

Is the Passing of Prop 5 a Genuine Reflection of the Will of the People of Whatcom County?

Whatcom County's November 8th election was certified on November 29th, despite opposition. The Proposition 5 "Yes for Whatcom Kids!" campaign submitted a last-minute surge of votes that came in following a ballot 'curing' process. This is a tax levy that will collect at least \$82 million from county residents over the next 10 years.

So, what is ballot curing? 'Curing' is a process to find registered voters whose ballots were rejected due to an error such as: lack of a valid signature, lack of a date, or unverifiable signature on the ballot envelope. Once these voters are found, the cause for the rejection can be explained and repaired (cured) and the 'cured' ballots can be re-submitted to the auditor for acceptance and tallying.

The "Yes for Whatcom Kids," used this process to canvas the county and match voters to rejected ballots, then questioned the "rejected" voters about Prop 5. If the voter indicated they had voted Yes on Prop 5, the voter was informed their ballot had been rejected and offered the opportunity to have their ballot accepted and counted. One can assume that only pro-Prop 5 voters would be informed about their rejected ballot and the ability to 'cure' them and that No voters were not treated to the same opportunity.

When a "Yes for Prop 5," campaign member was asked if they used any of their \$221,104.32 in campaign contributions to pay for teams of vote-curiers, I received no response. If campaign funds were used, that must be reported to the PDC report, so I will be reviewing their report for signs of a 'paid' curing effort.

For historical value, the "Yes on Prop 5" tax levy did not obtain enough signatures to place it on the ballot. Then, the Whatcom County Council intervened using the indirect initiative process and placed it on the 2022 General Election ballot. Initially, as timely ballots were verified and counted, the 'No' on Prop 5 had 2,284 more votes than 'Yes' on Prop 5.

But, Prop 5 did pass with twenty-votes. At the Canvassing Board's certification meeting, Whatcom County Auditor Diane Bradrick commented that the number of late, 'cured ballots,' was unprecedented and the reason the ballot measure passed. There was no vote-curing effort by the 'No on

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Prop 5,' and no local-media covered how this comeback was achieved through vote curing.

Whatcom County has a Canvassing Board whose function is to supervise the election process and protect our votes. They also certify our elections. Whatcom's Canvassing Board is comprised of: Whatcom County Auditor Diane Bradrick, a representative from the Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Royce Buckingham, and Whatcom County Council member, Todd Donovan.

Even though many citizens emailed the Canvassing Board about how the vote curing process affects election integrity, Royce Buckingham announced on November 28, that citizen's emails would not be reviewed or replied to until after the election certification on November 29.

How can we be confident that this flip in votes represents the actual will of the people? Many of Prop 5's biggest contributors stand to benefit financially from it. A few thousand dollars contributed up-front would reap much larger financial benefits over the 10-years these additional tax dollars are collected and redistributed through grants and subsidized childcare for their services.

The ability of an invested party to 'cure' ballots appears to have determined the outcome of this property tax measure. With voter apathy on the rise, when local campaigns use questionably ethical workarounds, like vote curing, it fuels that apathy. We need to shore-up our election process, not tear it down.

How can we repair the faulty aspects of our voting system and restore voter confidence? One idea is to make the status of each ballot confidential for all but the voter; this would eliminate the ability to 'cure' ballots. Another is to restore single day elections, rather than a five-week, prolonged process, with rejected signatures and questionable late ballots.

Voting is a hard-won constitutional right. We must not take it lightly.

John Marshall
Con Committee Member for Prop 5

My name is Todd Lagestee and I am here as a private citizen. I donated to the Children's Levy, put up a couple signs for it and even cured a couple of ballots for it. I am advocating for the lesser amount of \$8.2 million.

When a tax increase passes by **only 20 votes**, the governing authority, that is you the County Council; needs to take that into account as it implements that tax. This County Council can either vote to **take as much as possible or be responsible to the plan** and amount that was **submitted to voters on the actual ballot**.

Voters don't care about people with advanced degrees or lawyers and legal interpretations. Voters care about how much money is left in their pockets and how much they feel like they can or can't trust their elected leaders.

