



MERIDIAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Each student will succeed through quality, inspirational and innovative education

Rec'd
12.27.2021
WCPW - CIVIC 3rd FLR
JPK

December 19, 2021

James Karcher, County Engineer
Whatcom County Public Works
322 N. Commercial St., Ste 301
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Mr. Karcher,

Re: Irene Reither Elementary School - Hannegan Road / E. Hemmi Road Intersection

Please accept this letter as support for the measures recommended by the Whatcom County Public Works Department to mitigate safety concerns shared about the Hannegan Road and E. Hemmi Road Intersection. We appreciate the continued dialogue with your department and our district leadership, as well as your department's responses to the public who have shared their concerns over the past two years.

On November 16th Dawn Christiana, Irene Reither Elementary Principal, and I, shared the plan below with families attending a virtual parent evening. The plan has also been shared during our school board meetings in November. At the December 8, 2021, regular Meridian School District Board Meeting, the motion to support the recommendations of your department was approved. Those mitigation measures provided by your office in your letter to the district on October 27, 2021, are listed below.

- With the approval of the Whatcom County Council, implement left turn and through traffic restrictions on East Hemmi Road westbound, at Hannegan Road from 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM and 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday during the School Year.
 - This change will lower the conflict with through traffic on Hannegan Road and help to lessen the queuing of traffic at the drop-off and pick-up times of Irene Reither Elementary School.
 - Requested enforcement from a Sheriff's Department road-use Deputy which may include a warning period followed by citations, and continued enforcement, as necessary.

- We support the Meridian School District's efforts to encourage greater utilization of bussing. It is our understanding that the district offers bussing to all students under the Safe Routes to Schools program and that the district has determined that there are no safe walk/bike routes for students living within the normal 2 mile walk/bike zone.
- Removal of the 35 MPH School Zone on Hannegan Road. With the support of the school district, approval by the Whatcom County Council, and in conjunction with what has been previously expressed to us regarding the Safe Routes to Schools Plan for the Meridian School District, the removal of this school zone, where no children walk, would allow for more free flowing traffic and greater clarity for drivers.
- Commence a review of sight distance at the intersection, including surveying Whatcom County right-of-way in the southeast corner to allow for optimal vegetation removal.

Thank you for continuing the process to seek a solution that addresses the safety of our students and parents – as well as the traveling public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Everett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "E".

James Everett, Ed.D.
Superintendent