

**NOTICE:** The meeting will be open to the public via live broadcast on KRVM 1280-AM, the internet at [www.4j.lane.edu/stream](http://www.4j.lane.edu/stream) or Zoom Webinar at <https://zoom.us/j/98003667075?pwd=a1JFR0JKNHRNVFdyTGv1TjVYRnhwQT09> (Passcode: 513563)

Public Comment: Interested residents can submit a request to provide public comment during the meeting by sending an email request to [budget\\_comm@4j.lane.edu](mailto:budget_comm@4j.lane.edu) with the subject line "Public Comment Request." The deadline is noon (12 p.m.) on Monday before the Budget Committee meeting. District staff will contact requesters after the deadline to notify them whether they have been selected to speak and, if so, when and how to connect to provide public comment to the Budget Committee.

Residents can continue to submit written comments via email to [budget\\_comm@4j.lane.edu](mailto:budget_comm@4j.lane.edu), with "Written Public Comment" in the subject line. The Budget Committee members will read and take into consideration all comments submitted by noon on the day of the meeting.

**6:00 PM  
Budget Committee Meeting**

- I. **6:00 p.m. Regular Budget Committee Meeting:**
  - 1. Call to Order, Roll Call (6:00 p.m.)
  - 2. PowerPoint Presentation - March 28, 2022 2
- II. Items for Action at this Meeting
  - 1. Committee Administration: 48
    - 1. Approval of Minutes for February 28th and March 14th Budget Committee Meetings
- III. Items Raised by the Audience (6:05 p.m.)
- IV. Items for Information
  - 1. Development of the 4J Other Funds Budget for District Operations (6:20 p.m.)
  - 2. Information Items Related to Questions Raised by Budget Committee Members (6:50 p.m.)
- V. Budget Committee Wrap-up (7:25 p.m.)
  - a. Items Raised by Committee Members
  - b. Agenda Items for Next Meeting
- VI. Adjourn (7:30 p.m.)

THIS MEETING WILL BE BROADCAST OVER KRVM-AM (1280)

INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING:

To request interpreter services for this meeting, please call (541) 790-7850 or TDD (541) 790-7712 or the TDD Relay Number 1 (800) 735-2900



# Budget Committee

March 28, 2022



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# Agenda

- Committee Administration
- Public Comment
- Items for Information
  - Development of Other Funds Budget for District Operation
  - Questions Raised by Committee Members
- Committee Wrap-up



# Committee Administration



- Approval of Minutes for the February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Budget Committee Meeting

# Public Comment





# Other Funds Budget for District Operations





# Federal, State and Local Programs

- Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Grant - \$14.7 million
- Student Investment Account (SIA) - \$13.3 million in 2022-23 plus possible carryover of \$2.5 million
- Title programs (I, II, III & IV) – \$5.4 million 7
- High School Success Grant (Measure 98) - \$4.4 million
  - Spending plan for CTE Opportunities, Expending IB/AP and Dropout Prevention Strategies
- ESSER II Grant - \$4.2 million
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) – \$3.4 million
- IDEA American Rescue Plan (ARP) - \$0.8 million



# ESSER III

2022-23 will be the first full year of ESSER III spending:

- \$3.7 million for building improvements
- \$2.0 million for Summer School
- \$1.4 million for Staffing Pool
- \$1.2 million for 2 additional days for licensed staff
- \$0.8 million for BEST After School Program expansion
- \$0.9 million for Instruction software
- \$0.7 million for Technology staff + supplies/software
- \$0.8 million for Instruction Dept initiatives

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## ESSER III

- \$0.6 million for Nutrition Services staff + supplies
- \$0.6 million for Transportation staff + supplies
- \$0.6 million for increased utility costs + supplies
- \$0.6 million for Charter Schools
- \$0.3 million for Student Services Dept staffing – Fox Hollow campus and technology support
- \$0.3 million for school supplies
- \$0.1 million for website redesign + parent communication app
- \$0.1 million for Translation Specialist



