



EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

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June 12, 2008

Dear Woodway and Evergreen Families:

As you may be aware, the Edmonds School District Board of Directors has directed the Citizen Planning Committee (CPC) to work with District staff and parent leaders to study and create a plan to close Woodway and Evergreen Elementary Schools for the 2009-2010 school year.

It is with regret that we have to consider a plan of school closure, but it has become necessary. In recent years the combination of declining enrollment, unfunded and underfunded State mandates, and overall inadequate State funding for schools has created a financial challenge for most all school districts. At the same time our enrollment has declined as families have elected to move further north to more reasonably priced housing. Because the state funding to local schools is dependent on actual enrollment counts, the shrinking enrollment of the district means fewer dollars from the state.

This past spring we reduced our school district budget by 3.1 million dollars as a result of limited resources and increased costs. The basic overhead required to operate an elementary school is about \$600,000 a year. That does not include many other costs directly linked to students such as teachers and instructional materials. In order to be fiscally responsible the district must continue to reduce costs and build capacity to meet these challenges. It is for this reason that we must consider the closure of our two smallest schools.

Woodway Elementary and Evergreen Elementary are the two smallest schools in our district. Woodway expects to enroll approximately 170 students next year and Evergreen approximately 255 students. They currently serve students in the southern portion of the district where the enrollment decline has fallen most rapidly. The other schools nearby have strong instructional programs and they have sufficient space to accommodate the students from Woodway and Evergreen.

Beginning in August and extending into the new school year, members of the CPC, District staff, and parent leaders will be working together to develop a plan to consolidate these two schools into other nearby schools. There will be opportunities for parents to participate in the development of these plans by providing guidance and feedback through community meetings. On the back of this letter is a preliminary schedule of the meetings we have planned. Additionally, we seek input from parents and community members through either regular or electronic mail. Each and every idea is welcomed.

Assistant Superintendent Sue Venable will be leading the discussion and planning for Evergreen. She may be reached at venables@edmonds.wednet.edu or at 425-431-7155 for questions or comments about the closure of Evergreen. Assistant Superintendent Ellen Kahan will be leading the discussion and planning for Woodway. She may be reached at kahane@edmonds.wednet.edu or at 425-431-7176. If you would like to participate in the planning group to help design our plan for your school community please send a letter to the appropriate person at the address above.

Sincerely,

Ellen Kahan, Assistant Superintendent
For Woodway Community Team

Sue Venable, Assistant Superintendent
For Evergreen Community Team