



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 26, 2018**

**Families, community and staff share input in final phase of Marysville School District community engagement process**

MARYSVILLE, WA – Nearly 200 Marysville School District (MSD) families, staff and community members came together on Saturday, April 21, 2018 to help inform how the District will make key decisions and refresh the District’s Strategic Directions and goals.

Held at the Francis J. Sheldon Gymnasium located at the Marysville Tulalip Campus from 9:30 a.m - 11:30 a.m., the meeting was the last phase in a six-step community engagement process that kicked off last fall. The process included a telephone poll, online surveys, confidential interviews, focus groups and Saturday’s community meeting.

Garrison Kurtz, with Dovetailing consultancy, briefly reviewed the major themes that surfaced during the course of the confidential interviews and focus groups. Major areas of concern included middle and high school organization; parent engagement and communication; trust and execution; mutual respect and cultural competence; school safety and culture; building maintenance and improvement.

Dovetailing found that while there are many opportunities for improvement, there is also great energy around enhancing the District; almost everyone they spoke to values MSD and wants schools to be successful.

“We want to see students that are learning here, graduating from our schools and finding jobs here in Marysville,” said one anonymous interview subject.

Acting Superintendent Jason Thompson shared several efforts already underway that address some of these areas including the Parent Advisory Council and programs like AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination).

In addition to updating the District’s Strategic Directions, the community meeting sought input from attendees on possible changes to secondary schools. Acting Superintendent Thompson will make a recommendation to the Marysville School District Board of Directors at the end of May on whether to continue with open choice high schools or transition to school boundaries.

If the Board decides to change the current configuration, a task force will be convened to work through details of that process. Major changes would not be fully implemented until the fall of 2019. The District also commits to ensuring students that begin at one high school may stay there should a transition to boundaries be made.

“If a student or their family is wondering if they can stay at their current high school, the answer is yes,” said Acting Superintendent Thompson. “We would seek to make any transition as easy as possible for students, families and staff. Part of ensuring a smooth transition is maintaining consistency for the learner, and District staff and the Board are all committed to providing opportunities that make it easier to stay at the school where the student started.”

Several local and state leaders and officials also attended the meeting. Marie Zackuse, chairwoman of The Tulalip Tribes, opened the event and Dr. Tom Albright, president of the Marysville School District Board of Directors addressed

attendees. Board Directors Lundberg, Nation and Edwards were also in attendance along with Senator John McCoy, Representative John Lovick, Mayor Jon Nehring and Councilmember Kamille Norton.

During his address Dr. Albright acknowledged the pressing need to ensure that Marysville students are ready for 21st century careers.

“In the 1950s reading, writing and arithmetic provided high school graduates with 70 percent of the skills they needed to enter the workforce and be successful. Today those skills, while critical, only cover 2 percent of the needs,” said Dr. Albright. “Educational demands are radically different now and continue to change quickly. We must adapt and change how we are preparing our students for the future.”

More information on the public engagement process can be accessed at [www.bit.ly/DreamBigMSD](http://www.bit.ly/DreamBigMSD). The current Strategic Directions are the result of the 2014 Dream Big for Kids event. The District anticipates that the updated Strategic Directions will be made public at the start of the new school year.

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#### **ABOUT THE MARYSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Marysville School District seeks to engage our community, inspire our students, and prepare our graduates. It is our belief that every child in our community deserves the very best educational experience possible, and every child has the potential to achieve success in life if given the right tools to do so. Learn more at [www.msd25.org](http://www.msd25.org).

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