# Student Investment Account (SIA)

- 3<sup>RD</sup> Grade Reading - \$3.5 million including staffing of 16.63 FTE classified and 11.50 FTE licensed positions as well as approximately \$1.2 million in program services and supplies
- Wraparound Support Teams - \$3.0 million will provide 17.0 additional FTE and funding supports for: three HR Coordinators, a Suicide Prevention Coordinator, a Counselor, three School Social Workers, three Nurses, an Instructional Operations Coordinator, two Mental Health Specialists, and four Equity Coordinators as well as approximately \$1.0 million in program services and supplies
- Behavior Framework - \$2.2 million will provide 19.5 additional FTE and funding supports for: eight Behavior Support Assistants, a Behavior Threat Assessment Specialist, six Student Success Coordinators, a Teacher on Special Assignment and three and a half School Psychologists as well as approximately \$0.3 million in program services and supplies

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# Student Investment Account (SIA)

- Learning For All - \$2.2 million will provide 14.6 additional FTE and funding supports for: five Program Coordinators (Affinity Groups), four Facilitating Teachers, a little over four Teacher Program Mentors, a Director of Equity, Inclusion and Instruction and a part-time Teacher on Special Assignment as well as \$0.7 million in program supports
- Emergent Bilingual Student Success Plan - \$1.0 million will provide 4.0 FTE for additional ELL teachers and a coordinator position (classified) along with other program needs
- BEST After School & Summer Programs - \$0.9 million will provide 5.15 FTE and funding for BEST and summer programs
- Class Size Reduction - \$0.8 million will fund 6.6 FTE licensed teaching positions

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# Student Investment Account (SIA)

- Charter Schools - \$0.6 million in payments to charter schools
- High School Student Success - \$0.5 million for 4.0 FTE licensed teachers for 9<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities Studies
- Indirect - \$0.5 million for indirect grant support charges
- NATIVES Program - \$0.3 million will provide 2.0 FTE and additional funding for this program
- Grant Oversight - \$0.2 million for 1.0 FTE professional and 1.0 FTE licensed to support the financial and reporting requirements of the grant
- Affinity Group Supports - \$0.1 million to support affinity groups

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# ESSER II

ESSER II spending will wrap up in 2022-23:

- \$1.1 million for technology
- \$0.6 million for Student Services Dept staffing – Fox Hollow campus and 504 Plan support
- \$0.6 million for Transportation staff
- \$0.6 million for Eugene Online Academy staff
- \$0.4 million for Charter Schools
- \$0.3 million for campus safety staff
- \$0.2 million for Human Resources staff
- \$0.2 million for Facilities staff
- \$0.2 million for Nutrition Services staff

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# High School Success

4J is projected to have \$4.4 million in grant funding for 2022-23. Spending will be focused as follows:

- Career & Technical Education Expansion - \$1.3 million<sup>14</sup> for 7.0 FTE of CTE teaching staff, program staffing and classroom supports
- College Opportunities/AVID - \$0.3 million including 0.25 FTE for AVID coordination



# High School Success

- Drop-out Prevention - \$2.8 million for staffing and program supports as follows:
  - Teaching staff (5.7 FTE)
  - Educational Assistants (3.75 FTE)
  - 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition Coordinators (4.0 FTE)
  - Counselors (2.0 FTE)
  - Program Coordinator (0.5 FTE)
  - Program supports (\$1.15 million)

