

Saint Helens School District



COMMUNITY BUDGET GUIDE

Building Strong Schools for a Strong Community

Mark A. Davalos, Superintendent

Jessica Pickett, Business Manager

2015-2016

St. Helens School District

April 21, 2015

A Message from the Superintendent

The proposed St. Helens School District 2015-2016 operating budget was developed against the background of continued, significant funding challenges for public schools in Oregon and across the nation. We have struggled through more than a decade of reduced revenues and ever-increasing costs as we attempt to provide



an appropriate level of educational service for our children. The proposal reflects a gap of \$2.18 million dollars between expenses and anticipated funding. The projected gap could change depending on the final outcome of the legislative assembly. As of today our total estimated budget allocation is \$37,859,356 of which \$300,000 is allocated to contingencies and approximately \$2.25 million is set aside in the ending fund balance.

The proposed budget will sustain our District's annual goals, strategic plan, mission and vision for our schools. Our strategic plan has run its' planned five-year course and a new plan will be developed with guidance from the new Superintendent and the School Board. Our focus has always been to provide the best educational opportunities for students, to invest in our facilities as centers of learning and safe environments for all, and to promote the greater use of newer technologies that keep students and staff competitive across the nation.

We must care for the immediate needs of our current students. Their time is now and they deserve every opportunity. This proposal will maintain a focus on the communicated Board budget priorities and the District's commitment to a strong organizational approach that maximizes the dollars we do have. We strive to fulfill the educational hopes and aspirations of the St. Helens community to ensure that their students maximize their potential and prepare themselves well as citizens of this nation and capable learners ready for every challenge and opportunity their futures bring.

The 2015-2016 plans will continue to provide:

- A full calendar of 175 instructional days, when it has been stated how Oregon's students have one of the shortest instructional years in the country
- The maintenance of current class sizes, when statistics show Oregon's class sizes as some of the highest in the nation
- Instructional assistants in the primary grades that keep our focus on equitable academic development for all students
- Career and technical offerings at the high school needed to provide college and career readiness for our graduates
- Arts programs, in grades K-12, when most districts our size provide little or none
- A safe and high-quality transportation service
- An excellent nutritional breakfast and lunch program
- State-recognized excellent programs for special needs students
- Professional Learning time for our teachers, needed to plan and implement numerous initiatives and changes
- Our valuing of staff by maintaining a 3% salary raise and a 5% insurance cap increase across the employee groups
- The continuation of Middle and High School sports programs
- Increased supply allocation, per student, to schools for the first time in three years

The deficit, once again, presents a significant challenge to us as the stewards of our public dollars. After years of frozen salaries and stalled insurance support increases, all employee groups negotiated a successful return of lost steps and dollars the past years of shortfalls eliminated. We are pleased with those results but the actions created a new and higher expense base to operate from when matched against reduced per student allocations and declining enrollment losses. The state will fund full day Kindergarten but not by enough to offset the cost increases and other challenges the new budget presents. Not offering full day Kindergarten is not an option as we would lose allocated funding and many families would seek full day opportunities in surrounding districts.

A loss in enrollment is usually balanced by reductions in staff. The reductions of the past had the District and Board opposed to further staffing cuts so programs and days became additional targets when reductions were needed. The last two years of stable and almost roll-forward wage and benefit budgeting did not see adjustments made for the continued loss in student enrollment and those numbers have come due. We have dug deep into our budget and honored the priorities to get to this recommendation. As we have all experienced for so many years, it hasn't been a positive experience. Regretfully, another expected investment that offered so many positive gains for our district will not be afforded by this budget. The Columbia City School, announced to open as an additional K-6 school, will be delayed for one or two years depending on further developments and priorities.

Another major concern to address in the coming budgets is our lack of investment in curricular materials, modern technology, facilities and instructional improvement. We have been so focused on days of instruction, salaries and class sizes that we have neglected the tools and improvements our classrooms and students deserve. I hope to see these as priorities in future budgets.

