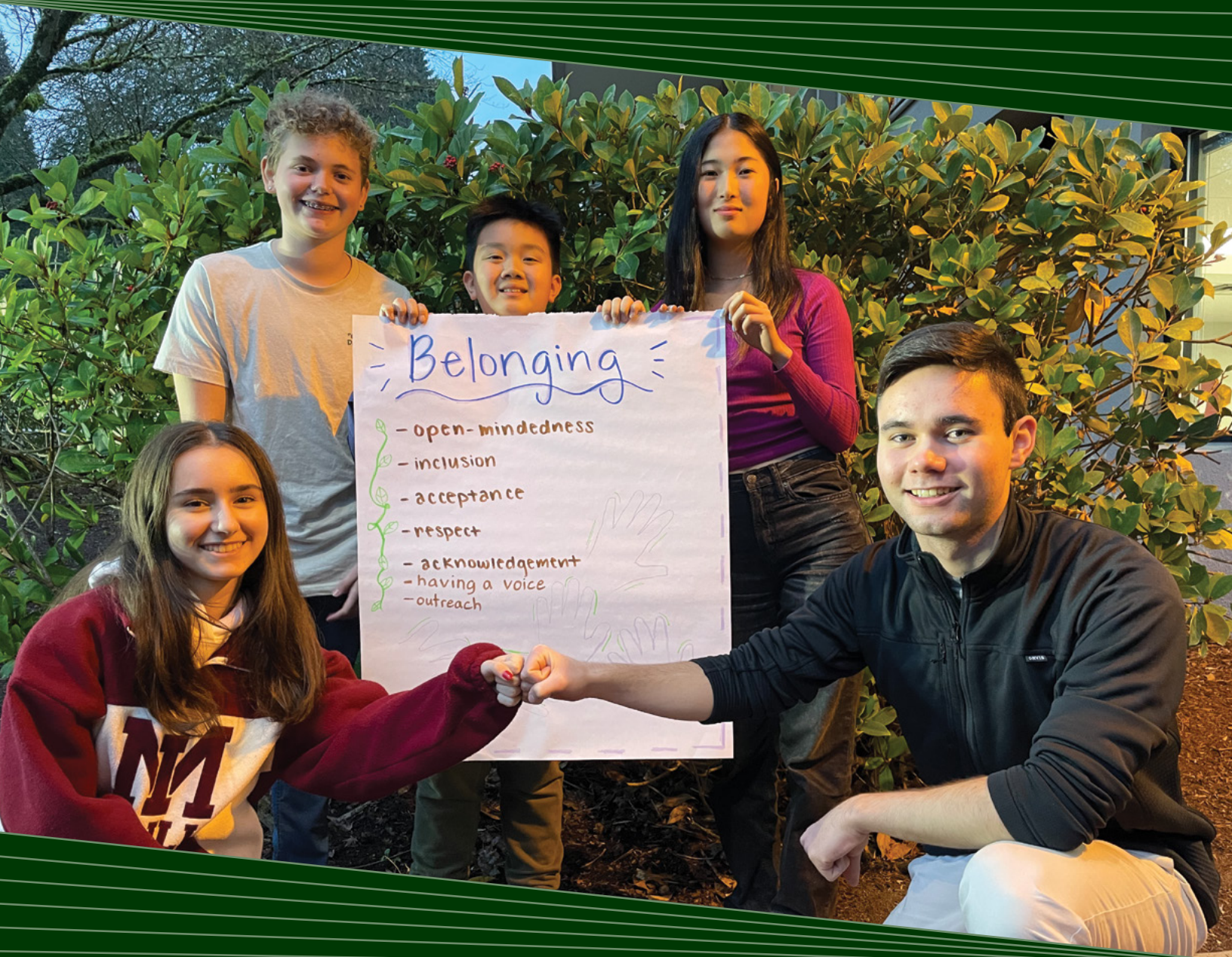




# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Superintendent Student Advisory  
focuses on

# Belonging



**Belonging**

- open-mindedness
- inclusion
- acceptance
- respect
- acknowledgement
- having a voice
- outreach

Superintendent Message • Meet the Board • Finance Update • Exceptional Special Services

# Message from Superintendent Dr. Fred Rundle



Dear Mercer Island Community,

A mentor impressed upon me when first starting out as a 22-year-old teacher the importance of reflective progress. His advice to me, look back periodically throughout a year and ask yourself two questions, “Are you in a better position today than you were a year ago, and what have you done in the past year to answer this question?” My first year as superintendent posed many challenges, but I am extremely proud of the accomplishments of our students, staff, and community. I can unequivocally state the Mercer Island School District is not only in a better position this year than a year ago, but poised for a bright future in 2024 and beyond.