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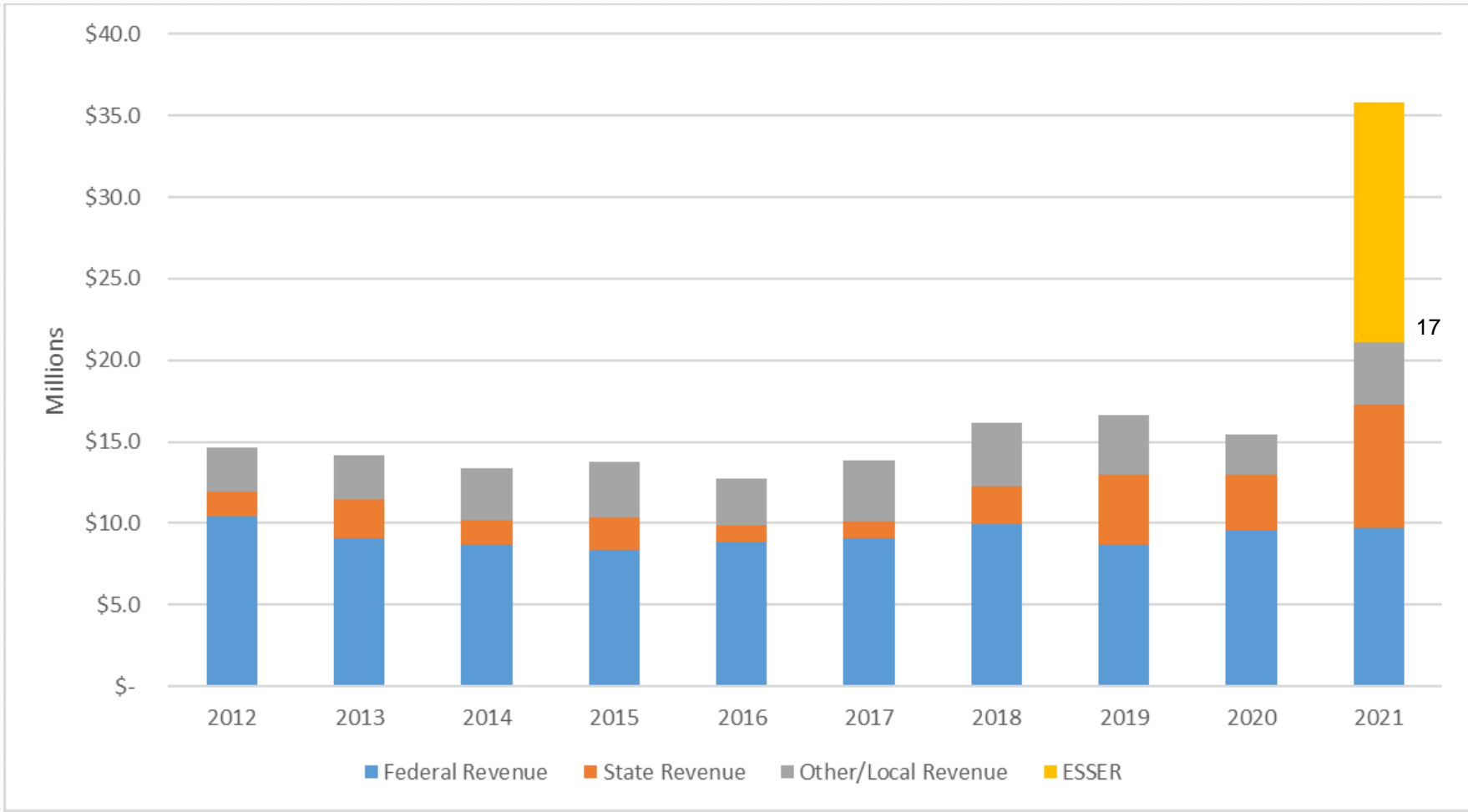
# Pending - Summer School Grants

- Statewide funding is estimated at \$100 million, roughly half of the funding available for 2021 summer grants
- It is expected that funding will continue to be split – 75% provided by ODE and 25% district match
- The district may have Student Investment Account and High School Success carry-over funds to meet the 25% district match. ESSER funds are also budgeted for summer school operations
- District staff are already planning for summer programming and beginning the hiring process for staffing

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# Grant Funding





# Special Purpose Reserves

## District Operations (Fund 290)

General Fund transfers support:

