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SPECIAL REPORT | SEISMIC NEGLECT

FAILING THE EARTHQUAKE EXAM



ELLEN M. BANNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Preschoolers crouch under tables during an earthquake drill at Hopkins Preschool Center in Aberdeen. The plan: Students stay under their desks until the shaking subsides, then walk about three-quarters of a mile up a hill before the tsunami hits.

Tens of thousands of students attend schools in tsunami and earthquake zones. But Washington state doesn't know which schools are safe because it doesn't require seismic evaluations or upgrades to vulnerable buildings.

By SANDI DOUGHTON AND DANIEL GILBERT
Seattle Times reporters

LONG BEACH, PACIFIC COUNTY — All that separates Long Beach Elementary from the Pacific Ocean is a half-mile expanse of flat, sandy ground dotted with restaurants, hotels and shops catering to tourists. When the next Cascadia megaquake strikes, the 250 students at the school will face a choice Washington officials would rather not think about.

They can try to outrun the inevitable tsunami and reach high ground two miles away. Or they can hunker down in a two-story building that wasn't designed to withstand an unstoppable wall of water. "It's a nightmare I hope I never have to face," said Principal Todd Carper. "Our current plan is a 'go upstairs and hope' situation."

When it comes to protecting Washington schoolchildren from earthquakes and tsunamis, hope often substitutes for dollars and steel, The Seattle Times has found.

No state faces a greater threat from the offshore fault called the Cascadia Subduction Zone than Washington. But none has done less to ensure that kids in school buildings will be safe when the disaster hits.

More than 31,000 students attend schools like Long Beach that are in or near tsunami danger zones, according to a Times analysis of state data. Across Washington, roughly 386,000 pupils — one in every three enrolled — live in earthquake-prone areas and attend schools built before seismic construction standards were adopted statewide.

Yet Washington doesn't mandate seismic evaluations or upgrades of school buildings. It doesn't keep an inventory of unsafe schools. Even earthquake and

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ELLEN M. BANNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Principal Todd Carper stands on the roof of Long Beach Elementary School, a place he can bring students in case of an earthquake and tsunami. Building a berm has been proposed so students and residents would have a safe place to go.

Seismic safety report card

Washington scores poorly compared to other West Coast governments, where retrofits of dangerous school buildings are a priority.

	Law or policy on school seismic upgrades	Structural surveys of all at-risk schools	Dedicated funding for school seismic retrofits
British Columbia	YES	YES	\$1.7 billion (2004-2016)
Oregon	YES	YES	\$210 million (2009-2016)
California	YES	YES	\$700 million (1972-2016)
Washington	NO	NO	NONE

Sources: Seattle Times reporting

FRANK MINA / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Farnborough Air Show

Will new 777 kill current version?

777-300ER SALES DROP WITH THE X COMING IN '20

Lease executive: 300ER no bargain; Boeing disagrees

By DOMINIC GATES
Seattle Times aerospace reporter

Boeing's 777-300ER, widely admired as the most efficient and best large twin-engine jet available today, isn't going to get a single new sale from the world's biggest owner of widebody jets.

Aengus Kelly, chief executive of giant aircraft-leasing company Aercap, owns 69 Boeing 777s and says, "It's a great airplane."

But he isn't interested in buying any more of those 365-seat jets from Boeing.

"You are going to lose money if you buy that airplane brand new," Kelly said. "You'd be better off buying one that's 10 or 12 years old."

Kelly's analysis has sobering near-term implications for Boeing's finances and its Everett workforce over the next three years.

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Britain's new prime minister vows to heal 'Brexit' splits

THERESA MAY

Names high-profile EU opponent foreign secretary

By STEPHEN CASTLE AND SEWELL CHAN
The New York Times

LONDON — After a startlingly swift transfer of power, Theresa May became Britain's prime minister Wednesday, promising to honor last month's referendum to leave the European Union (EU) but also to heal divisions that the vote exposed and to preside over an economy that benefits everyone, not just the "privileged few."

In a surprise appointment, May named Boris Johnson, the former London mayor who became a fiery advocate of the "Brexit" campaign only to abruptly pull out of the race to become the next prime minister, as foreign secretary. That gave the key foreign-policy role to perhaps

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