Dear Board members,

May 4th Board Actions:

- School Calendar approved for 2016-17: The board approved the school calendar for the coming year: School will start on September 7th; Winter break will be the last two full weeks in December, plus January 2nd; Mid-Winter break is the week of February 20th; Spring break is the week of April 10th; and school is out (pending snow days) June 23rd.

- EEU program approved: Earlier this spring the district reported compliance concerns about our partnership with the University of Washington Experimental Educational Unit. After several months of discussions, district staff have asked for board approval of three interagency agreements: preschool; Kindergarten; and demonstration centers. These documents meet legal requirements and extend a long standing partnership. Under this agreement, the UW will begin demonstrating promising practices from the UW sites in regional SPS sites.

- English Language Arts K-5 Materials Adoption – the public is invited to review books and other teaching materials under consideration for elementary reading and writing in Seattle Public Schools. There is information on our website.

- Personnel – Classified Reduction in Force means that we lose several family support workers. The family support program is 25 years old and was one of the first funded by the Families and Education Levies. At one time they supported 71 schools. Starting in 2012-13 the City has moved to more competitive grants. Family support workers were at 17 schools in 15-16. Half of the schools reduced family support workers for the coming year. This RIF motion passed only after extensive comments and many concerns about the loss of important wrap-around services.

- Technology – Recently approved BTA Levy funds won’t begin until January 2017. The board will vote soon on an inter-fund bridge loan to allow DoTS to begin planning and implementation as soon as possible.

Recognitions:

- Loyal Heights students presented a portion of their Wizard of Oz production at the board meeting on Wednesday. Their program included references to over 200 adults who had a role in helping make the event possible.

- Nurses Appreciation
  May 11 has been proclaimed School Nurse Day. We want to honor all Health Services staff which includes: 70 certificated registered nurses; 8 classified nurses, and 2 nurse administrators as well as office support staff. 100% of our certificated nurses hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and 40% are nationally board certified in school nursing. In 25 schools our nurses work collaboratively with school-based health center staff. Nurses manage school health care including immunizations, screenings, health care plans, illness and injury care, coordinating services with other health care professionals as well as working as a member of school teams to identify and mitigate health barriers to student learning. Katie Johnson, SPS Manager of Student Health Services, was
recognized for being selected as a Fellow of the National Academy of School Nursing.

- **Educator Appreciation Week & Proclamation**
  - The first week in May is set aside each year for thanking and honoring teachers, and all of our educators, for all they do – day in and day out – to serve the students of Seattle Public Schools.
  - Our students are supported each day by more than **3,000 teachers and instructional staff**.
  - We join our 52,000 students and their families in thanking our educators across the district for their great work in reaching out to Every Student, Every Classroom, Every Day.

**Board Comments:**

- **Director Blanford:** Congratulations to the Loyal Heights Players for a great presentation. Thank You to our Nurses for the work they do. Congratulations to Katie Johnson for her recognition. Thank You to Mark Perry for his Foster Award recognition and for his leadership and work on social justice.

- **Director Burke:** It is an honor to recognize our nurses and our educators. Teachers in the classroom are doing the heavy lifting - thank you. Thank you, Mr. Peterson (Center School student) for joining the board today. My Fauntleroy visit showed me how hard it is for international schools to put fewer kids into early grades - which is required by the legislature’s funding model. Cascadia School visit - concerned about HCC pathway. Excited about HS assessment alternatives in the negotiated regs. Thank you Garfield for the letter you shared. Your Email and video have been noted.

- **Director Harris:** Thanks Center School and IB. It's about money. Come to the budget hearing. McCleary not funded. Every dollar comes from somewhere else. Thank you to Asst Supt McEvoy on lunch and recess - poll out on recess before lunch - great example of working together for positive change for kids. Kudos to Vicki Schmitz - creative use of that space which is dedicated for educational services. Thank You to Erinn and Carri and Stephen for planning board retreat. Kudos to staff for working with the board on two resolutions for testing and program placement. Thank you for open and rich communication. Shauna Health - congratulations and thank you for job well done.

- **Director Geary:** I hope we can look at other ways to find funds for options schools – be creative in how we can save the school. Thank you Loyal Heights. Creative brochure. Great example of arts in our schools. I attended the regional Race and Equity meeting. Kudos to Bernardo. I would like to rework our volunteer policy – like Portland – to make sure they are not excluding those with a criminal incident in their distant past. Including those that we want to see in our schools - African American Males. Thank you to all of the students who came to testify - willing to come and speak so eloquently.