- Curriculum
- Staff Technology
- Prioritized projects that support district-wide operations

Note: no GF transfers are scheduled for 2022-23 for staff technology

## Capital Purchases (Fund 490)

General Fund transfers support:

- Equipment purchases
- Fleet purchases (buses, activity vans and maintenance vehicles)
- Student Technology

Note: no GF transfers are scheduled for 2022-23 for equipment purchases or student technology



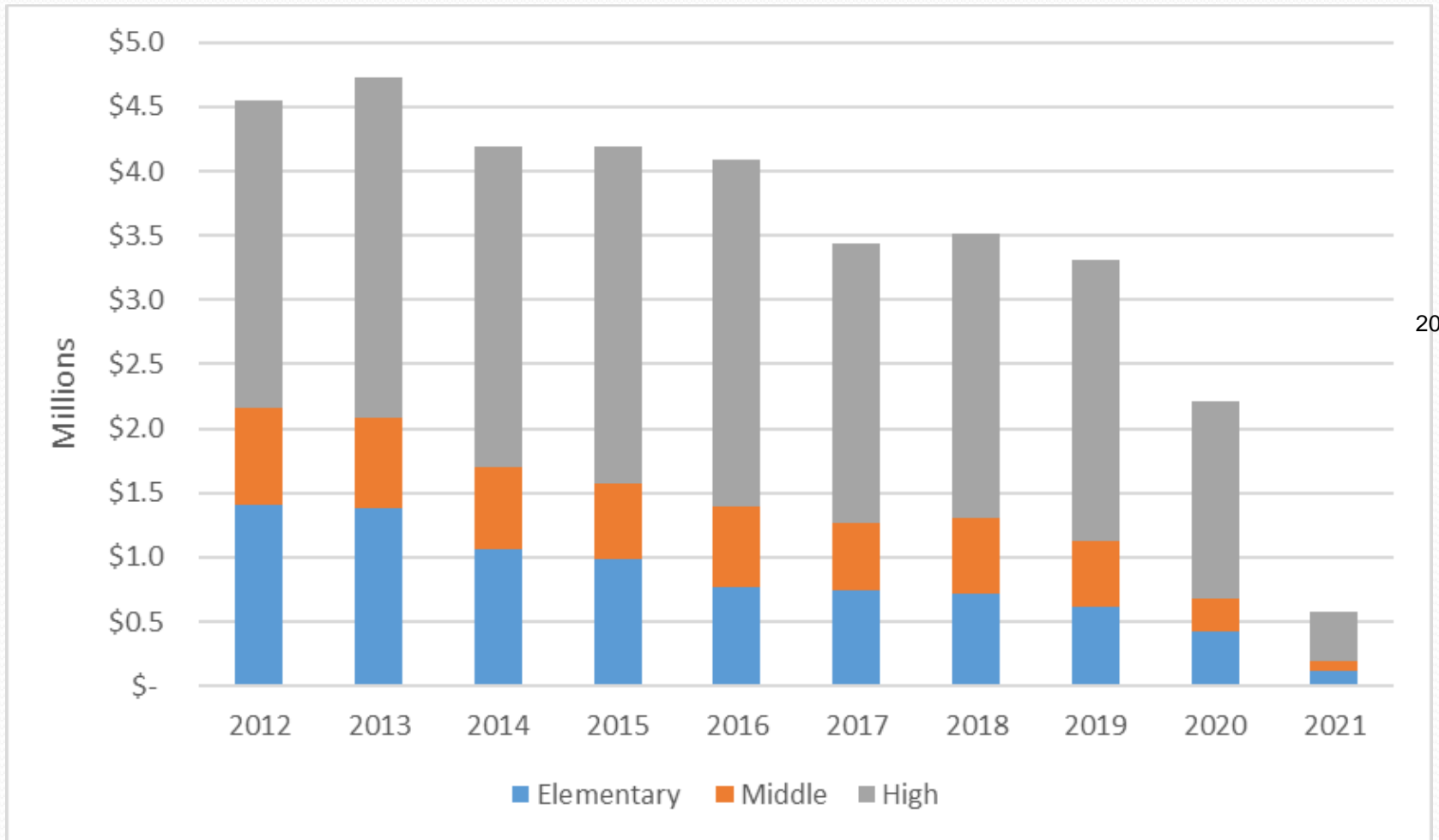
# Student Body Funds

Each school maintains a student body account to manage and support the financial activities of:

