

ELLENSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Planning Retreat Minutes • Wednesday, July 9, 2025 • 4:00 p.m.

Canyon Room, Palace Restaurant

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mary Gordon, Michelle Bibich, Dick Wedin, Mike McCloskey, Maureen Rust, Marvin Douvier, Gloria Bugni, Phil Backlund, Cara Marrs, Heather Burfeind, Troy Tornow

GUESTS: None

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by President Maureen Rust

- Approval of May minutes- approved (Michelle moved, Dick seconded)
- Everyone introduced themselves, with special welcome to our new board members Phil, Gloria and Heather and returning board member Cara

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Dick presented the June monthly report and discussed the 2024 annual report, answering questions about our multiple accounts and the history of our financial position. Reports attached.
- Funding thank you notes were read from Leif Holmgren (Class of 1974 scholarship recipient) and Macie Copenhaver (Mt. Stuart Elementary National Robotic Competition meals support).

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Troy discussed the summer business of the district, including wrapping up the previous school year and planning for the next budget cycle. The budget will be downsized due to an extremely small incoming kindergarten class. Troy explained some of the issues he foresees regarding reduced federal funds and the upcoming state budget which did not include added funding for MSOC (materials, supplies and operating costs) which is not keeping up with the rate of inflation. The Ellensburg School District maintains a 11% emergency fund but without increased state funding, understands we will be facing funding challenges for the 2026/2027 school year. The state mandated but unfunded 'Green Initiative' regarding upgrades to all heating and HVAC systems has gone by the wayside as there is no state plan to police compliance of the mandate. Maureen thanked Troy for his informative reports on the happenings in the district.

2024/2025 IN REVIEW

- **Strengths**
 - **Learning Enhancement Awards** - we gifted over \$16,000 directly to teachers and specialists for innovative projects in the classroom
 - **Fundraiser** - our February event netted over \$20,000
 - **Caring Cupboard** - this program allocated over \$6500 directly to students to support what they need to be successful in school
 - **Staff Appreciation** - we celebrated staff multiple times/ways to let them know we appreciate their hard work and dedication to students
 - **Bill Stovall Loan Forgiveness Grant** - we coordinated this effort to relieve \$20,000 in student loan debt to a first-generation teacher in our district (Shelby Wedekind, Ida Nason Aronica)

- **ESD 105 Award** - with a nomination from Superintendent Troy Tornow, we were recognized at a dinner in Yakima celebrating our support of students
- **Social media** - Marvin has improved our presence online and continues to improve engagement with our FB page
- **Chamber 'Best Of'** – we were nominated as Best Non-Profit with the annual 'Best of' competition through the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce
- **Book Mobile** - we continue to award \$500 a year for new books for the summer Book Mobile and partner with The Early Learning Coalition, a group that gives away books in English and Spanish supported partially by a LEA grant from us
- **Youth Awards** – this county-wide event celebrated dozens of students who were awarded certificates in 8 categories
- **New Board Members** – we welcome Gloria, Phil, Heather and returning member Cara
- **New Scholarships**- we continue to increase our scholarship impact for graduating seniors heading to college
- **Challenges**
 - Fall BBQ- this event was poorly attended by staff, and our expense of time and materials was wasted. In addition, our goal to celebrate ESD staff and administrators by hosting a celebratory back to school event was not met.
 - We'd like to increase our post high school giving to include more scholarships for students pursuing technical and trade schools

2025/2026 GOALS

- **ESDEF Board Recruitment** – we will continue to look for new dynamic members to join our board. Maureen will send out information to our current new members on how they can access our important documents on our Google Drive. We will continue to work on matching new members with their interests in different projects and help them become engaged and thriving members of our board. Mike will order nametags for our new board members and Mary will arrange head shots for the website. New members were asked to submit a bio to Mary.
- **Scholarships**
 - **Rubric** - we need to design a good rubric for determining winners and discussed sending this to a committee approach for choosing winning applicants in 2026.
 - **Tech and Trade Awards** – we all need to become better educated on the post-secondary options for trade/tech school so we can improve our support for the students who would benefit from that experience. It was suggested to invite EHS CTE Director Shannon Panattoni and EHS Counselor Kyoko Cleveland (scholarship coordinator) to a future meeting to discuss ways we can help to increase the tech and trade scholarship giving.
 - **ESDEF Scholarship** – much discussion followed on how best to fund this each year, including ESD payroll deductions (Troy to investigate possibilities), private funding, personal funding by board members, or using tile sales net profits. Tabled until the October meeting. This scholarship also needs more refined guidelines to limit the number of applicants. Discussion on which guidelines we want to add will be discussed further at a later date.
- **Bill Stovall Foundation Gift** – Bill Stovall would like to donate his estate to ESDEF upon his passing (not imminent) but would like clarification on how it will be spent. Dick

recommended setting up an endowment in Bill's name to be used to support teachers, programs and other projects to support ESD staff. Mike will communicate this idea to Bill and report back to the board.