- **Director Pinkham:** Thank you to Loyal Heights. Arts are essential in our schools. Congrats for nurses. Thank you Educators. The College of Education Circle Luncheon at Aki was great. I appreciate how rich our culture is – we can't make any student feel *less than*. We need to acknowledge strength of culture. UW now has a Native American educator program. The Mayor’s Education Summit was well done – I
like the focus … it is about kids. Shana Brown - congratulations. Mark, congrats. Want program to drive our budget.

- **Director Peters:** Thank you Loren (student) and Loyal Heights. Passionate testimony to the arts and for teachers they love. Compelling to hear about Garfield program - restore it to its strength. Center School created because we don't have a school in the QA area - arts is at the heart of it. My family is steeped in the arts. I know how important they are. It helps students care about not dropping out of school. Have to keep all options for kids by confronting basic budget issues. Have to be more creative with our funding. Ask staff for a creative solution to retain program and enrollment. Shout out to Center School for awards. 3rd out of 14 statewide. Thank you Dr. Herndon for water standards – and thank you to the board of 2004. Staff, please tell us how the wait list will work. IB funding is hot topic. Loyal Heights needs enough space to play.

- **Director Patu:** Thank you, Loren (student rep) and Loyal Heights. Congrats to Nurses and to Katie Johnson. Thank You educators for the work you do for our students daily. It is up to us to support our programs. Cuts to Center School and Middle College tell our kids they are less important. We need to find a way to keep and enhance our programs. Can’t believe that we continue to cut programs that serve students. Our job to look beyond to fully fund IB and Center School. If we want a great education for our kids we can no longer cut - we have to save all our programs.

**Superintendent Comments:**

- **Aki Kurose Honored** for Effective Teaching -The University of Washington School of Education Dean, Mia Tuan, showcased Aki Kurose teachers and Mia Williams, principal, for their dedicated and intentional development of effective teaching practices.

- **Nesholm Family** - I met recently with the Nesholm Family to personally say “thank you” for the incredible work they have done over the past 20 years. Their steady and persistent funding for Aki, Denny and Mercer has created a community of schools that are beating the odds, closing gaps, and showcasing best practices that we can learn from.

- **White House Recognizes Seattle Teacher Shana Brown**
  - Broadview-Thomson Teacher Shana Brown was honored yesterday at the White House for being a 2016 Great Educator
  - She was selected by The U.S. Department of Education and was among several honorees in attendance at the National Teacher of the Year Ceremony
  - A full time social studies and English/language arts teacher at Broadview-Thomson K – 8 School, Shana also serves as a teacher leader in the integration of Native history curriculum into K – 12 social studies
  - She is the principal author of Washington State’s newly required curriculum: *Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State*
  - Shana has also conducted trainings on behalf of Seattle Public Schools, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the National Indian Education Association, the organization that nominated her for this honor
  - Currently she is working with the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian on their new online initiative, *Native Knowledge 360°*

- **Mark Perry, Principal of NOVA wins the prestigious Thomas B. Foster Award** for Excellence. The Alliance for Education announced that award and presented a $50,000
gift to support his school. Nova is an alternative high school committed to a student-centered education. Mark works tirelessly to promote social justice and support his students - making the promise of education work for everyone. Please help me in congratulating Principal Perry and this terrific recognition of his work.

**Current Issues:**

- **District investigating** financial agreement. A former district employee entered into an agreement with Seattle Education Association (SEA) for more than $500,000, without going through the processes to get superintendent or School Board approval. The agreement is related to long-term pay for substitutes, some of which has already been distributed. The district will complete a review of how this occurred and continue legal assessment to decide a course of action. The district will provide updates as they become available.

- **Assessment:** Smarter Balanced Assessments are underway district wide in grades 3-8 and grade 11. Washington State has been identified as “High Risk” due to low SBA participation state-wide. OSPI recently reported that Seattle had 40 schools (and the district) out compliance due to lower than 95% participation rate. We have now been given six weeks to comply with the requirement by submitting a plan to improve SBA participation.

- **Preschool Task Force** launched: Deadline for applications is May 18th. The task force will look at issues of special education inclusion; funding; capacity and services. More information is on the web site and in the Attachment.