Some recent investments, by the District, will not be renewed in this recommendation. Attendance supports will be removed from schools, there will be no summer school opportunities for most students, outdoor school will not be funded and temporary school-based supports have all been removed.

In summation, the instructional calendar will be full. Class sizes will stay relatively the same as this year and our valued programs will still be there in September. The District office will hold off from hiring a Curriculum Director-level position and there will be small teacher and classified cuts linked to our accumulated loss in student numbers. Total reductions in payroll amount to approximately \$560, 000 or 2.3%. Professional development services dollars, afforded through the Northwest Regional Educational Service District flow-through allocations, will be re-directed as a mechanism to balance the budget. That will reduce dollars available for training and substitutes for professional development. The major contributor to the balanced budget will come from a reduction in the fund balance. We will spend down \$1.3 million of those carry-forward funds so that this budget will balance. Tight expense control and planned enrollment/staffing management practices will be passed along to the second year of the biennial budget process and result in a greater opportunity for a balanced rollover without reductions. The reserve will be smaller than this year and next year will see it reduced even more.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark A. Davalos".

Mark A. Davalos

St. Helens Superintendent

How the 2015-17 State School Fund Levels impact Oregon School Districts?

\$7.255 Billion

Flat Funding Dilemma

With a State School Fund of \$7.255 billion, Oregon schools will be faced with a difficult dilemma – whether to implement full-day kindergarten or maintain current programs and class sizes for students in grades 1-12. At this funding level – which is estimated to provide just \$1.34 more per student, or essentially flat funding, in the first year of the biennium – most districts will not be able to do both.

But the choice won't be a hard one. Educationally, districts know that full-day kindergarten provides a critical foundation for student success. So, given Oregon's school funding distribution system, most will opt to receive, rather than do without, the funding that accompanies full-day kindergarten – and then do the best they can with fewer resources to serve students in grades 1-12.

No matter what choice they make about implementing full-day kindergarten, though, at this funding level most districts would be forced to make some budget cuts, including:

- Teacher and staff layoffs
- Even higher class sizes
- Fewer school days
- Reduction of programs and services

Bottom line, this funding level falls nearly \$300 million short of the amount schools need to maintain current programs **and** add full-day kindergarten.









Revenue Estimates are Down.

The present state estimates include additional funding for full day kindergarten. Unfortunately, other state adjustments and inadequate funding amounts result in an approximately \$80 decrease in per student allocations after the Kindergarten distribution. Not offering full day Kindergarten would lower the allocation even more. We will not sacrifice full day kindergarten as a means to adjust the budget or challenge the state funding process. Our young students need this opportunity.


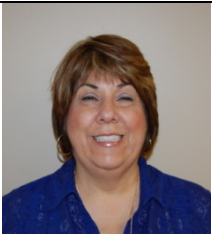


We have lost somewhere between 40-80 students almost every year for a decade or more. That loss reduces funding and the response to decreased funding should be budget cuts to staff, school days or programs. The years of cuts have been shocking with higher class sizes, shorter school years and loss of important and valued programs. Our efforts have spread us thin and we are barely holding on to programs that other districts stopped funding years ago. Our staff had their salaries frozen for years and were finally corrected this year and are finally earning back losses incurred during this struggle. Once again, just when it appeared the national and state crisis was over, our funding falls short of what is needed to just maintain our current expenses. We must make reductions to balance the budget and make recommendations that keep us moving forward for the next two years.

*Excerpt from COSA's partnership with school districts campaign for better school budgets, Promise, *Oregon*.

