

**Resolution 5-09**

**In Support of  
the Importance of Neighborhood Elementary Schools**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Bellingham unanimously passed a resolution on March 9, 2009, regarding the importance of neighborhood elementary schools; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's resolution stated that neighborhood elementary schools "are integral to the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan of 2006," unanimously encouraged "the Bellingham School Board to reopen Lowell for the 2009-2010 school year," and unanimously encouraged "the Bellingham School Board to keep Lowell, Larrabee, and Columbia Elementary Schools open in the future;" and

**WHEREAS**, the Bellingham School Board faces an unprecedented budget shortfall for the 2009-2010 school year and likely beyond, due to the multi-billion dollar Washington State budget deficit; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bellingham School District has engaged the Bellingham community in an open and transparent budget reduction process during the 2008-2009 school year to prepare for the projected budget shortfall; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bellingham community through the budget reduction process identified hundreds of budget-saving ideas, including the temporary delay of the reopening of Lowell Elementary School at a cost savings of at least \$450,000 in operating costs for the 2009-2010 school year with community members both in support of and in opposition to the delay.

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Bellingham School District strongly support the importance of neighborhood elementary schools with recognition of the equally important responsibility to all 10,500 students and its legal obligation to adopt a balanced budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year, does hereby,

1. Request funds in the amount of \$450,000 from the City of Bellingham to cover the unfunded operating costs necessary to reopen Lowell Elementary in fall 2009 consistent with the City Council's unanimously adopted resolution; and
2. Acknowledge that additional funds may need to be requested of the City of Bellingham by the Bellingham School District in future years to assist in the operation of the Bellingham School District's small neighborhood schools; and

3. Believe that the appropriation of requested funds by the City Council to the Bellingham School District will demonstrate the City Council's firm commitment to partnering with the Bellingham School District to achieve the immense value of small neighborhood schools.

Adopted this 17th day of March 2009.

BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 501  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stephen Schoenfeld

President

Melody H. Klode

Ken McBay

J. Kenneth G. Jass

E. Ann Whitings

ATTEST:

Kenneth Klode

Secretary to the Board of Directors