

# Richland Schools

## Office of the Superintendent

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### Memorandum

**Date:** 3/29/24  
**To:** School Board  
**From:** Shelley Redinger  
**Subject:** Friday Packet

Enclosed please find the following documents:

- Board Dates to Remember
- Community Events/Activities
- Student Advisory Notes
- Middle School Leadership Memo
- Integrated Financial Literacy Memo
- Media



**TO: Board of Directors**  
**RE: Event Dates**  
**DATE: 3/29/24**

**April:**

- **April 1-5...SPRING BREAK**
- **4/9/24...Board Meeting-Board Room – 6:30 PM**
  - **Ex. Session-(only if needed)**
- **4/23/24...Board Meeting-Board Room**
  - **Ex. Session-(only if needed)**

**May:**

- **5/14/24...Board Meeting-Board Room – 6:30 PM**
  - **Ex. Session-(only if needed)**
- **5/28/24...Board Meeting-Board Room – 6:30 PM**
  - **Ex. Session-(only if needed)**

# Upcoming Events/Activities

This list is suggestions of RSD and community events to attend as a Board Member. By no means is it a comprehensive list of all activities in the District. Future events will be added weekly.

## March

### Friday 29<sup>th</sup>:

- Tapteal Talent Show  
5:15 PM  
Tapteal Elementary
- Alice in Wonderland Performance  
6:30 PM  
Orchard Elementary

## April

### SPRING BREAK: APRIL 1 – 5

### Friday 19<sup>th</sup>:

- Hanford Music Benefit Auction  
5:30 PM  
40504 Demoss Rd., Benton City  
<https://www.hanfordmusic.org/benefit-auction>
- Secondary Marimba Concert (Homelink)  
6 – 7:30 PM  
Richland High Auditorium
- Night Witches  
7:30 PM  
HHS Black Box Theatre  
<https://www.hanforddrama.org/>

### Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>:

- Hanford Spring Bazaar  
9 AM – 2 PM  
Hanford High School
- Night Witches  
7:30 PM  
HHS Black Box Theatre  
<https://www.hanforddrama.org/>

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>:

- AAC Community Night  
5:30 – 7 PM  
TLAC Board Room
- Night Witches  
6 PM  
HHS Black Box Theatre  
<https://www.hanforddrama.org/>

### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>:

- Desert Sky Talent Show  
6 PM  
Desert Sky Cafeteria

### Friday 26<sup>th</sup>:

- Spring Fundraising Social (Leona Libby)  
6 – 9 PM  
Taverna Tagaris  
<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/1af6582d-4db9-4f81-b99d-28e147a9bee4>
- Night Witches  
7:30 PM  
HHS Black Box Theatre  
<https://www.hanforddrama.org/>

### Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>:

- Night Witches  
2 PM + 7:30 PM  
HHS Black Box Theatre  
<https://www.hanforddrama.org/>

**Hanford + Richland High School  
Athletics Calendars**

<https://hanfordathletics.com/events>  
<https://bomberathletics.com/events>

## ***Student/Superintendent Advisory Committee***

***3/15/24***

### ***Notes***

#### **Cell Phone Use**

**High School:** Students felt this is a classroom management issue. They stated teachers ask students to put phones away during class time. Some may allow phones if needed for class projects and research. Students can use cell phones before/after school and during lunch times. Students also need to learn how to use their phones and felt banning cell phones would be a bad idea. Students reported the process currently being used doesn't seem to cause problems.

**Middle School:** Students felt this is more of an issue in middle schools. Students are not as mature and not all students have cell phones, but a total ban does not seem necessary at this time.

#### **Chrome Book Support**

Dr. Redinger asked students if they felt Chrome Books were a useful tool? Or if students prefer to use their own devices?

Delta HS students shared Chrome Books are very slow and students are not given individual chrome books.

Other students reported they prefer their own devices if possible. Chrome books are very slow and should be updated or refreshed more often. Students felt touch screens were not as important as updating chrome books more frequently.

The IT department is purchasing hotspots to try to alleviate buildings areas with weak connectivity. Seniors in particular seem to prefer having their own devices to help prepare for after high school.

#### **Library Access/Utilization**

Dr. Redinger asked students to share ideas on what students would like libraries to look like in future buildings. Input included:

- place to study/quiet
- tables w/chargers
- comfortable chairs
- extended Library times (before/after school)
- a variety of areas-some quiet, others for collaboration

#### **Memorial Policy**

Students were asked for input regarding memorials at graduation ceremonies and how they would like to recognize students who passed away during the school year. Students split up in small groups to discuss with Mental Health Team members to share input.