Following four years of deficit spending, largely due to COVID recovery, the district faced two economic obstacles last year. First, the fund balance dropped to \$1.75 million (one month of operating costs is roughly \$5 million), and second, the district owed \$2 million to a fund balance loan from 2021–2022. In essence, the district started out last school year needing to overcome a \$250K deficit. I am proud to report to our community that we not only repaid the loan, but grew the fund balance to \$2.6 million dollars. To reach our goal of over \$7.5 million, we will need to maintain strategic spending practices, prioritize budgets, strengthen the partnership with the Mercer Island Education Association, maintain and build support from the community, and accurately predict enrollment.

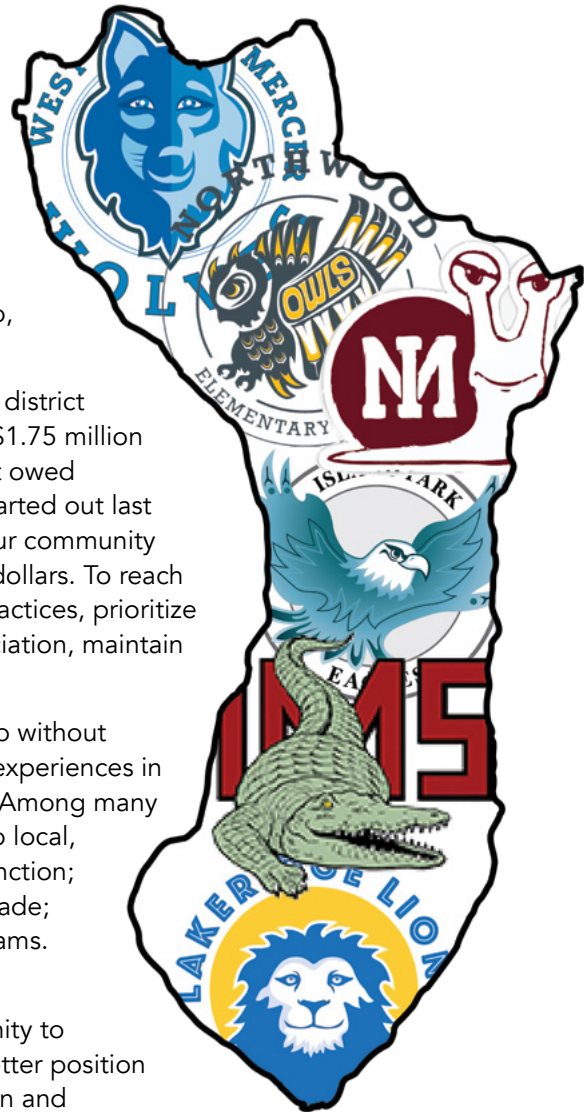
Together, we stabilized our financial position, but most importantly we did so without eliminating programs and services. Our staff provided exceptional learning experiences in and out of the classroom, and our students seized the opportunity to shine. Among many other accomplishments, we started a 5th grade honor choir; sent students to local, state, national, and global competitions where they received awards of distinction; represented MISD on the national stage of the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade; and graduated and launched students into colleges and careers of their dreams.

I am honored and feel a deep sense of gratitude to serve our students, staff, and community as the superintendent. The coming year is another opportunity to accelerate, improve, and shine. A year from now, MISD will be in an even better position than we are today because of the people and their commitment to education and our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Fred Rundle". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Fred Rundle  
Superintendent



Graphic: Kristina Getty  
MIHS Instructional Tech Coach

# Meet Your MISD School Board

Mercer Island School District Board of Directors are elected to four-year terms. Their responsibilities include goal-setting; employing the superintendent; setting district policy; adopting an operating budget; placing levies and bonds before voters; and ratifying contracts. They read every email and listen to every speaker who provides public input at board meetings. They encourage community members to visit [www.mercerislandschools.org/board](http://www.mercerislandschools.org/board) to view meeting schedules, agendas, presentations, policies, and proposals.