The Children's Levy plans were all based on \$8.2 million. The Children's Levy website and the Auditor's webpage and ballot language all list both 19 cents **AND** the \$8.2 million. This County Council must now decide **which carries more weight**. In making that determination, I would direct your attention to the EMS Levy language. While there is language in the EMS Levy ballot language that says "up to 29.5 cents"; there is no language stating a specific amount. Yet, we know that the EMS Levy will be a budget based approach. **What taxpayers deserve is consistency and transparency**. I believe that this supports the idea of utilizing the budget based approach and sticking to \$8.2 million.

As you consider \$9.69 million versus \$8.2 million, this County Council should also consider the actual ballot language of "approximately \$8.2 million" that was on the ballot. The difference of \$1.49 million is a difference of over 18%. I don't think that an 18% difference would be considered "approximately" in most people's books. When I Googled it, the legal definition seemed to be 5% for "approximately."

In considering which taxation basis to use, this County Council should also consider the message that you will be sending to voters in Whatcom County. We know that you didn't lower the EMS Levy, even though you could have. When a massive surplus is built up in the EMS Fund, again: how will the voters look at your record on taxation? When the voters have to consider a new tax for the new jail, how will the voters look on your record of taxation? Voters deserve consistency and transparency and even though I donated and supported the passage of the Children's Levy, I believe that **in order to preserve the trust of the voters, you should choose the \$8.2 million budget based approach**. Otherwise, when you need more money, Voters might not trust you enough.

You will not be able to make both sides happy on this issue. You will have to choose between disappointed people that didn't get more money than they planned or pissed off people that feel like they got fleeced. As Indiana Jones was bid in the Last Crusade, "*Choose wisely.*"

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“90% of a child’s brain develops by age 5. This critical window of time lays the foundation for the rest of a child’s life.

That’s why I’m one of more than **100 local doctors and nurses** across Whatcom County proudly endorsing Prop 5.”

– Dr. Monika Mahal, pediatrician at Peacehealth

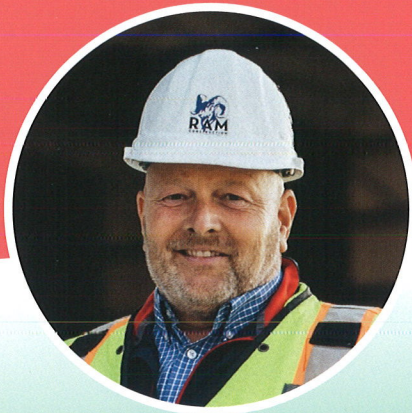


 **Vote YES FOR
WHATCOM
kids!**

Prop 5: The Healthy Children’s Fund

**ALSO ENDORSED BY:
NW Washington Medical Society
PeaceHealth
Chuckanut Health Foundation**

A Bipartisan Majority of our County Council Voted to put Prop 5 on the Ballot!



“Childcare is critical for the economy. Parents miss work when they can’t find care, and businesses struggle.”

– Mike Hammes, CEO, RAM Construction



“For every child from every background to have access to high quality early learning, we need 5,000 more spots for Whatcom kids”

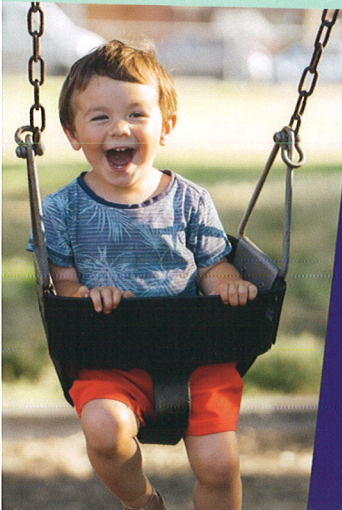
– Leslie Farris, Grandmother,
Retired School Counselor




“Studies show kids who go to preschool are more likely to graduate high school and less likely to run into trouble with law enforcement later in life.”

– Chief Donnell “Tank” Tansley,
Police Chief, City of Blaine

Learn more at YesWhatcomKids.com!



 **Vote YES FOR
WHATCOM
kids!**
Prop 5: The Healthy Children’s Fund

Top 5 Contributors:
Chuckanut Health Foundation,
Children’s Funding Accelerator,
PeaceHealth, IMCO Construction,
Lydia Place



Paid for by Yes for Whatcom Kids!
PO Box 5641 Bellingham, WA 98227


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 **Vote YES FOR
WHATCOM
kids!**

Prop 5: The Healthy Children's Fund

Every Whatcom County child deserves to be safe and healthy, with the opportunity to thrive. Research shows that 90% of a child's brain develops by age 5. **These critical years** lay the foundation. Today, fewer than half of Whatcom's children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

Prop 5 prepares our kids to thrive by 5!