#### **School Board Meeting Student Report**

- March 26, 2024 - Board Meeting-6:30pm
  - Marisa

#### **Next Meeting**

- April 12, 2024 - 11:30am - TLAC





**Date:** March 29, 2024

**To:** School Board Members and Dr. Redinger

**From:** Jennifer Klauss, Executive Director, Secondary Teaching,  
Learning and  
Curriculum

**Subject:** Leadership Courses at Middle School

The Board of Directors requested a summary of the leadership elective courses at each middle school.

After speaking with the administrators at the middle schools, below is a summary of how the courses are offered at each building:

- Chief Joseph Middle School:
  - 6th grade—quarter classes; required
  - 7th grade—quarter classes; elective
  - 8th grade—semester classes; elective
- Carmichael Middle School:
  - 6th grade—no elective; Leadership Club afterschool; working on building this out in their 3-5 year plan
  - 7th/8th grade combined—semester classes; elective
- Enterprise Middle School:
  - 6th grade—quarter classes; elective
  - 7th grade—semester classes; elective
  - 8th grade—semester classes; elective
- Libby Middle School:
  - 6th grade—quarter classes; required
  - 7th grade—quarter classes; required
  - 8th grade—semester classes; elective



**Date:** March 28, 2024

**To:** School Board Members and Dr. Redinger

**From:** Ryan Beard, Director, Career and Technical Education  
Jennifer Klauss, Executive Director, Secondary Teaching, Learning,  
and Curriculum

**Subject:** Integrated Financial Literacy at Middle School

The Board of Directors requested a summary of the options and timeline for integrating financial literacy instruction into core subjects at middle school.

Based on Senate Bill 5720, the Richland School District adopted the goal of increasing financial literacy education in middle school. Currently, the Richland School District requires Careers and Financial Literacy for graduation. This 10th grade course offers a quarter of financial literacy combined with a quarter of career exploration, with both serving to inform students' High School and Beyond Plans. Additional financial literacy education is offered at both elementary and middle school through outreach programs from Junior Achievement, GESA, STCU, or other local financial institutions. By expanding the outreach program offerings, the district will meet the requirements of Senate Bill 5720.

Requiring a stand-alone financial literacy course removes a choice option for students enrolled in yearlong music classes, or those receiving additional support services. In addition, all middle school students are now required to take a term of art every year (Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5878). Embedding financial literacy offers an opportunity to satisfy the district goal, while maintaining additional student choice in which to explore interests and engage in school.

The Richland School District is eligible to reapply for grant funds for 24-25 through the Financial Education Public-Private Partnership (FEPPP). These funds are intended to support expanding financial literacy education. To pilot the embedded financial literacy model, Carmichael Middle School is partnering with Junior Achievement to offer the

Finance Park lessons and simulation in the spring of this year. This will be taught in both Health and Social Studies courses.

Per direction from the board, we will be exploring options for integrating financial literacy into currently required core middle school courses. This work will include identifying which course to embed the instruction, and which of the various curriculum options we plan to pilot for 24-25. Our projected timeline is as follows:

April/May 2024:

- Carmichael Middle School to pilot Junior Achievement Finance Park in Social Studies and Health.
- Meet with Middle School Principals to determine course options in which to embed Financial Literacy instruction.

May/June 2024:

- Receive feedback from CMS Junior Achievement pilot teachers on Finance Park experience.
- Work with identified core content teachers, Teaching and Learning staff, and CTE Instructional Specialist to identify curriculum and where it can fit into scope and sequence of core course.

June 11 Board Meeting:

- Present findings of financial literacy curriculum team to Board of Directors.

[https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/tri-cities-students-hold-clean-slate-for-survivors-cleaning-supplies-drive-for-victims-of-domestic/article\\_ca19f094-eab1-11ee-8dd3-8b3abfda4776.html](https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/tri-cities-students-hold-clean-slate-for-survivors-cleaning-supplies-drive-for-victims-of-domestic/article_ca19f094-eab1-11ee-8dd3-8b3abfda4776.html)