**Cristina Martinez**  
2024-2028  
Position 1



**Dan Glowitz**  
2022-2026  
Position 2



**Maggie Tai Tucker**  
2024-2028  
Position 3



**Deborah Lurie**  
2022-2026  
Position 4



**Dr. Fred Rundle**  
**Superintendent**  
Secretary of the  
School Board

**Jody Lee**  
2024-2028  
Position 5

**Why is serving on the Board important to you, and what do you want the community to know?**

Serving on the Board is essential to me as it aligns with my profound belief in the transformative power of quality education for shaping our community's future. This role provides an opportunity to translate my commitment into dedicated action, ensuring that every child receives an outstanding education with the necessary support to thrive. Recognizing the pivotal role of effective leadership in navigating the complexities of overseeing a school district, my overall goal is to contribute to the betterment of our community by leaving a legacy of positive change.

**–Cristina Martinez**  
Position 1

We live in a unique and special place—a closely-knit community in the middle of a lake surrounded by an inspiring landscape and innovation. And, at the center of our community, are our public schools, which help forge our collective identity and that of each student. It is an honor and privilege to serve on the Mercer Island school board. Together, I believe that we can become a beacon that reflects who we are and shows what's possible in public education.

**–Dan Glowitz**  
Position 2

When my older kids were in elementary school, I volunteered as a classroom parent or library helper. Serving on the Board allows me to have a greater impact across the district. An analogy I like is that the Superintendent is flying the plane but the school board members, together, are air traffic control. I see my role as helping to direct the district's "flight path" to an educational model that meets the needs of our children today as they prepare for life in the modern world—without losing sight of the basics.

**–Maggie Tai Tucker**  
Position 3

Serving on the school board is crucial to me because it's a direct way to contribute to shaping our children's education and future. I'm committed to fostering an inclusive, innovative, and supportive learning environment where every student can thrive. To the community, I want to convey my dedication to transparency, collaboration, and ensuring that our schools meet the evolving needs of our diverse student body. Together, we can empower our youth and lay the groundwork for a brighter tomorrow.

**–Deborah Lurie**  
Position 4

Serving on the Board is a capstone to my years of volunteer service in our schools and for our students. Since moving to the island, I have been particularly involved in student mental health (serving on the board of MIYFS), arts advocacy, and in positions with the PTSA and other organizations that strengthen a culture of community and belonging. My goal is to represent parents and families, support our district in creating an environment where every student receives the education that best serves them, and to contribute in a professional and collaborative way.

**–Jody Lee**  
Position 5

# SUPERINTENDENT STUDENT ADVISORY

## Building a Sense of Belonging through Student Voice

In his first year as Superintendent, Dr. Rundle introduced and launched a district-wide focus on “The 4Bs”—Belonging, Belief, Barriers, and Broadcast (Dr. Tammy Campbell, *The Scholar First*.) Each of these tenants aligns with the District’s commitment to facilitating the very best opportunities for students to learn, creating environments for our staff to innovate, and providing gathering spaces for the community to connect. During the 2023-2024 year, the District is prioritizing Belonging.

The Superintendent’s Student Advisory (SSA) is a representative student body of fifth through twelfth graders, a district administrator and the superintendent. The team meets monthly to share points of pride and areas of concern to leverage change in our schools.



This year the SSA is focusing on belonging projects, which are being led by senior Asha Woerner and junior Ava Zhang, both Student Representatives to the School Board and co-facilitators of the SSA with Superintendent Rundle.

At a recent SSA meeting the group discussed what belonging means to them individually as well as in both large and small group settings. Woerner reminded students, “Just remember, we are identifying what it means to belong at your school. In future meetings we’ll talk a little more about the challenges you come up against and the barriers you face.”

Prior to the group discussions, Superintendent Rundle provided a foundational understanding, “An important part of belonging is making sure that everyone can show up as their whole authentic self wherever they are in our school district.”

“We have a couple of ideas of what belonging looks like,” said eighth grader Ashley Schalla at the November meeting. “We were just basically talking about being in a room where people know who they are and they are known and recognized.”

Junior Jordan Balousek highlighted what belonging looked like at the high school. “We think of belonging as being surrounded by a positive environment, accepted for our identity, engaged in relationships built on trust, connected, together, included, and respected.”

When students do not feel they belong, they often have a sense of detachment with their learning environment and can disengage with their education, leading students to underperform or act out in ways that include but are not limited to dropping out, expressing frustration through violence, developing thoughts of self-harm, and succumbing to anxiety and depression.

Woerner asked students to share what barriers to belonging they were seeing in their schools.

