

**Community Linkage Meeting: Connecting with Business Leaders
November 3, 2011**

Community Linkage attendees included Jeffrey Callender of ConocoPhillips; Reid Frederick and Tom Majerus of Washington Educational Credit Union; Derek Neumann, Vice President of Heath Techna; Robin Halliday of Technology Alliance Group; Pete Dawson of Dawson Construction; Shauna Unger, Human Resources Director of PeaceHealth St. Joseph's Medical Center; Ken Ryan of The Bagelry; John Butorac of Barlean's Organic Oils; Bob Pritchett, CEO of Logos Research Systems, Inc.; Terry Corrigan, Vice President of Haskell Corp and Doug Thomas, President and CEO of Bellingham Cold Storage.

President Ann Whitmyer called the meeting to order and, on behalf of the School Board, welcomed business leaders.

Superintendent Greg Baker welcomed the group and thanked them for their time to discuss the education of our students. Dr. Baker turned the meeting over to Director Steve Smith who explained the purpose of the meeting. As Dr. Smith explained, over the past year, the School Board and administration have begun to rethink how we do business.

Dr. Smith explained that the board is increasing its focus on performance metrics of the superintendent and the district, with the ultimate goal that the superintendent's evaluation and the district's performance metrics are perfectly aligned.

The purpose of the meeting was for the School Board to engage in a discussion about the skill sets and personal characteristics that our business community desires in our graduates.

Attendees were divided into four groups with at least one Board member and one Executive Team member with each group. The Board asked the business leaders to explore the following questions:

- x What are the critical skills for high school graduates now? 10 years from now? 20 years from now?
- x What are the key personal characteristics you see in your successful employees and colleagues?
- x Should high school prepare every student to enter a four-year college?
- x Should public education train students to directly enter the labor force upon graduation? What skills are necessary and critical?
- x Public education can be viewed as a 13-year production cycle, with large variability in the skills of the inputs, and the desire to customize production to maximize the value of each product. What are some key performance metrics school districts should consider for continuous improvement?

Following the small group discussions, each group shared key points:

- x Students still need basic skills, whether they attend college or not.
- x Don't discount community colleges and technical colleges. For some students this may be a better fit.
- x Instill good habits, such as focus, concentration, study skills, and time management.
- x Post-secondary training is an alternative, such as intern