## Tri-Cities students hold 'Clean Slate for Survivors' cleaning supplies drive for victims of domestic violence

By Rylee Fitzgerald

Mar 25, 2024



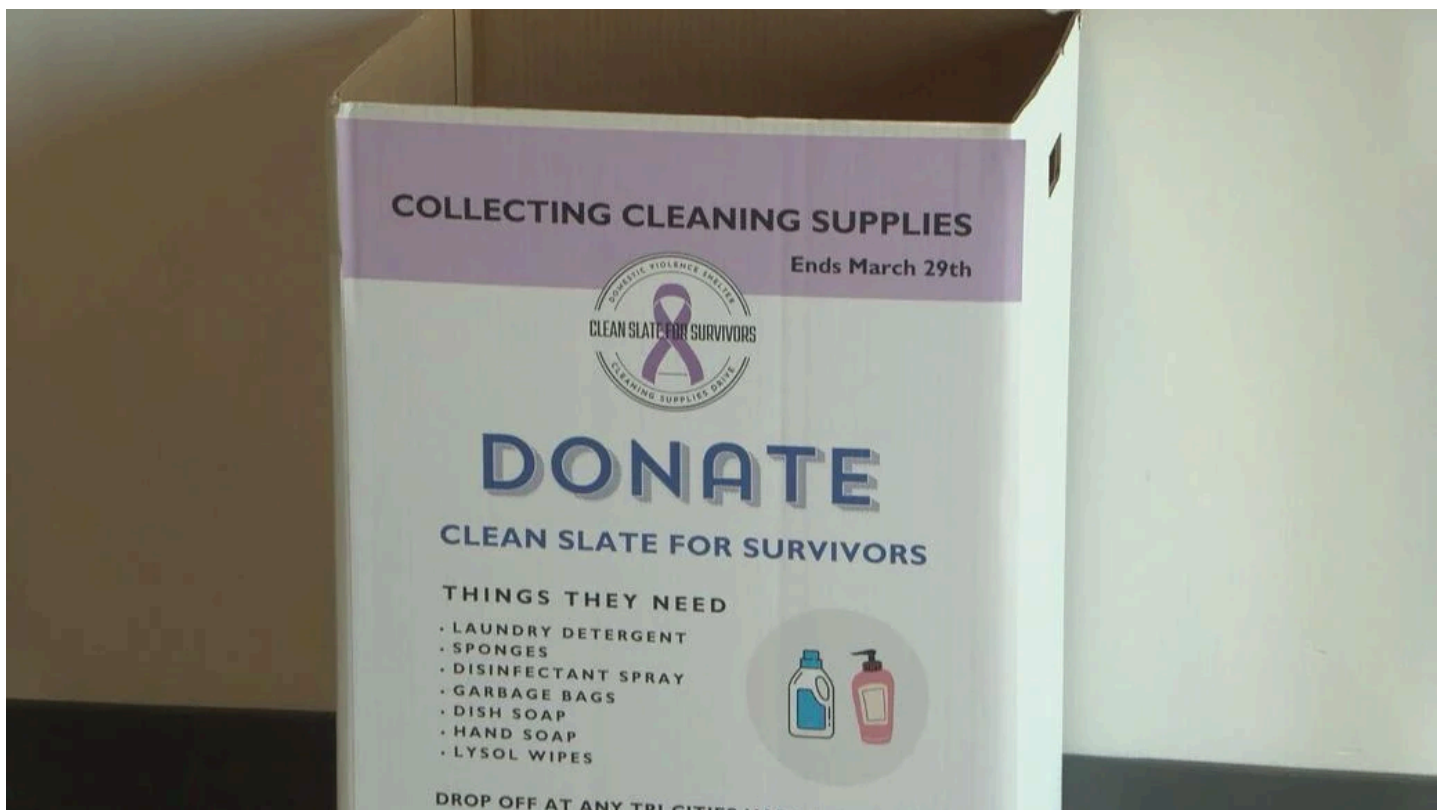
TRI-CITIES, Wash. — High school students in the Tri-Cities are making a difference for survivors of domestic violence. Students involved with the Y.E.S. Program through HAPO Community Credit Union picked a community service initiative this year. The program students are working to help provide a 'clean slate' for domestic violence survivors.

Y.E.S. stands for Youth Empowerment Squad. It involves mentorship, volunteering and philanthropic opportunities.

"The idea is to empower our young students with the recognition of the impact that they're capable of within their community," said Sebrina Wizner, the financial education coordinator with HAPO.

The program has been around for three years, but this is the first year the Y.E.S. Program has taken on its own community service initiative. The team of nine high school students chose to support the Domestic Violence Services of Benton and Franklin Counties (DVSBF).

ADVERTISING



Hanford High School senior and Y.E.S. participant AJ Moss explained how the group decided on its initiative.

“We all met together and we brainstormed what project we wanted to do. It's completely student-led, so we could have done anything for our project, but we decided to help out and do a drive for the shelter, because we wanted to give back to the community in a material, tangible way,” said Moss.

The students are collecting cleaning supplies, like sponges, laundry detergent, dish soap, disinfectant wipes and sprays and more.

The Youth Empowerment Squad also put together its own marketing for the cleaning drive, with videos and fliers.



HAPO Community Credit Union

Share

Facebook Watch

“With the drive, the cleaning supply drive that they're doing, they're really rallying the community to get involved, to recognize that same need, and there's something different when a kid comes to you and says, ‘Hey, this is a need, can you help me meet it?’ than just seeing it and glazing past it?” Wizner said.

