

Olympia School District: Administration Budget Proposal for the 2011-12 School Year

The Challenge

Olympia School District (OSD) enrollment has declined for several years; additional decline is expected for the 2011-12 SY.

State funding for basic education continues to be inadequate.

- Pupil transportation is underfunded by approximately 45%.
- State class size funding is among the worst in the nation.
- Programs for students who receive special services continue to be subsidized by local funds.
- The Legislature reduced district funding by over \$3 million beginning in the 2009-10 school year, and another \$1.6 million per year beginning in the 2010-11 school year.
- On top of these reductions, in December 2010, the Legislature confiscated 18% of the Olympia School District reserve, by reducing the reserve by \$671,000.
- Federal stimulus funding, first granted to the district in 2008, will expire for the 2011-12 SY. In addition, the Legislature has confiscated the latest installment of federal stimulus funding, \$1.9 million for OSD.

On top of inadequate funding and prior funding reductions, the 2011 Legislature appears poised to reduced funding again for the 2011-12 school year by \$2.3 million.

- This reduction equates to 29 teaching and other certificated staff.

Good News

Olympia School District will likely end the 2010-11 school year with a 4.3% reserve.

- This reserve has been generated by OSD staff doing more with less during prior years and in the current year. Our reserve is also made possible by parent and community support to fund-raise and fill in where district funds cannot and by our local levy.
- This reserve will off-set some cuts for the 2011-12 SY. This good news is tempered by the fact that the district is drawing down reserve funds in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years, and cannot continue this draw-down in the 2012-13 school year.

Administration Response

The Administration Budget Proposal for the 2011-12 SY is in response to these challenges and is designed around several goals.

- Reduce administration and other non-classroom expenditures as much as possible.
- Keep kindergarten class sizes small; class sizes will rarely exceed 23 students.
- Retain services to students, especially core academic programs.
- Keep the reduction-in-force for teachers as low as possible.

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- Maintain specialized programs that help students with complex needs.
- Continue direct services to preschool students at current levels.

Many administrative and support reductions can be taken to soften the financial blow to the classroom.

- Administration is reduced by 3%, or \$150,000. OSD continues to maintain a very low expenditure rate for central administration. If OSD spent the same percentage on central administration as expended by other districts, OSD would spend about an additional \$653,000 for central administration.
- Transportation expenditures will be reduced by \$130,000 by revising our school bell schedules. The revised schedule permits more efficient routing of buses and the district will expend less on fuel, and less on driver time.
- Athletics and Activities reductions of \$72,000: Two reductions are proposed. First, combine the CHS and OHS gymnastics and swim teams and reduce drill team from 2 seasons to 1 season. Second, create an intramural middle school sports program.
- Reduce custodial hours, especially in use of substitute custodians; \$115,000.
- Reduce building supply budgets by 10-15%, depending on school size; \$100,000.
- Implement new fees: preschool for typically developing, non-low income children (\$60 per week), on-line education for out-of-district students (\$190 per course), high school classes in excess of 6 (\$190 per semester), increase breakfast and lunch meal prices (25 cents per meal).
- Increase facility rental fees to the level currently charged by a neighboring school district; \$21,000.

Reductions to education programs cannot be avoided; every effort has been made to avoid damaging reductions.

- Reduce the Program for Academically Talented Students (PATS, gifted education) funding, by adjusting start and end times to accommodate the new transportation and bell schedule. Students see a reduction in PATS classroom time by about 1 hour and 20 minutes per day. PATS would continue to be designed around small, specialized class sizes.
- Reduce preschool teacher time devoted to home visits and extra planning. Students would be served the same number of hours per week; special needs families would receive 2 home visits per year instead of 1 per month. Families continue to have complete access to teachers for 30 minutes before and after school.
- Increase elementary class size by about 2 per class, at grades 1-5. This is consistent with the new state funding schedule which provides 1 teacher for each 25 students in grades K-3. (OSD continues to subsidize kindergarten class size at about 23 students where the state pays for 1 teacher for each 25 students.)
- Increase secondary class size by 1.3 students from 28.7 students per teacher/section to 30 students per teacher/section. This represents an increase in the average; as is the case today, class sizes will vary depending on content and student interest.