

OPINION

South Kitsap schools aren't honoring our levy deal

Chris Lemke, South Kitsap Published 11:31 a.m. PT Feb. 4, 2020

After less than a year as superintendent, Tim Winters and the South Kitsap School Board made the wrong decision [to increase the school levy amount from \\$1.50 per thousand to \\$2.50 per thousand \(/story/news/local/2020/02/03/states-levy-lid-lift-leads-big-tax-hike-south-kitsap/2856668001/\)](/story/news/local/2020/02/03/states-levy-lid-lift-leads-big-tax-hike-south-kitsap/2856668001/), which is allowed without a vote.

South Kitsap was a charter member of the lawsuit that finally got the state to fund basic education, and we lobbied and spent thousands to support this cause. The intent was to relieve local tax payers of this burden. The outcome was a higher state tax and the reduction of the local levy authority to a \$1.50/\$1,000 cap. The Legislature, under pressure from large school districts like Seattle and Tacoma, relented and raised the lid to \$2.50.

South Kitsap, like many districts, had passed a four-year levy before the lawsuit settled. So they could choose to keep the rate at \$1.50 cap, like Central Kitsap, or place a higher burden on its citizens of \$2.50. Central Kitsap, on advice from its community, made the right choice. South Kitsap, with the pleas from people like myself to establish a Citizens Budget Advisory Team, erred in the favor of more taxation without representation.

South Kitsap is not honoring its citizens.

Chris Lemke, South Kitsap

Read more: [State's levy lid lift for schools leads to large tax increase in South Kitsap \(/story/news/local/2020/02/03/states-levy-lid-lift-leads-big-tax-hike-south-kitsap/2856668001/\)](/story/news/local/2020/02/03/states-levy-lid-lift-leads-big-tax-hike-south-kitsap/2856668001/)

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