

Our School Board Continues Making **POOR FINANCIAL DECISIONS**



South Kitsap School District (Board) continues down the path of poor financial decision-making. They continue to fail at one of their primary duties to ensure there is fiduciary accountability. Our District school board has passed and approved another resolution. Resolution 1284 a bill intended to remove the limit on what districts can collect for future school levies.

Our district admits they will face a budget shortfall for SY-2019-2020 if this pending senate bill does not pass. The projected budget deficit is currently \$10,000,000.00 (TEN MILLION). It is a matter of record that SKSD is paying salaries and benefits well above most of the other school districts. Passage of this bill will wipe out the meager tax savings we were given in 2019.

Our legislators raised the State education tax with the promise that the amount that local school districts could collect on school levies would stay at \$1.50 per \$1,000 valuation of our properties. SKSD school board is telling our legislators that if SB-5313 fails to become law that our district may be forced to lay off teachers and staff. They are projecting a significant budget shortfall for 2019-2020.

Our elected school board members have nearly exhausted the millions of dollars that the State gave them to help fund basic K-12 education. A public hearing on SB-5313 was held on March 21st. Here is the link to the video of the testimony given on this bill:

<https://www.tvw.org/watch/?clientID=9375922947&eventID=2019031242&stopStreamAt=3857&autoStartStream=true>

You can continue to submit your comments online until the bill is actually voted on. The online comment form is here:

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/billssummary?BillNumber=5313&Year=2019&Initiative=False>

You can also write directly to our 26th District Senator, Senator Emily Randall. Tell her how you feel about this Senate bill. Her email is: Emily.Randall@leg.wa.gov Also, consider writing to other Senators who are on the Senate Ways and Means Committee, which is where this bill is now sits.



RESOLUTION NO. 1281
ADOPTION OF THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE
SOUTH KITSAP SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 402

WHEREAS, the 2019 Washington State Legislature will convene its regular session on January 14, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the South Kitsap School District Board of Directors has identified certain matters of local and state-wide interest where legislative action is needed or desired; and

WHEREAS, "It is the paramount duty of the State of Washington to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex;"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD OF THE SOUTH KITSAP SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 402 that it has identified the following legislative priorities for the 2019 regular session and with the Supreme Court's recent decision, there are a number of "fixes" that must be addressed. Given the complex nature of school funding, we also believe the intent of recent legislation was an effort to avoid doing harm to any of our school districts. We therefore ask our legislators for their consideration when developing their positions during this legislative session:

- The Special Education funding formula is detrimental to the South Kitsap School District and reduced funding in our local levy has put a tremendous strain on our budget, now and in the future.
- The change in levy funding happens too fast and should be reviewed and phased in over a longer period of time.
- The \$1.50 per thousand or \$2,500 per student levy parameters hampers local school districts' ability to address individual priorities. For South Kitsap, cost overruns in transportation, special education, and emerging building improvement needs like roof and swimming pool repairs have seriously limited our District's capacity to meet these needs. Consideration in increasing these amounts or language changes to "up to whichever is higher" would be more reasonable.
- The new State Employees Benefit Board (SEBB) appears to be woefully underfunded and will put a financial hardship on South Kitsap School District. It appears the quality of health care for our employees will be reduced and the out of pocket costs increased. The implementation of SEBB should be tabled until a clearer understanding of the consequences can be examined and the cost impacts understood.

- Increased salaries for school district employees will create additional cost requirements for school districts as employees retire with these higher salaries. Fully funding school district's retirement costs is needed.
- The Capital Budget for school facilities should not be held ransom in partisan politics. South Kitsap has real facility needs and the validating percentage requirements for capital bonds should be reduced to a 50% simple majority. South Kitsap School District is asking our elected representatives to advance a constitutional amendment to the people authorizing school district bond measures be approved with a simple majority vote and then let the people decide. We have real needs that exist beyond growth and additional classrooms for increased enrollment. Our newest buildings are over 30 years old and the majority are over 50 years old. Upgrades to our buildings in seismic, ventilation, lighting, heating, fire and safety have reached the tipping point and we need your help.
- The elimination of the staff mix factor and the salary allocation model will eventually cause most school districts in the State of Washington including the South Kitsap School District to reach an unsustainable salary model with no local funding to support it. South Kitsap is asking our representatives to be open to reviewing these two items in the upcoming 2019 regular session.
- School safety is now our community's biggest concern. The State of Washington provides an inadequate funding source to address this issue. Additional funding for school safety is needed not only for facilities but also for dedicated security staffing and mental and behavior health supports.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the South Kitsap Board of Directors expresses its thanks and appreciation to the members of our local delegation for their service on behalf of South Kitsap School District No. 402.

ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of South Kitsap School District No. 402, Kitsap County, Washington, at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 19th day of December, 2018.

Rebecca Diehl, President

Keith Garton, Vice President

Eric Gattenby, Director

Elizabeth Sebren, Director

Gregory Wall, Director

ATTEST:

Karst Brandsma
Superintendent/Secretary to the Board