- **Smaller K-3 Class Sizes** – Thanks to funding from the 2016 Legislature, class sizes will be smaller for the primary grades. The funding comes with strict class-size requirements that must be followed in order to receive funding. This will impact how classes are organized and will mean more split grade-level classes. We continue to work with schools and principals on K-3 ratio requirements and to mitigate implications for staffing and space.

- **Center School** – is a small high school with an arts and social justice focus. Due to lower enrollment, Center School is losing a portion of their art teacher. Students expressed concern that fewer electives will further reduce enrollment in the future.

- **Viaduct Closure:** The Viaduct two-week closure impacts many of our school buses. However, out of almost 1900 routes, only 24 needed to be altered slightly for delays. All of our drivers are coming in early each day. We reached out to all SPS families a couple weeks ago to help them plan ahead. Before the viaduct closed, our on time average for the month of April was 98%. On Monday our on time performance was at 96%. We are pleased there hasn’t been a significant impact for our students.

- **Enrollment, Staffing, and Mitigation:**
  - Since sharing projected enrollment and staffing allocations we have heard from a number of families, students and principals (e.g. Center School students)
  - There is a common theme to the concerns that our central leadership also shares – staffing impacts and potential erosion of programs including IB, dual language and Center School
  - Our current mitigation requests total $7.7 million dollars – this is a legislative challenge
- School budgets are based on enrollment projections and when projections are lower, we must do preliminary course eliminations – for example, in the case of Center School.
- Scheduled changes might be adjusted as enrollment numbers are finalized.
- The legislature was unable to fund the per pupil inflation factor this year – taking away $6 M in voter approved funds from Seattle Public Schools. **Historically we would be able to use these funds to mitigate but we are limited by the Legislature’s decision.**
- The “Levy Cliff” – **if not corrected early in the next session** – could reduce our local levy funding by another $25M.

**Water Quality**
- There have been recent stories about lead in school water in some regional districts.
- Seattle Public Schools has been active in addressing this issue often over many, many years.
- Over the last several years we have adopted and implemented a set of rigorous standards which have set nationally recognized standards for safe drinking water quality in public schools. Our local levies support this aggressive approach to testing – something other District’s aren’t funded to do.
- The program was established by the School Board, which adopted a Drinking Water Policy in 2004.
- It includes periodic testing of each drinking water source in each school, coupled with reporting of the results on the District website.

**ESSA Workshop.** The Every Student Succeeds Act is 1000 pages PLUS added regulations. Every time we hear an update, we learn more about some of the new provisions. Some new areas that I heard at a superintendents’ meeting this week included:
- Our state test will also be given in Spanish – our second most frequent home language.
- We will disaggregate for more groups of students including: military and foster children.
- Local HS testing alternatives may be available if approved by the state, given district wide, and include accommodations.
- We no longer have to send the “failing schools” letters.
- Washington will continue to identify the bottom 5% schools and provide technical assistance.
- The law does have provisions regarding teacher experience and high student needs.

**Recent School Visits**
- **West Woodland**
  Earth Day was well underway with dozens of children gathering round a large blue tarp to paint images of nature – plants, trees, sun, in vibrant acrylic colors – fully advertised in advance in the teacher’s weekly news.
• **Adams**
  Adams is an arts focus school. The school’s art theme is being carried forward through Art grants. Laird Norton provided grant writing training and the school is working on several additional art grants to support their program.

• **Salmon Bay**
  Salmon Bay is one of the few K-8s that has bigger middle school classes than elementary rather than smaller. That means that they take a lot of new students at 6th grade and have to rebuild the school culture and behaviors.

  Every student at Salmon Bay goes to camp every year. And they have a winter enrichment segment where the students can choose to learn about furniture making, rowing, and crafts. Panther Day in the spring sees 7th graders off to camp and 8th graders having a tour of Ingraham with a picnic there.

• **Aki Kurose**
  Walking into the building, I am welcomed in many languages, a “raise the rigor roof” encouragement to students. Students also see examples of positive growth mindset and see pictures/faces of each of their teachers.

  As I enter the principal’s office I am greeted with positive quotes AND a huge data wall showing student progress grade by grade in reading and math. Ms. Williams tells me enthusiastically about how they reduce the number of students in jeopardy from grade 6 to grade 8.

