

OPINION

District wasn't thinking ahead when pay was planned

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As I listened to people address the South Kitsap School District board prior to their vote on the RIF proposal, several suggested that if this was a one-year problem the district's \$20 million reserves could solve it.

Unfortunately, the reason is that this is not just a one-year problem. When the Legislature caved to the WEA, the districts who paid those huge pay raises to all with no way to sustain them made the problem a local one. The SKSD payroll was at \$87 million before the McCleary mandates. It instantly went to \$107 million and includes pay raises for years to come. The new state insurance program costs will probably cost the district much more than has been mentioned. What this means is that an additional \$5.5 million of your levy money goes just to cover these pay raises and goes up by 5 percent each year.

So out of the \$24 million in levy money for next year, \$5.5 million goes just to fund these huge pay raises that you now are responsible for. I don't get a big pay raise each year and someone paying for more than half of my health care. Some teachers now make over \$100,000 and some administrators now over \$150,000.

I support kids, but I can't understand growing out of my levy money going to fund the huge pay raises when I thought the money was "for the kids."

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