



Steve Chestnut, Ed.D. Superintendent
schestnut@mlsd.wednet.edu
920 West Ivy Ave.
Moses Lake, WA 98837

Barb Keilman, Exec. Assistant
bkeilman@mlsd.wednet.edu
(509) 766-2450
Fax (509) 766-2678

8/9/07

To Whom It May Concern:

The Moses Lake School District supports the idea of upgrading and expanding rail service in Moses Lake. However, the district does not support the proposed route. Our paramount concern is student and staff safety. It does not seem prudent to increase the frequency and length of trains on a route that passes right by Longview Elementary School including the playground and parking lot. The route crosses the primary pedestrian route to the school. The route also passes through existing residential neighborhoods and as Moses Lake grows, more residential growth is expected along that portion of the proposed route. We have just completed a project providing a safe walking route to Longview Elementary School and increasing rail traffic on that portion of your proposed route will undermine our efforts.

We are also concerned about the impact of increased rail traffic on student learning. More frequent and longer trains undoubtedly mean more noise. One railroad crossing is very near the school and another is within a few blocks. The noise of the whistle, locomotive and trains cars is likely going to disrupt learning during the school day.

Our preference would be a route that would bypass the Longview Elementary School area entirely. However, if the proposed route is chosen and eventually built, we would expect that the design would address those concerns that we are expressing, including student and staff safety and noise abatement. It seems only reasonable that the railroad construction address the issues that it is creating. At a minimum, we would expect some sort of pedestrian bridge to the school and some mitigation to address vehicular traffic and noise.

Sincerely,

Steve Chestnut, Ed.D.
Superintendent