“On the popularity thing, people know that they are being mean, but they really want to be cool and they don’t care about belonging,” said Island Park fifth grader Sophie Han.

“Popularity is a weird thing. Some of the most popular people in the world are some of the loneliest people in the world,” Rundle told the SSA. “While seeking popularity is trying to belong, it actually works against it. We have to be thinking about that person who is chasing popularity. How do we redirect them so that they feel like it is about belonging and not about just being popular?”

In the coming months, the collective effort of SSA will be dedicated to formulating actionable initiatives at both the school and district levels, with the aim of enhancing a sense of belonging. The goal is that by June, each student in SSA can say that they made a positive impact on the overall sense of belonging for MISD students.



# LONG RANGE FACILITY PLANNING

## Maintaining, Preserving, and Investing in our Schools

Beginning in April 2023, a representative group of 30+ community members came together to update the District's **Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP)**. The work by this Committee included a review of:

- The 2019-20 LRFP
- Current demographic information
- Facility conditions
- Building utilization
- Alignment to Values, Vision, and Mission

At a high level, the purpose of the Long Range Facility Plan is to provide a comprehensive summary of facility-related needs:

- Study district facilities' ability to accommodate educational programs
- Track district's capacity with respect to projected enrollment
- Document the physical condition of district's facilities as part of an asset analysis

A LRFP also serves as a tool for strategic management of district facilities over time by:

- Exploring modernizations, additions, replacements, and new construction
- Targeting opportunities for more efficient use of sites and facilities
- Creating a prioritized plan that reflects community values and is in alignment with community support.

Over the course of a series of six meetings, the Committee developed recommendations for future improvements to our schools.

These recommendations were shared with the larger Mercer Island community at multiple community engagement sessions in October to solicit additional input and to help further shape the recommendations. The recommendations were also shared with the School Board, who voted at the November 9 Board Meeting to remove consolidation of an elementary school from the LRFP process.

The Committee met for a seventh and final time on November 13. Superintendent Rundle and district staff will return to the Board in January 2024 to present an updated Long Range Facilities Plan that reflects the input received from both the committee and community.

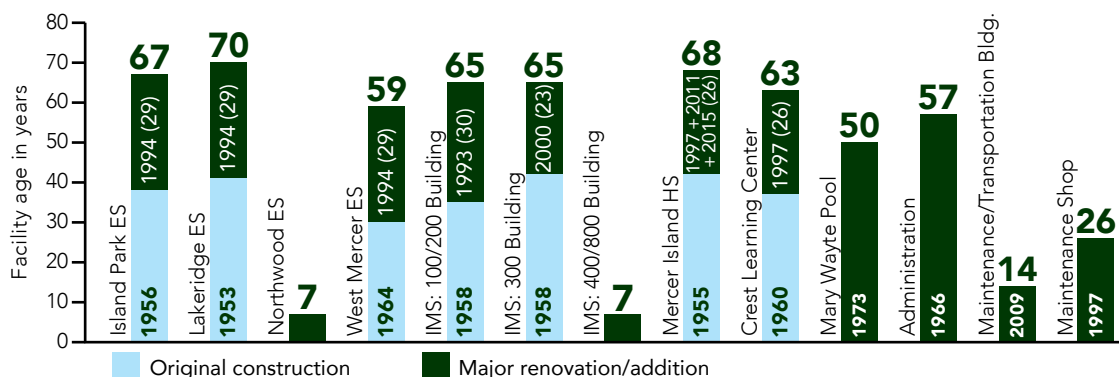
This plan will provide us direction to improve facilities as we plan for the future. We are committed to facilities that:

- Are safe, supportive, and healthy
- Promote rigorous and challenging learning
- Serve as points of pride for the community
- Attract and retain staff and families
- Represent responsible stewardship of public funds
- Provide spaces for convening, playing and belonging
- Align with our values and facilitate achieving our vision and mission

In 2014, our community passed a bond that allowed us to build Northwood elementary, undertake a partial replacement of Islander Middle School with a new building housing the Commons, library, gyms, administration offices, and a new music wing, and added additional classrooms at the high school.

Three of our elementary schools, Island Park, Lakeridge and West Mercer are at least 59 years old and none have had a major renovation in the last 29 years. Two of the buildings at Islander Middle School are both 65 years old with their last major renovations coming 23 and 30 years ago respectively. The high school will also need upgrades as we move forward. We know as our buildings and facilities age we will need to make improvements to them, which could include putting a bond before our community. We know we will be facilitating conversations in our community about how to best make these improvements in the coming years. We have important decisions to make as a community and we look forward to making them with you.

