



December 15, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

On November 5, 2009, the students and families of Whatcom Middle School, as well as the greater Bellingham community, suffered a tremendous loss as a result of a catastrophic fire that destroyed this beloved school and historic icon.

One of our first tasks was to stabilize the structure to prevent any further damage and to ensure no one was injured by building collapse, falling debris, etc. Under these extreme circumstances, we had the ability to choose any contractor we wanted to help with this emergency stabilization work. We immediately picked up the telephone and called Dawson Construction. That action was based on our own personal experience of working with them on the Bellingham High School remodel in 1998-99 as well as their stellar reputation in the community as an exceptional contractor of both competence and character.

Over the next several months we worked with professionals to design a replacement approach for the school in hopes of reopening in the fall of 2012. Shortly after bidding that work and Dawson being selected as the lowest responsible bidder, Pete Dawson suggested that we could accelerate the construction schedule, resulting in opening the school in September 2011, a year ahead of schedule and only 7 months after being awarded the bid! I have to say I had my doubts but after discussing the plan with Pete and listening to why he thought that was possible, I shared his idea with the Superintendent. The idea sprang to life internally and our plan was to make a final decision and announce this to the community at a public gathering if we were totally convinced it could be done. Before making a formal recommendation to the Superintendent, I asked Pete one more time, "Are you sure?" His answer was simple, "I gave you my word we can do this. What is your next question?"

Over the next 7 months Dawson orchestrated one of the most remarkable construction feats I've witnessed over my 30+ year career. Their leadership, integrity, focus, team approach, and relentless pursuit of excellence were the reasons we opened Whatcom Middle School a full year ahead of schedule.

If you have the opportunity to partner with Dawson Construction on your project, you will not be disappointed; they are that good.

Ron Cowan
Assistant Superintendent

Superintendent
Greg Baker

Board of Directors
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Kenneth B. Gass
Camille Diaz Hackler
Steven H. Smith
Scott Stockburger