

PROTECT LUMMI ISLAND COMMUNITY



P.O. Box 266  
Lummi Island, WA 98262  
February 9, 2014

Dear Dr. Quinn,

We appear to be days away from hearing the outcome of the bond issue for the high schools, and we wish you well on your effort. At the same time there is an issue at the elementary level that we believe also requires school district attention. Many of us on Lummi Island are concerned for the safety of children riding the ferry to and from school with no adult supervision.

Protect Lummi Island Community (PLIC) is a community alliance of residents and property owners numbering about 550 in membership and focused on ferry issues. At the annual meeting on January 21, 2014, attendees agreed that ferry ridership without adult supervision is an increasingly risky situation. Per Whatcom County ordinance 2010-054, children under the age of 19 ride free, but children under the age of 12 are to be accompanied by an adult. Currently, four families from Gooseberry Point attending Beach School have signed hold harmless agreements that allow their children to ride the ferry without adult supervision. The school has encouraged islanders to report instances of dangerous behavior directly to the school, providing specific teachable moments.

PLIC understands that the district supports the school's effort to increase enrollment by offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Beach School and will be promoting the program, encouraging more transfer students. We applaud this effort, but request that children's safety be taken into consideration at the same time. There are no sidewalks between the ferry dock and the school. To date, most parents have chosen to not ride the ferry and supervise their children. The school indicates that both the \$7 single round-trip ticket for walk-ons and 25-trip multi-ride ticket for \$115 or \$4.60 per round trip are beyond the financial reach of many families.

PLIC has been asked to address the issue and yet it seems that this is primarily a parent and school district responsibility. PLIC has formed a subcommittee to help search for a successful resolution to this unique situation. We would appreciate a chance to meet with you and discuss how best to address these issues and ensure our children's safety. I can be reached at (360) 306-0049.

Sincerely,

Rhayma Blake, President

cc: Judy Thomas, Kathy Thurber