

**April 16, 2019**



# Board Summary

## Budget

Superintendent Dr. Rick Schulte presented to the Richland School Board the [first draft of the 2019-20 budget](#). The Legislature has yet to determine how much funding it will provide for schools in the next school year, leaving the district to draw up the budget based on revenue projections, enrollment estimates and historic trends on spending. The district, like most other districts across the state, is expecting a budget shortfall largely due to the state's decision to cap local levies for schools, Dr. Schulte said. Slowing enrollment growth and changes to the state's funding formulas also are contributing to the projected shortfall.

Dr. Schulte said about \$5 million in reductions are in the draft budget in comparison to the current 2018-19 budget to ensure an ending fund balance of about 4 percent of expenditures, or roughly \$7.7 million. Those cuts include:

- Eighty percent reduction in staff travel
- Reduction of carryover
- Limit on capital expenses
- Reassignment of Classroom Support Teachers to classrooms
- Limit on class overloads in middle and high schools
- Reduction of transfers to the district's self-insurance fund
- Reassignment of two district-level administrators to vacant school administrator positions
- Reduction in curriculum adoption and professional development.

Further savings could be achieved to redirect funds at the Board's discretion through reduction of administrative assistants at eight schools, security staff at two high schools or school resource officers (SROs), Dr. Schulte says.

The district should know what funding the state will provide as early as April 28 when the legislative session is scheduled to conclude. Dr. Schulte added that he views this first draft as a "worst-case" scenario for the district's budget, as the state is more likely to increase funding due to a number of bills still pending in the Legislature, including one that would raise the cap on local levies.

## Special Education

Dr. Schulte provided an update to the Board on recent concerns and developments with the district's special education programs. Draft staffing cuts developed by the district for its special education programs based on inaccurate budget figures were released to the public, causing fear and uncertainty about those programs. Dr. Schulte and Board President Rick Jansons apologized for that inaccurate information and the worry it caused in the community.

Dr. Schulte suggested the district and Board take the following next steps:

- Maintain special education programs at their current staffing levels with any changes based on student needs. The 2019-20 draft budget has no cuts to special education.
- Begin a participatory process to determine how, why and when to make any changes to special education programming, communicating broadly and frequently with the community.
- Remain focused on providing a continuum of services to meet the diverse needs of the district's 1,600 students currently with an Individual Education Program (IEP).
- Seek short- or long-term goals for each student that include achieving optimum independence as a self-supporting, happy and healthy adult
- Schedule a Board workshop on May 2 to consider further input and discussion of special education.

Mr. Jansons proposed the Board preserve special education's current funding levels for the 2019-20 school year. He also called for the formation of a Special Education Task Force composed of district officials, staff representatives and parents connected to general education and special education to review best practices and make recommendations on how to improve the district's special education programs.

**Next Meeting: April 23, 2019 @ 6:30 p.m.**

*Richland School District*

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