- **Staff Appreciation –**
 - **Fall** - it was decided to discontinue the fall BBQ and replace that event with a pancake breakfast during one of the LID days happening on Monday, August 25 and Tuesday, August 26. Mike has access to all equipment through his affiliation with Kiwanis, and the board can provide other materials and manual labor. Troy will let us know the best day to plan this event in August. Everyone is encouraged to wear ESDEF logo wear available at Shirtworks.
 - **Winter** – we will continue with delivery of poinsettias and signs thanking our teachers, support staff and administrators.
 - **Spring** – we will continue with our \$150 gift per building to enhance the work being done by parent groups, to include transportation, Early Learning, Print Shop and the Admin office.

BOARD ROLES AND CURRENT CHAIRS

- **Caring Cupboard (Mary)** – work will continue next year with some improvements, including shoe sizers at each building and hygiene packs to start off the year. Mary appreciates any and all help with everything concerning Caring Cupboard. Cara offered to help where needed.
- **Learning Enhancement Awards (Michelle)** – applications will be available on August 1 with presentation option preference added (via email or in person). We will also add a rubric to aid in selections and possibly send this to a committee approach next year.
- **Youth Awards (Mike)** – Mike encouraged all board members to get involved in coordinating and presenting the awards. The ceremony will be held on Monday, March 30, 2026, and every nominee is brought up on stage and celebrated. Awards are given in 8 different categories, and this event is open to all Kittitas County schools.
- **Promotion**
 - **Facebook (Marvin)** – Marvin continues to improve our presence on Facebook. He plans to do board introduction posts and asks everyone for a photo and a blurb to share about interests, etc. Mike suggested Marvin create a questionnaire for board members to complete for this purpose.
 - **Website (Mary)** – The website demands more of our attention to make sure all is working well. Mary will continue to do the smaller tasks, and we will hire Keigh Design to do larger formatting projects. Mike moved and Michelle seconded the allocation of \$1200 per year to hire Keigh Design for this purpose. Motion carried.
 - **Community Promotion (Maureen)** – generally our PR plan revolves around our fundraiser. Mary requested the parent group presentations be moved up one month.
- **Staff Appreciation (Maureen)** – Maureen would love help delivering poinsettias in December. Everyone can help with the pancake feed also.
- **Scholarships (Mike and Dick)** – this is a well-oiled machine and Mike and Dick have a process that works. They'll let us know if they need help.
- **Fundraiser (Mary)** - This year's fundraiser will be held on Friday, January 30, 2026, with our fundraising planning retreat to be held on August 14, 2025. Place to be determined.

- **Tile Wall** – this area needs leadership to grow the program. It was discussed that tile sale proceeds could be used to fund the ESDEF scholarship each year. Ideas to increase tile sales were discussed.
- **Board Membership** – we should all continue to look for interested people to join our board.

2025-26 PLANNING CALENDAR

June LEA applications open (changed to August 1)
 July 9 General planning retreat

August 14 Fundraiser retreat, venue TBD
 August 25 Pancake Feed, MMS, 7 am

September

- meeting 9/9, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams
- Fundraiser update

October

- meeting 10/7, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams, Kyoko Cleveland and Shannon Panattoni invited to discuss tech/trade scholarships
- Fundraiser update

November

- meeting 11/4, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams
- Fundraiser update
- LEA award discussions at 4:15 prior to board meeting

December

- meeting 12/2, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams
- Fundraiser update, invitation stuffing, poster sign up
- Poinsettia and signs distributed in mid-December

January 2026

- meeting 1/6
- Fundraiser update
- Fundraiser – Friday, January 30

February 2026

- meeting 2/3, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams
- Fundraiser recap

March

- meeting 3/3, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams
- Annual meeting invitations
- Spring Break- March 23-27
- Youth awards ceremony, Monday. March 30, MMS

April

- Annual Meeting and Dinner - 4/7, place TBD
- Scholarship applications due April 15

May

- Meeting 5/5, 5:15 pm, Johnston and Williams
- Determine dates/locations for our annual and fundraising retreats

- Choose scholarship winners (sub-committee?)
- Staff Appreciation activities

June

- No meeting

July

- General planning retreat

August

- Fundraising retreat
- Pancake Breakfast- LID day, date TBD

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10.

Our next meeting is Thursday, August 14 for the fundraising retreat, 4 pm- 7pm. Location to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Gordon
Secretary