### AGE OF MISD FACILITIES



State assessment scoring indicates older middle school buildings (100, 200, 300) are in the worst condition, followed by Island Park, Lakeridge, and West Mercer.

The high school building is in good condition and Crest is in fair condition.

All older facilities have a significant list of maintenance needs. Although major remodels were completed at all older schools, this work is close to 30 years old and did not replace all building systems.

# Improved Financial Position of MISD

The Mercer Island School District is committed to transparent stewardship of the community resources provided to operate the District and serve our students. MISD is proud to report to island taxpayers the significant progress made to improve the current and future financial position of the District.

The District's 2022-23 Year-End Fiscal Report highlights two significant benchmarks: repayment of an interfund loan and growing the General Fund balance for the first time since 2018-2019.

## Interfund Loan Repayment

In the Spring of 2022, the District made an interfund loan transfer from the Capital Projects Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$2 million. This loan from "ourselves" was taken in April of 2022 to cover salaries, benefits and operating costs through the end of the fiscal year in August 2022. Legally, an interfund loan must be paid back with interest within a year. As of April 30th, 2023, the interfund loan (with interest) totaling \$2,027,215.03 was paid in full.

## Fund Balance Growth

### General Fund Balance

The General Fund accounts for the day-to-day operations of the District. Revenue for the General Fund comes from three primary sources: local levies, state taxes, and federal and state grants. In 2022-2023, the District grew the General Fund Balance by 1.3%. However, when accounting for the \$2 million dollar repayment noted above, the District had a 4% recovery. This was the first time expenditures did not exceed revenues in four years.

### Capital Projects Fund Balance

This fund had a **-28.64%** decrease due to the completion of major projects to improve facilities.

### Debt Service Fund Balance

This fund had a **+0.41%** increase, which was due to continued payments on the bond as determined by the amortization schedule.

### Associated Student Body Fund (ASB) Balance

This fund had a **+6.52%** increase due to needed spending on trips, sports, travel, and equipment/events. Much of this will be spent in the current 2023-2024 year.

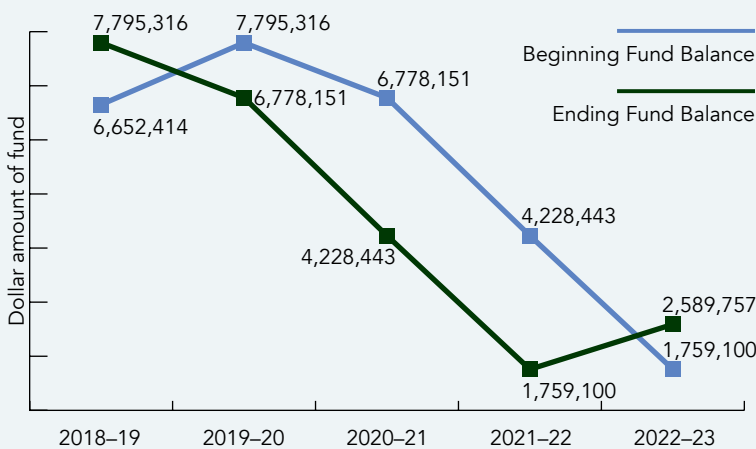
### Transportation Fund Balance

The fund has a **-11.55%** decrease due to the purchase of two electric buses.

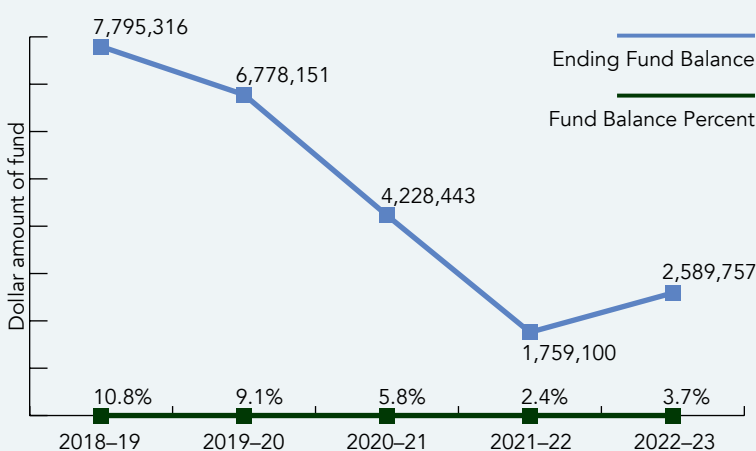
Per the District's Operational Expectation # 7 (OE-7), it is the District's goal to maintain annual budget reserves of at least 8%, with a target of 10%, for the prior fiscal year ended as of August 31st, that are adequate to be consistent with best financial practices for public school districts.