To support these students’ efforts, you can find donation bins at any HAPO location in the Tri-Cities. The cleaning drive lasts through the 29th of March.



COLLECTING CLEANING SUPPLIES

Ends March 29th

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RELIEF

CLEAN SLATE FOR SURVIVORS

CLEANING SUPPLIES ONLY

DONATE

CLEAN SLATE FOR SURVIVORS

THINGS THEY NEED

• LAUNDRY DETERGENT

• SPONGES

• DISINFECTANT SPRAY

• GARBAGE BAGS

• DISH SOAP

• HAND SOAP

• LYSOL WIPES

DROP OFF AT ANY TRI-CITIES HAPO LOCATION.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY HAPO'S YES PROGRAM!

HAPO

Community Credit Union

YES

COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

DVS

OF WITSON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

READ MORE FROM APPLEVALLEYNEWSNOW.COM:

A photograph of three Rottweilers sitting side-by-side, looking towards the camera. The dog in the middle has its mouth open, showing its tongue.

**Benton Co. Sheriff's Office defends killing of dogs after animal control fails to respond to Kennewick neighborhood**  
Monique Ledesma

A photograph of a wooden structure, possibly a bridge or a building, with a date stamp that reads "MARCH 22 2014 10:37 AM". Below the stamp, there is a sign that says "OSO LANDSLIDE 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY".

**10 Years Later: The Oso landslide, what we've learned**  
Jessica Jalal

A photograph of a car crash scene, showing the front of a vehicle that has been crushed and mangled.

**Hermiston woman arrested in fatal Christmas Day car crash that left child dead, 7 others hurt**  
Erin Wencel

A missing person poster for a woman named Irene Fleming. It includes a photograph of her and text providing details about her disappearance, including her age, last seen date, and location.

**Grant Co. Sheriff's Office clears up rumors related to missing Pasco woman investigation**  
Erin Wencel

# Richland's Woodard named Player of the Year in second sport

**Pasco dance team dominates WIAA**



*BRIAN HAYES • BHAYES@THENEWSTRIBUNE.COM*

Richland's Joshua Woodard (12) and Mount Si's Blake Forrest (2) tangle up as Woodard goes to the net during the first half of the Class 4A state championship game at the Tacoma Dome earlier this month.



**BY JEFF MORROW  
SPECIAL TO THE HERALD**

Pasco dominated the 4A Dance/Drill State Championships over the weekend in the Yakima Valley SunDome.

The Bulldogs earned three titles, winning in Hip Hop, Pom, and Show.

Pasco scored 296.10 points in Hip Hop to defeat 16 other schools.

Pasco scored a 293.70 to take the Show category, and the Bulldogs had 284.20 to win in Pom.

All scores received Superior Ratings.

Richland placed fifth out of 17 schools in the Dance category, scoring 259.60 points to earn an Exceptional Rating.

In the smaller classifications, Hermiston came home with several trophies.

The Bulldogs placed first in the Dance category for Class 1A/2A/3A, scoring a 295.40 for a Superior Rating.

Hermiston also finished second in 3A Hip Hop with a Superior Rating score of 279.20 points; and the Bulldogs also finished first in 3A Show with 272.80 points, another Superior Rating.

Meanwhile, Royal grabbed a first-place finish in 1A/2A Military competition, scoring 263.60 points for an Exceptional Rating score.

Othello finished second in 1A/2A Hip Hop with a 278.80 Superior Rating score. The Huskies also placed third in 1A/2A Pom, scoring 249.40 for an Exceptional Rating score.

## **Boys basketball**

Richland dominated the major awards for Mid-Columbia Conference boys basketball, as senior Josh Woodard was selected by the conference's coaches as Player of the Year. Senior Luke Westerfield was named Defensive Player of the Year, while the Bombers' Earl Streufert was named Coach of the Year.

For Woodard, he becomes the first player in recent memory to be named a Player of the Year in both football and basketball. He was Richland's quarterback this past season.



*BRIAN HAYES • BHAYES@THENEWSTRIBUNE.COM*

Richland's Joshua Woodard (12) and Mount Si's Blake Forrest (2) tangle up as Woodard goes to the net during the first half of the Class 4A state championship game at the Tacoma Dome earlier this month.

Woodard and Westerfield were both named first-team all-conference, and they were joined by Kamiakin senior Peter Dress, Hermiston senior Grant Olsen, and Southridge senior Jesse Tijerina.

Woodard and Westerfield also were all-defensive selections, as was their teammate, senior Jack Forbes. Joining them are Walla Walla senior Dane Gardea and Kamiakin senior Tayson Wagar.

