

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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All in one day: Ken Root appointed, Sam Kim resigns from School Board



Sam Kim



Ken Root

Roughly four hours after helping select Ken Root to fill a vacancy on the School Board, 16-year director Sam Kim created a new opening on the panel. He announced his resignation immediately, citing his job in Las Vegas.

With Board meetings generally on Fridays or Saturdays, Kim rarely was absent, having flown home for the weekend. But he said “it has been gnawing at me” that he cannot attend week-day events in the schools and join fellow Board members in school tours. He asked, rhetorically, “Am I giving the children and the district a fair shake by not being present except at meetings?”

Kim, 51, was laid off as a director at the Vancouver Hewlett-Packard research and development operation in August 2009. But he soon landed a job as a top executive in information technology with Harrah’s Entertainment in Las Vegas, now Caesars Entertainment.

He said he “loves” being on the Battle Ground School Board and would not have stepped down were it not for his absence during the week. His wife, Robyn, lives here and this is Kim’s legal residence. He is president of the Greater Brush Prairie Neighborhood Association but in January resigned from Rotary because of time away from home. The Kims have twin 20-year-old sons who graduated from Prairie High School.

Kim said, “I have confidence I am leaving this Board and this school district in great hands.” He said the three Board members elected in November 2009 – Steve Pagel, John Idsinga and Monty Anderson -- “are positive and work well together. I am confident Ken Root is a good choice and will be a positive addition to the Board.”

Kim’s resignation announcement came early Saturday afternoon following a closed executive session to discuss personnel and real estate issues. His vote for Root in the public meeting earlier Saturday was one of the final acts of his Battle Ground School Board career, which began almost 16 years ago and which, he said, “has been a life-changing experience.”

Root was selected from among four applicants to replace Karen Lehman, who resigned March 26, also citing job-related issues. She was often out of town as an educational consultant. More about Root and that Board action is available at battlegroundps.org

Superintendent Shonny Bria and the other Board members each praised and thanked Kim for his dedication to the children of the district, its employees and the community as a whole in his long service as a School Board member.

Kim was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board in June 1995 and ran for a full term that fall. His fourth term ends late this year. The other four Board members will select a replacement to serve until December when the person elected in November takes office.

Board President Pagel said details will be forthcoming within a few days about the process and deadlines for replacing Kim. The post must be filled by a registered voter living in Director District 4, which is mostly – but not entirely – south of Northeast 199th Street and east of Northeast 72nd Avenue. A map showing director districts can be seen by going to battlegroundps.org, then clicking “School Board” at left and scrolling down to “Map of the five director districts.”

Application information also will be posted on the district Website and in legal advertisements in The Columbian and The Reflector. Paper copies will be available at the district office, 11104 N.E. 149th St. in Brush Prairie and the Battle Ground Community Library.

Kim said there have been “Stellar accomplishments” by the Board and the school district’s employees despite financial squeezes. “The fact we’ve been able to do so much with so little for years prepared us for the current economic climate,” Kim said.

But, he said, “This is a good time for me to leave. We have a really good Board and I’m just not as connected to the community as I had been.”

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