- Student Government
- School clubs, events and athletic teams
- Scholarships, donations and other accounts for the benefit of students
- Fundraising



# Student Body Spending



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# Pension Bond Debt Service

## What We Pay

PERS 2004 bond principal and interest paid via 4.85% charge against District payroll

## What We Get

A reduction of 5.56% in our PERS rate applied to eligible employee salaries

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## 2022-23 Budget

Net savings of approximately \$770,000 in personnel costs for the next school year

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# General Obligation Bond Debt Service

Annual debt service levy approved by the Board funds principal and interest payments on bonds issued under the 2002, 2011, 2013 and 2018 bond measures. Factors impacting this budget include:

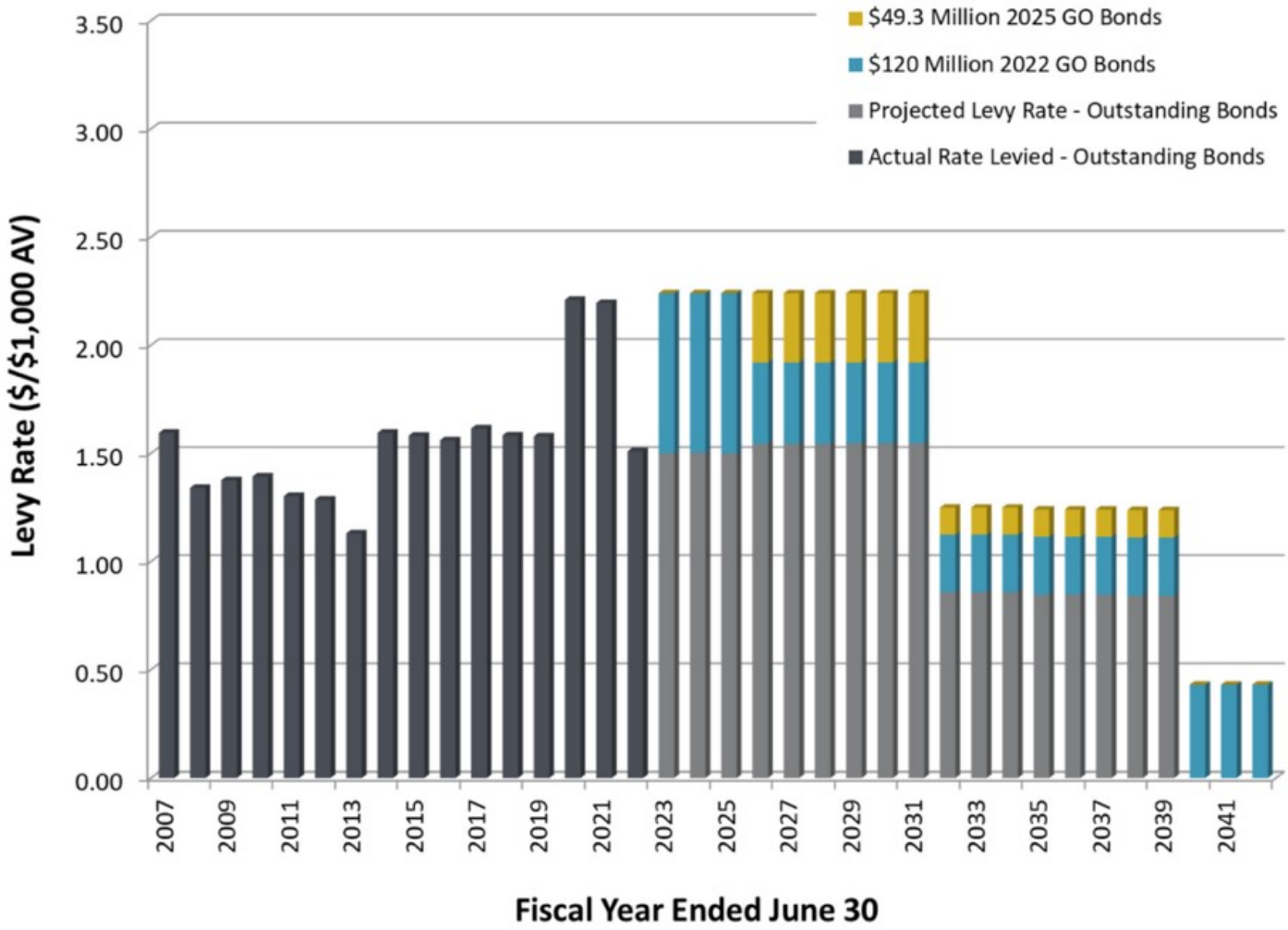
22

- Advanced Refunding bond sale in the fall of 2020
- Upcoming \$120 million par bond sale for the 2018 bond measure



## LANE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4J (EUGENE)

### Remaining 2018 General Obligation Bond Authorization – Two Sales of Remaining Authorization (Scenario 1)





# Debt Service Tax Levy Rate

## LANE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4J (EUGENE)

### General Obligation Bonds – Summary of Structuring Scenario

<b>Structure</b>	<b>Three Sales</b>		
<b>Total Par Amount</b>	<b>\$319,300,000</b>		
<b>Dated Dates</b>	<b>4/11/19, 6/15/21 &amp; 6/15/23</b>		
<b>Final Maturity</b>	<b>6/15/2041</b>		
<b>Total Term</b>	<b>22.18 Years</b>		
<b>Projected Average Levy Rates*</b>			
	<b>Prior Debt</b>	<b>New Bonds</b>	<b>Combined</b>
2018.....	\$ 1.58	\$ -	\$ 1.58