## College track and field

Hermiston grad Caden Hottman earned two first-place finishes for WSU at the 18<sup>th</sup> Sam Adams Classic outdoor track and field meet at Whitworth University in Spokane on March 16.

Hottman won the men's hammer throw with a toss of 197 feet, 2 inches; and he won the men's discus title with a mark of 154 feet, 6 inches.

There were other Mid-Columbia winners.

Lewis-Clark State College's Geraldin Correa (Kennewick) finished first in the women's 800 meters with a time of 2 minutes, 15.89 seconds.

Eastern Washington University's Madelyn Knight (Walla Walla) won the women's 400-meter hurdles final in a time of 1 minute, 1.52 seconds. Knight also ran a leg in EWU's winning 4x400 relay final. The Eagles' time was 4:00.92.

In that relay race, Gonzaga's women placed second in 4:05.06, and Richland High grad Bailee Carr ran a leg for the Bulldogs. Carr also placed second in the women's 1500 meters with a time of 4:34.82.

Kamiakin graduate Devyn Chelin placed second in the women's javelin throw, as the Whitworth standout had a mark of 125 feet, 4 inches.

Southridge graduate Abdelrahim Abdelrahim — competing unattached for Spokane Community College, finished second in the men's triple jump. He leaped 45 feet, 3 inches.

Finally, Whitworth's Eddie Vu (Walla Walla) placed third in the men's shot put with a toss of 46 feet, 5 inches.

## **Prep softball**

This Mid-Columbia Conference softball race could be fun this spring.

Just one week into conference play, there are three teams with 3-0 MCC records — Chiawana, Kamiakin and Richland.

Hanford is right behind at 1-0, while Southridge sports a 2-1 conference record.

Key games this week: Southridge visits Richland in a single contest starting at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26; Chiawana plays at Hanford in a 4 p.m. doubleheader start on Friday, March 29.

## **Prep baseball**

It's early, but it looks like the usual suspects — Kamiakin, Kennewick and Richland — are manning the top spots in the Mid-Columbia Conference baseball standings.

Both Kamiakin and Richland are 3-0 in MCC play, as well as 7-0 overall. Kennewick is a half-game back at 3-1 MCC, 7-1 overall.

Hanford is right there too, sitting with a 2-0 MCC record, 3-2 overall.

Key games this week: Kennewick visits Richland for a single game at 5 p.m., Tuesday, March 26. The two teams met last week, with the Bombers winning 7-4.

On Friday, Richland visits Hanford for a doubleheader that starts at 4 p.m.

## **Girls basketball**

Chiawana junior Malia Ruud was named Mid-Columbia Conference Player of the Year for girls basketball recently.

Kamiakin's Emaunii Smith and Aubrey Herrin shared MCC Defensive Player of the Year honors, while Kamiakin's Lane Schumacher was named Coach of the Year.

Joining Ruud on the first team are Kennewick senior Haylee Johnson, Hanford senior Lynnea Moran, and two Kamiakin players — Smith, a sophomore, and senior Nicole Wertenberger.

Joining Smith and Herrin (a junior) on the all-defensive team are Chiawana sophomore Baylee Maldonado, Hanford's Moran, Walla Walla senior Madison Reibel, and Richland junior Mackenzie Schulz.

## **College wrestling**

Chiawana grad Darion Johnson was named second-team All-American after placing second at the National Junior College Athletic Association Division I men's national wrestling championships a few weeks ago in Iowa.

Johnson, wrestling for Western Wyoming, placed second at 184 pounds, losing 7-3 to Northwest College's Aziz Fayzullav.

Johnson, a sophomore, finished the season with a 36-12 record.

*Jeff Morrows is former sports editor of the Tri-City Herald.*

[https://www.nbcrightnow.com/news/124-jobs-cut-14m-saved-as-yzd-fights-budget-crisis/article\\_91984bba-eb2b-11ee-9560-eb3f9592b7b2.html](https://www.nbcrightnow.com/news/124-jobs-cut-14m-saved-as-yzd-fights-budget-crisis/article_91984bba-eb2b-11ee-9560-eb3f9592b7b2.html)

## 124 jobs cut, \$14M saved as YSD fights budget crisis

Tomas D'Anella NonStop Local Multimedia Journalist  
Mar 25, 2024

**YAKIMA, Wash.**—Dozens of teachers, school staff and other members of the Yakima Education Association flocked to the Yakima School District Board Meeting to learn the status of their jobs.

124 of them learned they will lose those jobs.

A trend of lower student enrollment since the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with inflation, has forced the district to cut those jobs to save over \$14 million.

