



## Debunking a few of SKSD Alternative Facts

The following is offered in hopes of 'clearing up' some of the "Alternative Facts" presented at the SKSD Board meeting held on 02-01-23, There will be other meetings to be reviewed and further discussed in the future.

The discussion about the new percentage of HS graduates was an error by the superintendent. He later admitted to Director Daily that he was wrong and that, yes, the district is now mandated to have a graduation rate of 90%. The District is now at 81%. The big cost lies ahead as only 52% of the 9th graders are on track for graduation at the moment.

The new policy also requires the academic scores to be published in the newspaper. So much for past habits of distorting or perhaps omitting the true academic achievement data... This reality presented in this past academic progress briefing hit home more many. This briefing reported about the same stats. as we previously been provided. In other words, little or no progress for all the money being thrown at the problem of 'stalled' academic improvement. One only needs to look up the data on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction website (OSPI) and you will see that SKSD is not doing better, regardless of what is being 'shoveled out' at in District academic briefings. In fact, the data shows that other districts are showing more progress than SKSD according to the OSPI's own data.

On the budget shortfall, the real figure is that the District is \$10,000,000.00 (perhaps even more) in the hole... SKSD had a chance two years ago to reduce staffing but refused to do so. The \$13M cushion now in SKSD reserves that are required by law. So, in reality, that money cannot be used for anything else. SKSD'S required reserve figure is \$12.2M which they cannot go below. The District is simply out of money due to the huge pay raises the unions got.

What about the pattern of giving overly generous pay raises? A 5.6% pay raise (COLA) and a 4% internal (paid by the district) is so far set to be paid. Most employees got a 9.6% pay raise this year that the District was not forthright about in explaining, so no one really knows about. It has been this way for many years, which is why the fund balance has been declining and is now out of money. Of course the District's preferred method to 'refill' these reserves is to just run more levies in order to make payroll. policy.

And how about the no discussion/debating consent agenda items policy (this is a Director Berg policy by the way). The real priority should be to discuss money matters when the board addresses the consent agenda items. However, since the board (driven by Berg) changed things so it is not possible. Why, primarily due to union influence of not wanting folks to know about the real financial issues of the district. This will not be changed until the consent agenda policy is scraped and re-created. Until this happens, no one will really know what is going on and where the money is really being spent.

The board majority claims that it is too costly to keep track of and account for (take inventories) the value of district property (assets) that fall below an arbitrary \$5,000 cap, This is absolutely not acceptable! Most businesses in the real world account for everything, which is why they are profitable. SKSD does in fact throw many "obsolete" items that normal businesses keep, as they don't have the taxpayer's money to replace at will. Many of the district's CONEX boxes are full of good furniture (that you will see if you ask to look inside them) regardless of what the superintendent said at the 02-01-23 board meeting. Why is there such waste? This is only partially due to COVID, as the district got rid of many long tables at considerable cost. Remember the six-foot student separation rule that was later reduced to three feet? Then, with COVID gone, they bought new tables again, to replace those sitting in the CONEX boxes. There is nothing wrong with those discarded tables. This means the district paid for them twice, and this is going on all the time. with many other district equipment, furniture,

and assets. But because they are under the \$5K threshold to report and account for, no one tracks any of this. And of we are of course the piggy bank that enables this waste to continue to occur.

Obviously it is of prime importance to keep things correct since the bond is coming up and the district is going to embellish everything possible to get the bond passed.