



Fully fund special education

The district applauds the Legislature for the increase toward special education funding. We are asking legislators to take a more deliberate approach to fully fund special education. Mukilteo School District spent **\$9 million** from local levy funds in 2021-22 and is slated to spend **\$13 million**, or 8 percent, for special education costs this year to support and provide services to our students.

As a reminder during the 2018 McCleary decision, local levy funds were capped. Last year, 13.58 percent of our students received special education services. We appreciate Safety Net dollars, however the extensive staff time to apply, along with using local dollars all year until Safety Net dollars are received in August, is a fiscal impact.

Provide equitable resources for staffing and unfunded mandates

Funding for critical staff, such as nurses, social workers, counselors and safety and security staffing fell short by **\$3.1 million** last year. Mukilteo School District urges the Legislature to provide the resources to support each student to achieve successful outcomes and recruit, support, and retain effective staff who reflect the diversity of our student populations, including ethnicity and gender. Mukilteo School District would like to thank the Legislature for beginning a phased-in allocation for enhanced staff, specifically to meet students' needs for social, emotional, safety, and behavioral health.

We urge you to continue implementation of the Phase 1 recommendations by improving prototypical school funding model levels for school principals to promote school cultures of learning and growth, supporting students by meeting social-emotional and mental health needs and addressing increased responsibilities in supervisory duties of their staff. The current model allocates a minimum number of paraeducators who are vital to supporting students and teachers in their classrooms. While learning loss is real, the need to increase paraeducators via the prototypical model is critical. The current funding model does not adequately staff our schools to support basic education.

Support basic education compensation rebase

Current law (EHB 2242 adopted in 2017) requires the Legislature beginning in 2023 to regularly review and rebase minimum salaries, including regionalization, to ensure salary allocations align with staffing costs for the state's basic education program. Mukilteo School District's current regionalization is 1.18. We started at 1.24 and have incrementally decreased to 1.18; regionalization factors must be adjusted using school districts' labor markets rather than cost of housing alone. The total loss in revenue for Mukilteo School District is **\$12 million**.

Fix pupil transportation

Under STARS, the current pupil transportation funding model, Mukilteo School District will experience a funding shortfall of **\$1 million** for the 2022-23 school year. We appreciate the 2022



Legislature's provisions of additional funding to address the excess costs of transporting special passengers. The current system does not consider the increase in wages (specifically due to the Implicit Price Deflator). Not only is there a shortfall, but the lack of transparency in the current system makes it impossible to accurately forecast with the coefficients changing each year.

Invest in learning recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the long-term use of remote learning, which was detrimental to many students. The 2021 Legislature recognized this and provided significant investments to support learning recovery and acceleration. These were supported with one-time funds, but the critical need still exists. Ongoing resources are needed to expand learning opportunities for tutoring, additional instruction time and to offer more student supports to address long-term impacts from the pandemic. Our students need more, and we are being held back by funding.

Budget reductions – the “perfect storm”

The four contributing factors have culminated in a “perfect storm” leaving a need to reduce our budget by 6 to 8 percent (**\$20 to 25 million**):

- Decreased enrollment
- Lingering McCleary Case outcomes
- Inadequate state funding
- End of one-time federal funding

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