YSD's Assistant Superintendent of Finance Jake Kuper says without the reduction in force, the district's general fund balance would hit zero by the end of the 2023-24 school year.

Student enrollment is projected to be almost 2,000 less than YSD saw in 2017-18. The loss in enrollment is almost equal to the combined total of the Zillah and Union Gap School Districts.

"We did believe not only here in Yakima, but in the state of Washington and across the country, that students would come back," says YSD Superintendent Trevor Greene. "We have to think about education differently. Why are they not coming back?"

The sudden change in enrollment caught the YEA off guard. YSD says the district kept the association in the loop since last summer.

YEA says that was not the case.

"I want to know who's going to be held accountable for all the spending, all the stuff that happens, and that we did not see this coming," says YEA President John Cavanaugh. "I know you did not see this coming in the district."

Greene says YSD has been preparing for the cuts and potentially others. If the special election levy had not passed earlier this year, the cuts could have been more.

### **Unofficial February Special Election results**

"If the levy had not passed, then we would have not only had to have a \$20 million reduction plan set for the second attempt at passing the levy, but we would have had to then come up with a \$58.5 million reduction plan if it failed a second time," says Greene.

Jobs being cut include 10 assistant principals, health assistants, migrant student advocates and academic specialists.

"These teachers have been hired starting careers and establish themselves in their buildings," says Duff DeWitt with YEA. "They are making the relationships with students and families and becoming a part of our community. And the school district has betrayed their trust."

YSD says the cuts are not immediate. Administration will have to go through personnel contracts and make cuts based on seniority.



[https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/financial-storm-prompts-layoffs-for-100-employees-at-yakima-school-district/article\\_d0c1ad60-ebd3-11ee-a586-8bb8b45b088c.html](https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/financial-storm-prompts-layoffs-for-100-employees-at-yakima-school-district/article_d0c1ad60-ebd3-11ee-a586-8bb8b45b088c.html)

## 'Financial storm' prompts layoffs for 100+ employees at Yakima School District

By Emily Goodell

Mar 26, 2024



Emily Goodell reports.



YAKIMA, Wash. — More than 100 employees at the Yakima School District, including counselors, paraeducators and assistant principals will be out of a job for the 2024-25 school year due to a massive budget shortfall stemming from decreased enrollment.

“What we're facing is certainly not an anomaly,” Superintendent Trevor Greene said.

Greene said how much funding a school district receives from the state is dependent on the number of students they have, so lower enrollment equals less funding across the board.

Enrollment has decreased across the country since the pandemic, when some students opted to switch to homeschool or private school.

According to Greene, school districts' budget deficits are at \$105 million for Seattle, \$31 million for Kent and \$35 million for Vancouver. Locally, he said Toppenish is needing to cut \$5 million to \$7 million and Mabton's budget deficit is at \$1 million.

"The inflation that's taking place, the lack of full funding and education, combined with the declining enrollment that we see statewide, many districts are finding themselves in a situation that is precarious," Greene said.

YSD has seen a 9% decrease in enrollment — or 1,463 students — since the 2017-18 school year, when the district's enrollment peaked. Projections show a bigger decrease at 11.4% — or 1,854 students — for the 2024-25 school year.

Greene said decreased enrollment has led to a subsequent decrease in state funding and now the Yakima School District needs to cut \$20 million from its 2024-25 budget to make ends meet, which means more than 100 employees won't have a job next year.

"Like many districts, a continual loss in student enrollment, increased staffing levels and salaries, inflationary pressures, and the exhaustion of one-time ESSER aligned to create a 'financial storm,'" YSD officials said in documents provided to the school board.

According to Greene, had they not been able to pass the Educational Programs and Operations Levy to help them pay for programs and services not covered by state funding, the reduction in staff would have been even greater.

"Instead of reducing \$20 million, we would have been reducing \$58.5 million and that would have been catastrophic," Greene said.

Yakima Education Association President John Cavanaugh said it's true that it's a problem most school districts are facing and some position eliminations were inevitable. However, he said the district could have done more to reduce the impact.

"Just by hiring less, realizing that it was coming and balancing this out more over the past four or five years, they could have prevented the shock of what this rift is right now," Cavanaugh said.

During the same time period where student enrollment dropped by 9%, the Yakima School District saw certificated staffing levels increase by 9% and the number of classified employees increase by 18%.



“Our certified staff are typically our teachers, counselors, librarians,” Greene said. “Classified can be anyone from a bus driver position to food services to paraeducators.”

According to the district, they haven’t reduced staffing up until this point for several reasons; one being that they anticipated students would return after the pandemic and at the time, they had funding to maintain staffing levels.

The district still had residual funding from the landmark settlement of the McCleary lawsuit, which funneled billions of dollars in public education across the state. Much of that funding went toward increasing educators’ salaries and staffing numbers.

