



May 17, 2011

Dear Ingraham staff, students and families:

When I was appointed Interim Superintendent, it was with the clear charge to strengthen opportunities for all students to learn. You asked me to bring high levels of transparency and accountability to this effort. The decision I made last Tuesday about the leadership of Ingraham High School Principal Martin Floe reflects my efforts to realize these commitments.

However, I also know that a good leader listens. After extensive conversations with Ingraham High School staff and the community, I have decided to renew Mr. Floe's contract for the 2011-12 school year, under the condition that he continue on a plan of improvement, which I, along with his Executive Director, will monitor throughout the year.

If Seattle Public Schools is truly to make gains for our students, we must hold all of our leaders to a high standard of performance. The work my team completed over many months leading up to my initial decision not to renew Mr. Floe's contract was, and is, solid. As I have explained, I am not able to share with you the details of Mr. Floe's performance evaluations or the work done with him to address performance concerns. I assure you that I made this decision after a fair and rigorous process.

Before a decision about terminating a principal's contract is made, the evaluation process includes identifying areas of concern through a mid-year evaluation, building a clear and detailed performance improvement plan with the principal, numerous one-on-one performance meetings, coaching sessions, time in the school by my team, bi-weekly reports with feedback on progress and very clear guidance to the principal about performance expectations. Only after this process had been completed and the principal had been offered support and opportunities to succeed would a decision be made to not renew a principal's contract. A principal must demonstrate "unsatisfactory" performance on the performance improvement plan in order to be recommended for non-renewal.

We know high performance means not just high test scores but schools where every student has access to high-quality teaching in every classroom. That kind of performance depends on principals who work with their teachers day in and day out to improve the quality of their teaching practice. We rely on our principals for other things too, but this work with teachers—what I and others describe as "instructional leadership"—must be their top priority if we are to achieve what we say we all want for all children in Seattle.

We should all have very high standards for our leaders, and our strong team of Executive Directors of Schools will continue to work with all principals to ensure that our students achieve at high levels. I am mindful of the community input and the turmoil this situation has created for the school. I am not backing away from our high standards for performance or the work that led to my initial decision. However, I listened to the community input and I decided it is appropriate to provide Mr. Floe with an additional opportunity to succeed.

I had a chance to meet one-on-one with Mr. Floe on Monday, and I believe we can all work together to see improvement at Ingraham. I also want to thank the Ingraham staff and community for your obvious commitment to the school. Given today's announcement, I am cancelling tonight's community meeting at Ingraham. My hope is that now we can move forward as a community to ensure all of our students receive the very best we can give them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Enfield".

Susan

*Susan Enfield, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent
Seattle Public Schools*