• **MLK Jr**
  A sign in the entrance tells of a June event for Empowering Youth and Families and promotes the Jump Start for Ks. They have worked this year on:
  - Philosophical belief systems - Growth Mindset
  - Including self, students and families
  - The idea that they always start with WHY - their bigger purpose of reaching EVERY student
  - Working from a position of strength for themselves and their students
  - Reflective questions that lead to personal commitment

• **Wing Luke**
  I’m greeted with a big sign outside the front door saying, “Wing Luke supports Muslim Families.” As I wait in the office, I notice the four years in a row as a School of Distinction.

  In Pod A, we see a classroom together in a circle and collaboration underway with the ELL teacher using GLAD strategies to explain how earthworms breathe - using pictures and labels and student discussion. At Wing Luke 50% of the students are ELL.

• **Highland Park**
Students at Highland Park go to an all student assembly every morning. Students do the pledge of allegiance, get recognized for one of the school values and then do research based calm breathing exercises. That together with other ideas from their MTSS-B Building Leadership Team, has improved behavior a great deal. Each classroom has a designated “calm” space and buddy classrooms help each other out by giving students options for time out.

Current Events

- **City Summit** – The Mayor’s Education Summit activities are well underway. They have held 20 focus group sessions (including 1300 participants) and had a sell-out crowd of 500 at Garfield High School on Saturday. The focus on Eliminating the Opportunity Gap is timely and much needed. It is encouraging to see the City, our community and many funders rally around better meeting our students’ needs. **An impressive panel of students shared their perspectives and we were challenged to “work together” and repeat “it is not about you, it is not about me…it is about the children”**. Associate Superintendent of Teaching & Learning Michael Tolley gave a powerful presentation about our district’s plan and efforts to eliminate the opportunity gap. We are pleased to work with The City to provide equity, opportunities and access and --to support the children of Seattle in succeeding. As a result of the Summit, we are eager to work with the City to help develop recommendations.

- **Achieving Educational Racial Equity** (sponsored by PSESD & WSSDA) – Nineteen regional districts gathered last week to learn about Achieving Educational Racial Equity. Seattle was featured along with Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Portland as examples of some of the work underway. Bernardo Ruiz, SPS lead for Equity, was co-MC for the event.

Public Engagement Opportunities

- **Naramore Art Exhibit**
  - The public is invited to see 200 works of student-produced art in the district’s annual Naramore Art Show at the Seattle Art Museum
  - Seattle Public Schools has held the Naramore Art Show since 1985 to celebrate the success of our highest achieving middle and high school arts students and share their learning with the community
  - The show runs until May 22

- **Ripples of Hope Gala** – City Year’s annual fundraiser (5/5)
- I spoke before the **Chinese Chamber of Commerce** at their luncheon (5/6)
- **Saturday, El Centro de la Raza** is holding their Cinco de Mayo Celebration (5/7)
- **The Awards Ceremony for 2015 WA State Achievement Winners** (Schools) will be held on Tuesday, May 10th in Union Gap, WA
- **Seattle Public Schools Scholarship Fund Annual Awards Ceremony** will be held on May 19th

Good News

- **Funding for Rainier Beach High School**
- We’re excited to announce that the Alliance has provided funding for the IB program at Rainier Beach High School.
- Although we talked to the Alliance about all three schools – RBHS, Ingraham and Chief Sealth – they were able to support only the program that was most as risk next year.
- Thank you to the Alliance for Education, who has pledged $50,000 annually for the next three years
- We certainly welcome additional private funding for all of our IB programs.
- Again full State funding of education is required to fully cover programs like IB programs.

- **Seattle Schools Recognized**
  - Garfield and Roosevelt High Schools were recently ranked among Niche’s top ten “2016 Best Public High Schools in Seattle Metro.”
  - Ballard High Schools’ newspaper – The Talisman earned the top Best in Show award at the National High School Journalism Convention in Los Angeles.

Larry

**Deputy Superintendent Update**: Attached please find Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen’s update for this week.

**Associate Superintendent for Facilities & Operations Update**: Attached please find Associate Superintendent for Facilities & Operations Flip Herndon’s update for this week.

**Associate Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Update**: Attached please find Associate Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Michael Tolley’s update for this week.

**Assistant Superintendent for Operations Update**: Attached please find Assistant Superintendent for Operations Pegi McEvoy's update for this week.

**Chief Information Officer for Technology Update**: Attached please find an update from Chief Information Officer Carmen Rahm.