Additionally, the school district received about \$86 million in one-time COVID-19 relief funds from the federal government, but those have now been spent and the district already had to take a significant amount of money from its reserves to balance the 2023-24 budget.

In short, the district continued hiring because they believed students would come back and they had funds in the short-term to make those hires without relying on the state funding that’s based on enrollment.

“Even after these reductions take place, we will have more employees per 1000 of our students than we had even three years ago,” Greene said.

It wasn’t until last year that they began to try to save money by making initial cuts to programs and services and deciding not to rehire for certain vacant positions.

However, Cavanaugh argues the district should have taken action as soon as it became clear those numbers weren’t coming back up again.

“Even last year, they hired 104 certified staff when they knew they were going to have to make corrections this year,” Cavanaugh said.

Cavanaugh said the youngest and newest hires will be the first to be let go, depending on their certification.

“A lot of my members, teachers, colleagues, counselors that started out their career and now basically had the rug pulled out from them, which is very scary,” Cavanaugh said.

Greene said in making decisions about which positions were cut, they tried to limit the impact to students and ensure that reductions were made not just in the schools, but at the district office as well.

However, Greene said there are no proposed reductions in salary for existing positions as part of the changes agreed upon by the school board at its meeting Monday night.

Cavanaugh said he doesn't think it's fair for Superintendent Green to be making \$375,000 annually as one of the highest-paid superintendents in the state. He said assistant superintendents also make a considerable amount — an average of \$224,000 per year based on the latest available data from 2023.

That means out of about 2,000 total employees, just the top four positions — the superintendent and three assistant superintendents — cost the school district more than \$1 million a year.

"This falls really heavily, as far as I'm concerned, on the school board because they are approving the salaries," Cavanaugh said. "How many beginning teachers could that money support, if his salary was in range, even with the school districts of similar size around here?"

The Pasco School District is less than 100 miles away and slightly larger with 18,500 students to the 14,700 at the Yakima School District, but their superintendent made about \$233,000 — \$142,000 less than what Greene was paid.

When asked about the possibility of reducing the salary of top-level administrators as an alternative to position cuts at the ground level, Greene said they've already reduced expenses at the top-level administrator level by cutting positions, including two assistant superintendent positions.

"We recognize the devastating impact of what is currently happening to many individuals, but we have actually been reducing administrative staff since January," Greene said.

Greene said he encourages anyone with further questions about salaries or the budget to get more involved in the process and make their voices heard.

"I would certainly invite anybody that has questions to participate in the school board or to reach out and schedule a meeting with me individually," Greene said.

Cavanaugh said he credits the district with trying to choose the positions laid off carefully in an attempt not to take teachers out of classrooms and minimize the impact to students.

However, Cavanaugh said the layoffs will still mean larger class sizes, less support for those who need it and extra pressure on teachers.

"It's just going to put more stress on the system itself, which, when you do that, definitely bleeds down to affect the students in the classroom," Cavanaugh said.

Cavanaugh said the district is working to notify employees at risk of being laid off this week and they will be able to work until the end of the school year, but after the end of August, what happens next is up to them.

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[https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/columbia-basin-colleges-running-start-program-offers-summer-funding-for-2024/article\\_788d2eca-eb9d-11ee-a93a-a3594ee30969.html](https://www.applevalleynewsnow.com/news/columbia-basin-colleges-running-start-program-offers-summer-funding-for-2024/article_788d2eca-eb9d-11ee-a93a-a3594ee30969.html)

## **Columbia Basin College's Running Start program offers summer funding for 2024**

Morgan Huff

Mar 26, 2024



*Pictured: New graduates line up May 17, 2018, before the start of a community college commencement in East Rutherford, N.J. Seth Wenig, Associated Press*

*If you are one of the borrowers who is benefitting from forgiveness under the SAVE plan, you will receive an email from the Education Department.*

PASCO, Wash. -- Columbia Basin College's running start program announced funding is available for summer classes.

High school students who have completed their 10th grade (Sophomore) year can apply for the Summer 2024 quarter but can only take a maximum of 10 credits. Current running start students are also eligible to take a maximum of 10 credits. Graduating high school seniors, class of 2024, who are 15 credits or less from earning an associates degree at CBC can take a maximum of 15 credits.

Students who are interested need qualify for at least one college-level area of English, math or reading to participate in running start. After qualifying and enrolling, the student will automatically receive summer funding towards their credits.

“We are excited to see the Running Start funding expand into summer. This gives students more time to complete college level courses and obtain an Associates degree,” says Cheryl Holden, Vice President for Student Services.

