

SOUTH KITSAP SCHOOL DISTRICT

SKSD to cut 25 teaching, support positions

Budget cuts could reach \$4 million for next school year, the board says

By Bob Smith

Thursday, May 9, 2019 5:12pm | **NEWS** SOUTH KITSAP SCHOOL DISTRICT



PORT ORCHARD — As expected, the South Kitsap School District's board of directors approved at its regular board meeting Wednesday night what it calls a "reduced educational program" for the 2019-2020 school year.

All told, the school district reduced its budget by \$4 million, which also includes cuts to assorted operating expenses next school year.

But the hit will impact many of those who work in the school district's classrooms and in a support role — it means a reduction in the number of certificated and classified positions. Twenty-five positions — 24 full-time and two half-time — will be trimmed from South Kitsap's district employee ranks, as a result of the district's budget next school year.

Exactly how the cutbacks will play out remains to be seen. Resignations and retirements will soften the blow; in the current school year, the district has recorded 28 resignations and 10 retirements. Twenty-eight positions — at least — will not be filled in the next budget due to resignations and retirements.

One of the more visible positions eliminated is the district's athletic director. The district's communications department will also lose a full-time position. Three certificated elementary staff positions will be cut, as will a half-time position — an IB coordinator — from among the middle school certificated staff.

Among the high school certificated staff, the district plans to cut 10.5 full-

time positions. Three of those will be trimmed from the high school's foreign language teaching ranks. Two certificated staffers each will be cut from the science and social studies programs, one each from math and physical education, one dean's position and a one-half position for the high school's credit recovery program.

The board also indicated that two elementary assistant principal positions will be eliminated, as well. Among classified staffers, an assistant transportation director, two full-time security and one full-time transportation employee also will be eliminated from school district employment rolls.

Employees impacted by the cutbacks are required to be notified by May 15.

The anticipated move was characterized by Amy Miller, the district's spokeswoman, as being less severe than expected, but she acknowledged the cuts were a sign of "difficult times, for sure."

The budget cuts were necessitated by a decrease in the school district's student population. Currently, with 9,544 students enrolled — down by 118 students from the previous school year — the district is anticipating an additional loss of 92 students for the 2019-2020 school year. According to the district, each enrolled student impacts the budget revenue by about \$10,000.

Helping to soften the impact, the state Legislature earlier raised the local levy cap to \$2.50, or \$2,500 per enrolled student. The board and superintendent, Karst Brandsma, indicated at the Wednesday meeting that an increase does not solve the district's immediate budget shortage. Additional funds from the levy, to be collected in April and October, won't be available to the school district until next year. And those funds can't be allocated to general education, but rather to enrichment programs.

The district will dip into its reserve fund for \$2 million to lessen the shortfall, Brandsma said at the meeting.

The presentation stated that the new levy cap will restore approximately \$4.5 million to the budget in 2020.



© 2019, Kitsap Daily News and Sound Publishing, Inc.

[About Us](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#)