The Supreme Court

State of Washington

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Judge Jeffrey J. Jahns
Kitsap County District Court
614 Division St., MS 25 Rm 106
Port Orchard, WA 98366-4685

VIA E-MAIL ONLY

Re: Kitsap County/Administrative Office of the Courts Meeting

Dear Judge Jahns:

I am writing to follow-up on the meeting between Kitsap County and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) held on March 20, 2019 because I was told that the meeting did not go well. I would like to be sure you understand the availability of AOC resources and statewide priorities.

As required by JISCR 13, Kitsap County District Court requested approval by the Judicial Information System Committee (JISC) to "purchase and install a new automated Case Management System." On February 22, 2019, you presented to JISC and described that the challenges Kitsap County Information Services was having maintaining your current document management solution with limited resources led to your decision and request. After some discussion, you agreed to meet with AOC staff to more thoroughly discuss Kitsap County's specific business needs, the status and complexities of the data exchange with the Enterprise Data Repository (EDR), and the viability of other options.

Kitsap County District Court Administrator Clint Casebolt advised AOC by e-mail on February 25, 2019, the next business day following the JISC meeting, that the district court had "reserved March 20th at 1:30 for a Judges meeting that day and would like to invite the appropriate representatives to attend." The Courts of Limited Jurisdiction Case Management System (CLJ-CMS) project sponsors and staff from AOC, as well as Judge Kim Walden, the vice-chair of the CLJ-CMS Project Steering Committee, rearranged their calendars to participate on the date designated by Kitsap County.

AOC provided Kitsap County with a proposed agenda and a complete list of participants on March 8, 2019. Despite numerous e-mails between Mr. Casebolt and Vicky Cullinane from AOC about the meeting agenda and participants, at least one of which you were directly copied on, at no time was there any mention that anyone outside Kitsap County government would be involved in the discussion.

Nonetheless, when Judge Walden and AOC staff arrived for the meeting there were two representatives from a case management system vendor in the meeting room. Judge Walden wisely asked you to excuse the private vendors from the discussion to mitigate legal and ethical concerns for members of the statewide project steering committee and you agreed to do so. Next, to the surprise of Judge Walden and the AOC participants, King County District Court's Chief Administrative Officer Othniel Palomino soon joined the meeting.

I understand that you began the meeting by describing the challenges the Kitsap County District Court is facing with its local document management system using SharePoint and that your county information technology services lacks capacity to support that system because of competing local priorities. The court concluded that its needs will best be met by implementing and maintaining a comprehensive court case management system. Apparently, Kitsap County IT services believes it will be easier to support a new case management system rather than your SharePoint system or a replacement document management system.

Judge Walden shared her experiences from Tukwila Municipal Court, which has implemented a document management system and other features that she believes would satisfy the needs Kitsap County described without taking on a complete case management system replacement project at the local level. At one point during the discussion, you asked "Whose side are you on?" When Judge Walden responded that she was there as a member of the CLJ-CMS Project Steering Committee, you responded, "You sound like you're from AOC."

First, I object to your characterization of there being sides. AOC is not on a side. AOC provides IT services, under the direction and policy making of the JISC, which I chair.

Second, Judge Walden took time away from her court and other responsibilities to help discuss options for Kitsap County's problem. She did not feel she was treated with respect. It is unfortunate because she is deserving of respect and appreciation for her efforts to assist Kitsap County, as well as her work as co-chair of the CLJ-CMS steering committee, among other reasons.

I understand that AOC staff explained some of the risks associated with implementing a local case management system, including that the technical and business resources required to implement and successfully maintain the system will likely be exponentially greater than the challenges the county IT staff has with maintaining a document management system. Also, jurisdictions that choose to implement local systems are required to exchange statewide data with the EDR. The King County District Court has not yet gone live with their data exchange and at this time it is not anticipated the exchange will go live until summer 2019.

I understand that you and Judge Paja told AOC staff that Kitsap County had made its decision and it was AOC's job to support it; Kitsap County expects all the integration work by AOC to be completed according to Kitsap County's schedule; Kitsap County is expecting it will take one year to implement the new system; Kitsap County refuses to do any duplicate data entry; and stated that it will be AOC's "fault" if there is a gap in critical data for public safety or other purposes because Kitsap County has "given AOC plenty of notice." These expectations are both inaccurate and unrealistic.

It is important that you understand that implementing the required data exchange to the EDR is not solely an AOC activity. It requires significant work on both the business and technical side of

the local court. Each county's integration with the EDR requires work on both ends of the exchange. The new Kitsap County request is one of many projects that will have to be prioritized and scheduled based on available AOC resources.

I wish to emphasize the following:

JISC has directed AOC to focus on implementing and supporting statewide solutions. Its information technology and business resources are aligned with the priorities set by the statewide court community's representatives on JISC through the Information Technology Governance (ITG) process.

With JISC approval, courts may implement and maintain local case management solutions at their own expense.

Courts that choose to implement local case management solutions must either provide statewide data required in the approved JIS data standards through the EDR or by duplicate data entry into JIS systems. You have received the "Responsibilities and Considerations for Courts Implementing Local Case Management Systems" which the CLJ-CMS Project Steering Committee approved in February 2019 which describes in detail the business and technical risks that Kitsap County government assumes by choosing a local option case management system.

Exchanging data through the EDR requires both local and state resources.

If Kitsap County's request to implement a local case management system is approved by JISC, any implementation or support activities by AOC are still subject to resource availability and scheduling based on JISC priorities. AOC is not authorized to divert resources from other statewide priorities set by the JISC to meet Kitsap County's local timeline for implementing its local system. If state and local timelines do not align, Kitsap County must provide data required under the statewide JIS data standards by duplicate data entry into the statewide JIS systems until the data exchanges can be tested and fully operational or you can adjust your implementation schedule.

During the next biennium (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021), funding and resources for data exchanges will be limited and JISC has already determined its priorities.

Kitsap County District Court's Information Technology Governance (ITG) request will be on the agenda for the April 26, 2019 JISC meeting. You are welcome to attend.

Please contact me if you have questions.

Very truly yours,

Mary E. Fairhurst

MARY E. FAIRHURST
Chief Justice and Chair of JISC

cc: Dawn Marie Rubio, AOC, State Court Administrator
Vonnie Diseth, AOC, Director/CIO, Information Services Division
Judge Kimberly A. Walden
Judge Rebecca Robertson
Judge Marilyn Paja
Judge Claire A. Bradley
Judge Kevin P. Kelly
Judge J. Leach, JISC Vice Chair