-  **High quality, affordable childcare and preschool in every corner of Whatcom County.** We have 5,000 fewer childcare slots than we need to give kids a healthy start. Childcare helps parents get back to work and businesses succeed.
-  **Vulnerable, at-risk, and homeless children get more support** with mental health services and stable housing.
-  **Tough fiscal accountability.** Prop 5 includes strict accountability rules, audits, and citizen oversight so the money will be used as promised.



**learn more at
yeswhatcomkids.com**

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PROP 5 Supporters

Businesses

- Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Puget Sound Energy
- PeaceHealth
- SuperFeet
- Ram Construction
- IMCO Construction
- Tradewinds Capital
- BNP Realtors
- Pure Alaska Salmon Co.

Nonprofits

- NW WA Medical Society
- YMCA
- Boys & Girls Club
- United Way of Whatcom
- Lydia Place
- Whatcom Community Foundation
- Opportunity Council
- Interfaith Coalition

Community Leaders

- Prosecutor Eric Richey
- County Executive Satpal Sidhu
- County Councilors Barry Buchanan, Kathy Kerstner, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, and Kaylee Galloway
- Superintendents of Meridian, Mt Baker, and Bellingham School Districts
- Ferndale Mayor Greg Hansen
- Blaine Police Chief Donnell Tanksley
- Undersheriff Doug Chadwick

...and over 250 more businesses, doctors, teachers, and community leaders.



A bipartisan majority of your County Council voted to put Prop 5 on the ballot!

Vote YES FOR **WHATCOM**
kids! PROP 5:
 The Healthy Children's Fund

To see the full list and add your name, visit:
yeswhatcomkids.com

Paid for by Yes for Whatcom Kids! PO Box 5641 Bellingham, WA 98227
 Top 5 contributors: Chuckanut Health Foundation, Children's Funding Project, IMCO Construction, Patti Imhof, Dr. Chao-ying Wu

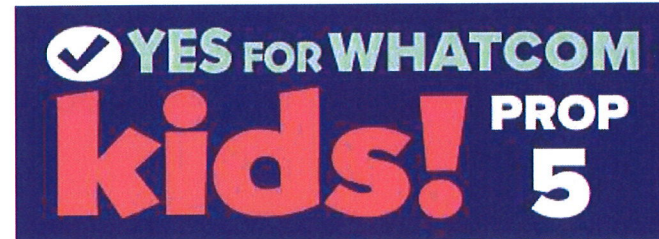


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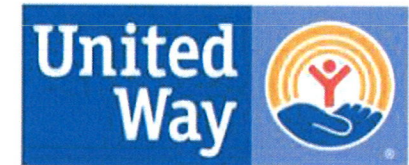
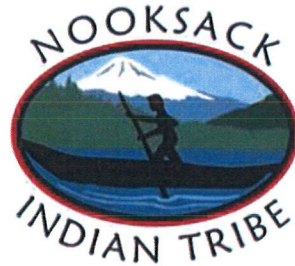


"Every child deserves a champion: an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be."

- Rita Pierson, Educator

Prop 5 is Supported by: *Community Endorsements*

Endorsements from Our Community

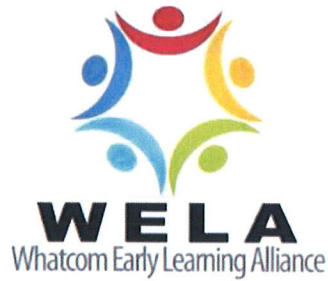


United Way
of Whatcom County

Endorsements from Our Community



Endorsements from Our Community



WHATCOM
community
FOUNDATION



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Wild Whatcom



Endorsements from Our Community

Doctors and Medical Professionals

Alejandro Rey, MD, Hospital physician for Family Care Network at Saint Joseph Hospital

