

[Douglassk](#) (Mon, 31 Jul at 2:33 PM)

to : pdc@pdc.wa.gov

Dear Mr. Ragins:

Regarding your request for a response to Ms. Foster's complaint, please note the following:

The District believes the mailer in question and public meetings regarding the upcoming maintenance and operations levy were a normal and regular part of the District's public information program authorized by RWC 28A.320.090 and therefore did not violate the requirements of RCW 42.17A.555.

Under RCW 28A.320.090, the District has the statutory authority to "to authorize the expenditure of funds for the purpose of preparing and distributing information to the general public to explain the instructional program, operation and maintenance of the schools of the district" so long as these activities do not have the purpose of influencing the outcome of a school district election. Under this express legal authority, the District also acted in a regular manner. It routinely holds public meetings in its facilities to explain various school district programs or issues on topics that are unrelated to levy elections. For example, in the 2016-17 school year, the district publicly promoted and hosted three "Round Table Discussions" open to all community. These were held at the high school. Two of the round tables were topic specific (extracurricular activities/budget) and the third was about the district in general. This spring the district promoted and held a presentation and asked for community input for a proposed ELA (English Language Arts) Curriculum Adoption. When levies have been run in prior years, the district also provided factual information and an opportunity for the public to ask questions. Under RCW 28A.320.090, topics related to the District's operations and maintenance are specifically authorized, and the purpose of the meetings in question were a regular, normal and legally authorized effort to provide the general public an opportunity to learn factual information and ask questions about the district's current operations and maintenance needs and intended use of the proposed levy.

In this situation, the district also considered the requirements of RCW 42.17A.555 and believed it complied with the statutory requirements that such information be restricted to an "objective and fair presentation of facts relevant to a ballot proposition" and did not engage in activities designed to promote or oppose the ballot measure. We also reviewed the PDC's "Guidelines for School Districts in Election Campaigns (Public Disclosure Law Re: Use of Public Facilities in Campaigns)." We believe the one mailer was appropriate under the Guidelines, General Principles, 8 a. and different meeting locations were held to accommodate members of the public residing in different communities within the district's large geographic area.

Based on the above, we do not believe the district acted in violation of applicable PDC requirements.

Thank you,

*Karen Douglass*

Karen Douglass

Superintendent

Stevenson-Carson School District