March 9, 2009

It is with a very heavy heart that I share with you the reductions to our school system for the 2009 – 2010 school year. These reductions are necessary as a result of the state budget shortfall. K-12 public schools represent 41% of the state budget, therefore 295 school districts will receive decreased monies from the state as a result of the shortfall. You may have either heard on the news or read in the papers how districts are approaching these reductions.

The legislature is still in session and has not finalized the state budget, but as a school district, we have an obligation to timelines for our staff and public to begin the process of announcing reductions.

For the past several months, information has been shared about the budget with staff and community through open letters to community and staff, in the paper and on our internal email system. During the month of February, staff and community were asked to share thoughts and perspectives. Thank you for your contributions to this process. Never before has our system received such a large and thoughtful response. My staff and I have read each note and email carefully and used many ideas as we generated our system response.

It’s never easy to share this kind of information. Coming up with nearly $2 million worth of reductions, representing about 5% of our budget is very difficult. Below highlights the reductions:

- **K – 12 system:** $1,354,950
  Moving back to half-day kindergarten; Classified Staff reductions; Sixth Grade Camp and Elementary Swim Program; Move to .5 counseling program at each elementary school; TOSA positions at EHS; Literacy Camp (break even); Increased staffing formula 6-12; Athletic Director at EHS; Reduction of Secondary Instructional Council monies 6-12; Shifting CTE monies to cover administrative responsibilities of program

- **System Administration:** $337,300
  Reductions to all system administration departments; superintendent contract (2 days); 9 – 12 Late Arrival; Leadership Team advance and opening day adjustments

- **Aligning Staff with Enrollment and Programs:** $318,200
  2.2 FTE; Grant In-directs; System athletics; PE/Music schedules

My hope is that things will change at the state funding level for our schools. This year will be very hard, but it could be far worse in future years if a new funding system is not implemented. There are several bills before our lawmakers right now that could help K-12 schools in the future.

I know some of you might have questions regarding the above list. Please feel free to email with any questions that you might have to mike_nelson@enumclaw.wednet.edu. A community meeting will be held on March 24th at 6:30 in the EHS Library as a way of explaining these reductions in person. I wish there wasn’t a need to write this note to you as these reductions represent valuable staff members and programs.

Respectfully,

Mike Nelson
Superintendent