“Running Start is a fantastic chance for local high school students to get college credits for free while still in high school. The students enjoy the opportunity to experience college on a smaller scale and it gives them an idea of what to expect at college,” says Elizabeth Hernandez-Osario, Director for Running Start at CBC.

Summer registration begins on May 29, however, current running start students registration date is May 21.

For more information on how to get started at CBC, [click here](#).

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Morgan Huff

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# School bus driver in Pasco who died of overdose recalled as kind, generous


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## In Memory of Carlos David Gomez



 Adrian Gomez is organizing this fundraiser.


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COURTESY GOFUNDME

Carlos David Gomez, 28, was living with his brother in Pasco when he overdosed on a combination of fentanyl and methamphetamine, officials say. He had been struggling with addiction for some time.

**BY CAMERON PROBERT**  
**CPROBERT@TRICITYHERALD.COM**

A 28-year-old Pasco school bus driver was on a leave of absence when his struggles with drug addiction caught up with him.

Carlos David Gomez, 28, was living with his brother in Pasco when he overdosed on a combination of fentanyl and methamphetamine, Franklin County Coroner Curtis McGary said.

He was discovered dead on March 21, McGary said. He had been struggling with addiction for some time, and this was not the first time he overdosed.

It remains unclear when that was or if he was receiving treatment.

He went on a leave of absence on Dec. 1, 2023, from driving for the school district, but the reason was not made public.

Gomez started working at the Pasco School District in December 2022 as a contracted driver, and had no history of any problems with his driving in his year on the road, said Anna Tensmeyer, the district's director of public affairs.

“We were saddened to learn of his death yesterday morning and it was announced to drivers yesterday afternoon,” Tensmeyer said. “Counselors were provided to support staff at transportation.”

His brother, Adrian Gomez, said in a [GoFundMe fundraiser](#) that he loved his job and the children adored him.

“Carlos is remembered for his kindness to all, his willingness to help people and his generosity,” Adrian Gomez wrote. “His passing left a large void.”

Fentanyl has become the largest single source of overdose deaths in the Tri-Cities, according to statistics from Benton and Franklin counties.

A [Tri-City Herald analysis](#) of Benton Franklin Health District data found the drug most commonly affects men in their 40s or 50s, working in construction, trade labor, the food service industry or health care.

## **School policies**

School bus drivers and all commercial driver license holders need to pass drug and alcohol screening before they’re hired.

Once they are working, they are subject to random drug and alcohol testing.

“We have no record or reports of Mr. Gomez being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while driving,” Tensmeyer said.

The district also tests drivers if they are involved in an accident, even a minor one.

The school district offers employees access to counseling as part of their benefits. They can get referrals to local drug and alcohol treatment providers as part of that system.

If they need to take advantage of a treatment program, they can take a leave of absence to participate.

Tensmeyer explained that the school district seeks to help employees struggling with addiction.

[https://www.nbcrightnow.com/news/yakima-high-school-students-walk-out-to-protest-ysd-layoffs/article\\_0c729414-ed4b-11ee-b673-f35749ef2b26.html](https://www.nbcrightnow.com/news/yakima-high-school-students-walk-out-to-protest-ysd-layoffs/article_0c729414-ed4b-11ee-b673-f35749ef2b26.html)

## Yakima high school students walk out to protest YSD layoffs

Thomas Metcalf, NonStop Local Digital Journalist  
Mar 28, 2024

**YAKIMA, Wash.** - Students at Davis High School and Eisenhower High School walked out on Thu., March 28 to protest recent staff cuts in the Yakima School District.

Students reportedly walked out at 1:30 p.m. for the protest.

[At a board meeting on Mon., March 25](#), a total of 124 YSD staff members learned that they were losing their jobs to support the district's budget.

YSD says the cuts will save the district \$14 million. The reason for the cuts is a trend of lower student enrollment since the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance Jake Kuper said at the meeting that the district's general fund balance would hit zero by the end of the 2023-24 school year.

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This change in enrollment shocked the Yakima Education Association, stating that it did not see this coming.

"I want to know who's going to be held accountable for all the spending, all the stuff that happens, and that we did not see this coming," said YEA President Jon Cavanaugh. "I know you did not see this coming in the district."

YSD noted in a later interview with NonStop Local that the district will still have more staff than it did in its peak enrollment year of 2017-18 where it hosted 16,233 enrolled students with 108 staff members per 1,000 students.

After the reduction, YSD will have 125 staff members per 1,000 students with 14,379 projected enrolled.

*This is a developing story, which means information could change. We are working to report timely and accurate information as we get it.*

MORE INFORMATION



Despite budget cuts, YSD to still be well staffed next year

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Thomas Metcalf

NonStop Local Digital Journalist