

Community Linkage Meeting Connecting with Business Leaders

The Bellingham School Board and Superintendent Greg Baker welcomed a group of community business leaders to a linkage meeting on Nov. 3 to discuss the education of our students.

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:

- What are the critical skills for high school graduates now? 10 years from now? 20 years from now?
- What are the key personal characteristics you see in your successful employees and colleagues?
- Should high school prepare every student to enter a four-year college?
- Should public education train students to directly enter the labor force upon graduation? What skills are necessary and critical?
- 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?

Examination of these questions led the group as a whole to a discussion about how business leaders see a definite need for students to develop social skills including focus, concentration, time management, preparedness, organization, social responsibility and ownership, but most importantly self-motivation and drive. Other needs addressed were the importance of verbal, written, interpersonal and team communication in a professional atmosphere.

To view minutes from the meeting, please [click here](#).