

OPINION

Fiscal responsibility missing in South Kitsap schools

Lucinda Tharp, Port Orchard Published 8:43 p.m. PT March 20, 2019

Education funding has become a battleground of emotion in South Kitsap. There have been years of failed bond measures that attest to the taxpayers' lack of trust in the school district's management. The student's learning is not the priority with your dollars because of the salaries of administrators, directors and department heads.

The lack of fiscal discipline with the \$151 million budget is troubling. You might be surprised to know that our current three term, interim superintendent Mr. Karst Brandsma's annual salary plus benefits is \$244,508. He has a deputy and an assistant superintendent whose salaries are \$231,147 and \$210,515 respectively. This is simply the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Administrative positions and salaries. The school board and Mr. Brandsma are ultimately responsible.

Most employees were given 20 percent raises as well as increases in benefits this year. While teacher pay has always lagged terribly, soon those pay raises will not be sustainable.

Meanwhile the School Board is actively lobbying in Olympia with your legislators to increase the levy cap. These are funding shortfalls that will land once again on you the taxpayer.

We as a community we have had faith that because our children's educators and esteemed community leaders may mean well and that they know how to act in a fiscally responsible and accountable manner. Sadly, they don't.

To learn more visit www.citizensupportingsouthkitsapschools.com, consider attending school board meetings and or writing your state legislators to let them know you are concerned.

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