Anneliese Floyd, Family Doctor

April Wakefield Pagels, MD, Family Medicine

Arielle Furtado, ARNP, Family Care Network

Ashlee Walls, MD, Family Medicine Physician

Beth Earthman, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, PeaceHealth

Brooke Jardine, Pediatrician, St. Joseph Medical Center

C Bree Johnston, MD, MPH

Christie Erskine, Speech Pathologist, PeaceHealth Medical Center

David A. Lynch, Family Physician, parent & grandpa

Deborah Benz, MD

Deborah Hall, Family Physician

Dr. Chao-ying Wu

Dr. Kaeley Kaplan

Dr. Kellie Jacobs, MD

Drs. Astrid & Chris Newell

Elizabeth Gaylord, Naturopathic Doctor & Nurse Practitioner Family Care Network

Erica Gadzik, MD - Family Medicine Physician

Ernest Cassella and Dina Levin, MD

Francie Gass, R.N.

Frederic Braun, MD

Gib Morrow, MD, MPH, Internal Medicine Physician and Public Health Officer

Endorsements from Our Community

Greg Anderson, MD, Family Physician Family Care Network

Heather Honey, Family Care Network

Ian Bonner, Family Physician

Jeffrey Radakovich, physician

Jennifer A Bates, MD Ferndale Family Medical Center

Jessica Bloom, MD, Family Physician Family Care Network

Jim Hopper, MD

Judith Koont, Retired Child, Adolescent & Family Psychiatrist

Kainui Rapaport, RN

Karena Whitworth, Family Physician

Kellie Jacobs, MD

Ken Gass, MD Retired Whatcom Pediatrician

Kenneth Bachenberg, MD, Retired Physician

Kim Wiley, LMHC, Child & Family Mental Health Therapist

Laura Fox, family physician Family Care Network

Lessli Putney, MD, Pediatrician, Chief of Pediatrics & Children's Therapies

Lisa Brodsky, ARNP

Lucia Pearson, ARNP, MPH

Mara Kelley, Medical Director Pediatrics, St Joseph Medical Center

Marcy Hipskind, MD

Marcy Shapley, Physician Assistant, Family Care Network

Mark Lisowski, MD – Emergency Medicine Physician

Mary Ellen Shields, MD, Retired Whatcom County pediatrician

Endorsements from Our Community

Mary Swanson, Family Care Network

Megan Gruber, ARNP at Family Care Network,
Whatcom Family Medicine

Megan Murray, Family Nurse Practitioner

Meghen Flaig, Physical Therapist and Founder of
Endurance Physical Therapy

Melana Schimke, MD, Family Physician Family
Care Network

Nancy McAllister, MD

Nicholas Lois, PA-C

Ken Gass, MD

Patrick McLaughlin, North Sound Family Medicine

Paul Homer, MD

Rachel Lucy, PhD

Rachel McCarthy, Practice Manager at North
Sound Family Medicine

Rachel Stipek, Medical Assistant

Richard Binder, MD, Family Care Network

Robert Baird, MD

Rodney Anderson, MD

Rory Bradt, DO, Family Physician

Ryan Honey, Physician, Family Care Network

Sally Baird, PhD Child Psychologist

Shay Martinez, MD

Sophia Kuo, Child, Adolescent, and Adult
Psychiatrist, Sound Mental Health, PLLC

Steven Ban, MD, Retired Whatcom County
Pediatrician

Susan Holstine D.O., Hospitalist , Sound Physicians

Teresa Thornberg, MD

Tricia Peterson, RN

Endorsements from Our Community

Tyler Nelson, MD Family Medicine

Elected Leaders

Eric Richey, Whatcom County Prosecutor

Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive

Sharon Shewmake, State Representative, District 42

Alicia Rule, State Representative, District 42

Liz Lovelett, State Senator, District 40

Debra Lekanoff, State Representative, District 40

Alex Ramel, State Representative, District 40

Barry Buchanan, Whatcom County Council

Carol Frazey, Whatcom County Council

Kaylee Galloway, Whatcom County Council

Todd Donovan, Whatcom County Council

Vermont McAllister, MD

Kathy Kershner, Whatcom County Council

Greg Hansen, Mayor of Ferndale

Mary Lou Steward, Mayor of Blaine

Seth Fleetwood, Mayor of Bellingham

Dan Hammill, Bellingham City Council

Lisa Anderson, Bellingham City Council

Kristina Michele Martens, Bellingham City Council

Hannah Stone, Bellingham City Council

Michael Lilliquist, Bellingham City Council

Hollie Huthman, Bellingham City Council

Ashley Brown, Everson City Council

Kelly Bashaw, Bellingham School Board

Endorsements from Our Community

Camille Díaz Hackler, Bellingham School Board

Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt, Mt Baker School Board

Michael Shepard, Port of Bellingham
Commissioner

Christine Grant, Public Utility District
Commissioner

Community, Nonprofit, and Business Leaders

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Adam Resnick

Adrian Shulock

Adrienne Renz, Executive
Director, Domestic Violence and
Sexual Assault Services

Alex Winstead, Cascadia
Mushrooms

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Alivia Jelinski

Alycia Hawkins, Lydia Place
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Brambleberry

Annie Teed, Generations Early
Learning and Care

Annie Roegele

Anya Milton, Community
Advocate

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Ari Lee-Newman

Ashley Brown

Ashley Kimberley

Barry Meyers

Endorsements from Our Community

Becka Robinson, educator

Becky Brunk, realtor

Ben Kinney

Benjamin Christian

Benny Musonda

Brandi Damon

Brenda Kenyon

Brian Russell

Briana Slater

Bryan Brink, retired teacher

Bryant and Hilary Engebretson

Bryttani Watts

Carol & Ray Dellecker

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Cathy Fairbanks

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Chris Phillips

Christine Espina, Faculty
member WWU

Christine Wiebe, educator

Chuck Robinson

Cindy Brinn

Cindy Rudolph

Clark Campbell, President at
Gear Aid Inc

Colby Abshire

Colton Kaltenfeldt

Danielle Lash

Daria & Bill Taylor

Darlene Giblin

David Johnson, Business leader

David Schrengohst

David Webster

Deb & Pete Granger

Debbie Ahl, Former CEO,
Sterling Health Plans

Debbie Broughton

Dee Robinson

Dera Ye

Derek Long

Endorsements from Our Community

Derek Thornton, CFO, Peoples Bank

Devin Connolly, Executive Director, Interfaith Coalition

Diana Wu

Diane & Mike Bates

Dick and Peggy Campbell, Bellingham Millwork Supply Co.

Donnell Tanksley, Police Chief, City of Blaine

Doug Chadwick, Whatcom County Undersheriff

Dr. Barbara Mathers-Schmidt, Professor WWU

Dr. Greg Baker, Superintendent, Bellingham School District

Dr. James Everett, Superintendent, Meridian School District

Elizabeth Boyle

Emily Hoffman

Emma Bishop

Elizabeth Maynard, Executive Director, Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center

Elizabeth Shieff

Elizabeth Thrash

Emily O'Connor, Executive Director of Lydia Place

Eric Hayes, CMO, Superfeet

Eric Hirst

Eric Rising

Erica Huffman

Erin Lynch, Board President, Chuckanut Health Foundation.

PTA parent, Carl Cozier Elementary School

Erin Maloney

Ernest Cassella

Flo Simon, retired, Police Chief, City of Bellingham

Gabriel Miles, Gabriel's Art Kids

Gena Gustafson, retired primary teacher

Geneva Blake

Gerry Smoot, Coach, Mt. Baker School District

Greg Winter, Opportunity Council

Gretchen Pflueger

Haley White

Heather Bliss

Endorsements from Our Community

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Heather Ellis

Heather Flaherty, Chuckanut
Health Foundation

Heather Hyink

Heidi Bugbee, Executive
Director Of Generations Early
Learning & Family Center

Hilary M Schwandt, Professor
WWU

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Isabel Machuca-Kelley, 3rd
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Public Schools

Isabel Meaker

Jaime Arnett

Jamie Ashton

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and Community Relations,
Bellingham Public Schools

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Jennifer O'Toole

Jennifer Woodruff

Jennifer Wright

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Director, Make.Shift Art Space

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JoAnn Benson

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Joe Timmons, Candidate for
State Representative, District 42

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Josh Kaplan

Julianna Cress

Julie Wasilewski

Kaiden Bair

Karen Kildall Occhiogrosso

Katie Boylan

Kathy & John Whitmer

Kaye Marshall, Retired
Kindergarten Teacher and Early
Learning Specialist, Mount
Baker SD