ST. HELENS SCHOOLS BY THE NUMBERS

SCHOOL	PRINCIPAL/LEAD	14-15 FUNDING ALLOCATION	15-16 FUNDING ALLOCATION
Lewis & Clark K-6 		Principal – Cathy Carson Enrollment - 725 Administrators – 2.0 FTE Counselors – 1.0 FTE Teachers ₁ 29.0 FTE Classroom Ratio: 25 Support Staff ₂ – 12.45 FTE	Principal – Cathy Carson Enrollment - 711 Administrators – 2.0 FTE Counselors – 1.0 FTE Teachers 31.0 FTE Classroom Ratio: 23 Support Staff – 11.95 FTE
McBride 		Principal – Lisa Rawlings Enrollment - 657 Administrators –2.0 FTE Counselors – 1.0 FTE Teachers– 26.0 FTE Classroom Ratio: 25 Support Staff – 11.47 FTE	Principal – Lisa Rawlings Enrollment - 647 Administrators –2.0 FTE Counselors – 1.0 FTE Teachers– 28.0 FTE Classroom Ratio: 23 Support Staff – 11.06 FTE
St. Helens Middle School 		Principal – Carol Dowsett Enrollment - 484 Administrators – 1.0 FTE TOSA/Dean – 1.0 FTE Counselors – 2.0 FTE Teacher– 18.87 FTE Classroom Ratio: 29.9 Support Staff – 9.32 FTE	Principal – Carol Dowsett Enrollment - 425 Administrators – 1.0 FTE TOSA/Dean –FTE → Counselors –FTE → Teacher– 17.87 FTE Classroom Ratio: 28 Support Staff – 8.78 FTE
St. Helens High School 		Principal – BG Aguirre Enrollment – 944 Administrators – 3.0 FTE Counselors -3 FTE Teachers– 36.32 FTE Classroom Ratio: 30.3 Support Staff – 16.06 FTE	Principal – BG Aguirre Enrollment – 948 Administrators – 3.0 FTE Counselors -3 FTE Teachers– 36 FTE Classroom Ratio: 30.7 Support Staff – 14.93 FTE

2.0 FTE is assigned and the Principal will choose which positions to keep






<p>CCEC</p> 		<p>Head Teacher – Coleen Grogan Enrollment – 88 Teachers – 3.0 FTE Support Staff – 2.72 FTE</p>	<p>Head Teacher – Coleen Grogan Enrollment – 88 Teachers – 3.0 FTE Support Staff – 2.72 FTE</p>
<p>CRYC (SHHS Program)</p> 		<p>Head Teacher- Terri Lewis Enrollment – 17 Teachers – 1.0 FTE Support Staff – 1.0 FTE</p>	<p>Head Teacher- Terri Lewis Enrollment – 17 Teachers – 1.0 FTE Support Staff – 1.0 FTE</p>

*Enrollment numbers, for regular classroom teacher allocations, neither use the students enrolled in special programs nor those teachers assigned to teach them in setting the allocation and/or ratios for the classroom. Elective offerings in the elementary schools are highly desired but not required to meet contractual language for prep time. Secondary staffing formulas include elective staffing in the calculations since practice requires each secondary teacher a daily prep equal to a period of teaching. The number of electives offered, at the Elementary schools, will raise or lower class sizes.

¹Special programs & special education general fund FTE, not included.

²Support staff= classified, custodial and food service

ST. HELENS SCHOOLS BOARD

CHAIR	VICE CHAIR	MEMBER	MEMBER	MEMBER
Gordon Jarman Term expires- 6/2017	William Amos Term expires- 6/2015	Ray Biggs Term expires- 6/2015	Kellie Smith Term expires- 6/2017	Jeff Howell Term expires- 6/2017
				

BUDGET COMMITTEE 2015-2016

Oregon school budget regulations require a budget committee made up of the school board members and an equal number of district community members. The Board makes up the first five and the additional five are:

Kelly Niles	Term expires on 6/30/15
Amanda Normine	Term expires on 6/30/15
Mike Herron	Term expires on 6/30/17
Traci Brumbles	Term expires on 6/30/18
Trinity Monahan	Term expires on 6/30/18

The Budget Committee select the annual chair at the first meeting and the chair presides over the Budget Committee hearings and agenda. The task of the Budget committee is to review, recommend possible changes and approve for adoption by the Board.