Our continuing financial improvement from paying back the interfund loan and our rising fund balance will see us meet OE-7 sooner rather than later, which is good news for our students, staff, and community.

## Historical Fund Balance Beginning vs. Ending



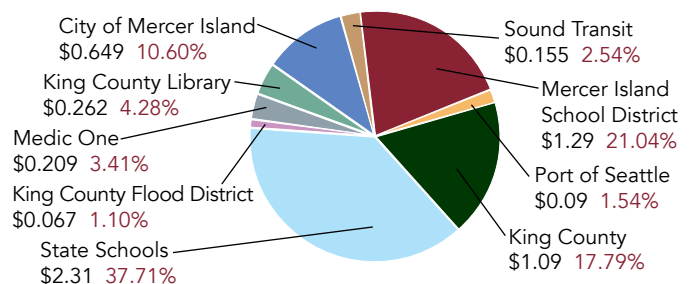
## Historical Fund Balance Percent



## 2023 Property Tax Information

If your home's assessed valuation is \$1 million dollars you would pay \$6.12 for every \$1,000 of the overall value which is \$6,120. This pie chart breaks down the \$6.12 tax rate and identifies what your property tax dollars fund.

### 2023 Property Taxes • Total Rate = \$6.12



# SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIAL SERVICES

## Serving All Students

In November, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) notified the Mercer Island School District (MISD) that they were in compliance with all annual legal requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), marking the fifth consecutive year MISD was recognized in full compliance and without any corrective action. While this is something to be proud of and celebrate, this is not the goal.

“Compliance is the floor which we stand on,” said Dr. Sue Ann Bube, MISD Special Services Director. “Compliance is not what we strive to do. We strive to be better than compliant. We expect more than the bare minimum from our departments and services.”

This is evident from the district’s Preschool program to their Pathways program. Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE Pre-School) is currently collaborating with six daycares and community preschools to provide students with more opportunities to learn alongside peers.

The MISD Pathways program supports students who are 18-21 years of age and have completed high school credit requirements but continue to need instruction and guidance in vocational training, life skills, recreation and leisure, and mobility. When the new Pathways building was erected, which opened in December of 2021, the district went beyond bare compliance to ensure all of the students could access and benefit from the facility.

The 2021-22 graduate survey showed 94% of MIHS graduates with disabilities attended college and 5% secured employment (85% response rate to the survey), which is one of the highest rates of employment and college enrollment and attendance success in Washington.

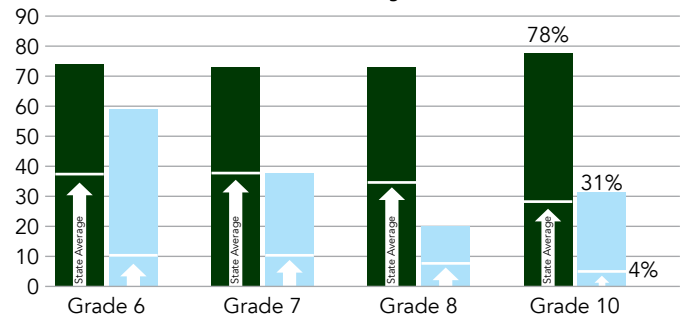
The fact MIHS graduates have the highest rate in Washington is due to the exceptional work of all the special services staff, collaboration with fantastic parents, and the dedication to doing more than the minimum.

MISD is working hard on inclusionary practices, and for students with disabilities, there has been a 15% increase in

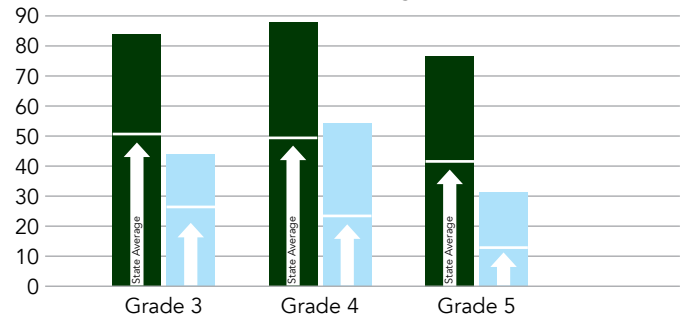
the number of students accessing the general education curriculum for more than 80% of the school day. This increased access to the general education curriculum shows up in Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) data. “What’s important with our SBAC data is that special services students are outperforming four grade levels of general education students at the state level, showing students have raised the bar,” said Bube.