Endorsements from Our Community

Keelin Hunsdale, Kindergarten Teacher, Bellingham Public Schools

Keith Montoya, Generations Forward

Keith Negley, Keith Negley Illustration

Kelsey Bedlent, Sun Mountain Consulting

Ken Hertz, Chair Blossom Management Corporation

Kim Brown, NAMI Whatcom Board Member

Kimberly Lynn, PhD, Professor WWU

Kim Weil

Kristi Birkeland, CEO United Way

Kristi Fairbanks, LICSW, child and family therapist

Kristin Barber

Lara Welker

Laura Clark, Executive Director, Whatcom Humane Society

Leslie Farris, retired school counselor

Licia Sahagun, Executive Director, Wild Whatcom

Linda Wise Miller, Retired Administrator, Bellingham Public Schools

Loch Trimingham

Lucinda Pfeiffer-Hoyt

Lupita Garcia-Ruiz

Lyn Salazar

Maralise Fegan, Former Ferndale City Council member

Marc Fairbanks

Madison DeBruler

Margie Kimberley

Maria Macpherson

Maria Stahn

Mark Geri

Mark Johnson, Retired Superintendent, Nooksack Valley School District

Mary Brett

Mary Sewright, Superintendent, Mount Baker School District

Matt & Teri Treat

Matthew Barrow, Director at Lydia Place

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Mauri Ingram, President & CEO,
Whatcom Community
Foundation

Meg Metzger

Meghan Penny

Meredith Hayes, Whatcom
Child Care Coalition

Mike Hammes, Owner and CEO,
RAM Construction

Missy Belles, Gifts & Grants
Administrator at Whatcom
Community Foundation

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Nanette Davis

Nasreen Mughal-Barrows

Nolan Pate

Paul Newman

Peter Telfer

Raven Lee Dietzen

Rachael Wilson, Lilac Listings
by Rachael and Laura RE/MAX
Whatcom County

Rand Jack

Ray Deck III, Founder Skookum
Kids

Rebecca Lewis, Educator and
mom of a special needs child

Reid Frederick

Rita Jefferson, Chief Operating
Officer, Silver Reef Casino Resort

Rob McElroy, Former
Elementary Principal

Robina Sandhu

Ron Polinder, Retired Educator

Ryan Thramer

Sadie Townsend, Housing Case
Manager, Lydia Place

Sallye Quinn

Sam Gearhart, Executive
Director Bellingham Public
School Foundation

Sara Nichols Chiabai

Sara Williams

Sarah Hayes

Sarah Rothenbuhler, Owner,
Birch Equipment

Shane Sullivan

Shawna Unger

Shelly Justis-Johnson

Shu-Ling Zhao

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Stephanie Allen, Teacher

Stephen Gockley

Stephen Taylor

Steve Clarke, retired Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Bellingham Public Schools

Steve Harris, Local law enforcement officer and labor leader

Steve Ruthford, Fairhaven Middle School Principal

Steve and Kim Smith

Steve Swan

Steve Walker, Retired Executive Director, Community Boating Center

Sue Sharpe

Sue Staley, Retired Marriage and Family Therapist

Suneeta Eisenberg, Executive Director Whatcom Waves

Susan & Pete Rittmueller

Susan Given-Seymour

Susan Trimmingham

Suzannah Gusukuma, Lightning Tree Designs

Suzanne Goodell

Suzanne Wu, Retired Early Childhood teacher

Tallie Jones, Director, Mindport Exhibits

Tamara Spira, Fairhaven College, Western Washington University

Tammie O'Dell

Tammy Fehrer

Teizeen Mohamedali, Whatcom CARE (Whatcom Coalition for Anti-Racist Education)

Teresa Goetz

Terry Thalhofer

Tiffani Beardsley

Tim McEvoy

Tina Anderson

Tricia Peterson

Trinity Bernhardt

Troy Lautenbach

Endorsements from Our Community

Troy Muljat, Muljat Group

Vesla Ann Tonnessen,
coordinator at the Whatcom
Early Learning Alliance

Vikki Kinsman

Virginia Mercado

Wendy Scherrer, M.Ed

Wes Drilias

Wilanne Ollila-Perry, Early
Learning Advocate

William Larry Ziels,
CEO/Executive Director,
Whatcom Family YMCA

Zanna Kuehl