The progress made over the past several years is an amalgamation of factors such as steadfast leadership by Dr. Bube and Assistant Director Hannah Bolivar, a dedicated Special Services staff working tirelessly for students, general education staff who believe in the potential of all learners, and family partners who hold high expectations for their own children.

**2022-23 SBAC MATH Secondary**



**2022-23 SBAC MATH Elementary**



■ MISD Overall ■ MISD SPED

## Nondiscrimination Notification

The Mercer Island School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, marital status, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

**Contact these people regarding inquiries about the nondiscrimination policies**

**Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Coordinator:**  
Erin Battersby, Executive Director 206-230-6227  
erin.battersby@mercerislandschools.org

**Title IX Compliance Coordinator:**  
Erin Battersby, Executive Director 206-230-6227  
erin.battersby@mercerislandschools.org

**Section 504 & ADA Coordinator:**  
Nova Williams, Learning Services Director  
206-236-4510  
nova.williams@mercerislandschools.org

**Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator:**  
Erin Battersby, Executive Director 206-230-6227  
erin.battersby@mercerislandschools.org



MERCER ISLAND  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400  
2023 Annual Report

4160 86th Ave. SE  
Mercer Island, WA 98040

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## Who We Are

MISD comprises six exceptional schools spread around Mercer Island who are perennially recognized as among the best in the state. The Island, home to 25,000 residents, is surrounded by beautiful Lake Washington and connected to Seattle and Bellevue by the I-90 bridges. Our unique community has a suburban, small town feel that is a school district, city, and island all in one!

### Enrollment (October 2023)

Districtwide.....	3,932
Island Park.....	362
Lakeridge.....	405
Northwood.....	361
West Mercer.....	415
Islander Middle School.....	937
Mercer Island High School & Crest Learning Center.....	1,452

### Student Ethnicity

American Indian/Alaska Native...	0.1%
Asian.....	27.4%
Black/African American.....	1.1%
Hispanic/Latino.....	7.3%
Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander.....	0.1%
Two or more races.....	14.4%
White.....	49.5%

### Student Services

Free/reduced price meals.....	3.0%
Students with Disabilities.....	10.8%
Multi-Language Learners.....	3.9%

## Students Enrolled in Additional Programs and Services

Running Start.....	59
MI Online.....	107
Pathways.....	10
Early Childhood Education.....	27

## Advanced Placement Historical Information

<b>2012</b> • 469
<b>2013</b> • 644 (+37%)
<b>2014</b> • 696 (+8%)
<b>2015</b> • 822 (+18%)
<b>2016</b> • 761 (-7%)
<b>2017</b> • 852 (+12%)
<b>2018</b> • 1,009 (+18%)
<b>2019</b> • 1,178 (+17%)
(+151% over 7 years or 21.5% per year between 2012-19)
<b>2020*</b> • 1,079 (-8%)
<b>2021*</b> • 911 exams taken (-15%)
<b>2022</b> • 1,031 (+13%)
<b>2023</b> • 1,117 (+8% and +137% since 2012, including the pandemic)
<b>2024</b> • 1,391 exams ordered by 550 students as of October 2023. Registration for exams open through March of 2024.

\*Data skewed due to COVID-19 Pandemic



## Class of 2023

Class of 2023 High School Graduates.....	373
Attending in-state colleges.....	31.8%
Attending out-of-state colleges.....	68.2%
Attending two-year colleges.....	1.5%
Pursuing other education opportunities.....	7.5%
Number of college/universities Class of 2023 is attending.....	131
Percentage attending four-year colleges/universities....	91%

## National Merit Scholars

National Merit Semifinalists.....	7
National Merit Commended Scholars.....	33

## Advanced Placement Test Results

Students Tested.....	469
AP Tests Taken.....	1,117
AP scores 3 and above.....	902
AP Scholars.....	84
AP Scholars with Honor.....	47
AP Scholars with Distinction.....	71
AP International Diploma.....	1