2019.....	1.58	-	1.58
2020-2025.....	1.37	0.87	2.24
2026-2031.....	1.08	1.17	2.24
2032-2034.....	0.57	1.02	1.58
2035-2037.....	0.14	1.44	1.58
2038-2039.....	-	1.58	1.58
2040-2041.....	-	0.58	0.58
<b>Increase over 2019 Rate</b>		<b>\$0.66</b>	

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# Capital Projects

## Fund 400

- 2.25 FTE (9 custodial positions at 0.25 FTE/each) for ongoing athletic field maintenance
- Building and athletic field repairs and maintenance

## Fund 450

- Building and site improvements
- Real estate and property consulting 25
- Program relocation moving costs
- Preventative maintenance (0.5 FTE)



# Capital Projects

## Fund 410

### 2013 Bond Measure

- Capital repairs & improvements (\$2.5M)

## Fund 420

### 2011 Bond Measure

- Building improvements and upgrades (\$2.0M)

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## Fund 460

### 2018 Bond Measure

- North Eugene, Edison and Camas Ridge rebuilds (\$67.6M)
- Curriculum adoptions (\$2.6M)
- Bond staffing (\$1.5M)
- Title IX Projects/CTE Shop (\$1.0 million)
- Technology (\$1.0M)

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# Nutrition Services

*31 4J kitchens across the district serving breakfast and lunch at multiple locations*

## Highlights:

- 19 schools now part of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program – 13 elementary locations, four middle school locations and three other program locations (ECCO, Eugene Online Academy and Fox Hollow Campus)
- Free breakfast for all elementary students

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# Risk Management

Resources: workers compensation and unemployment assessments against District payroll, insurance claims and General Fund support (transfer of \$340,000)

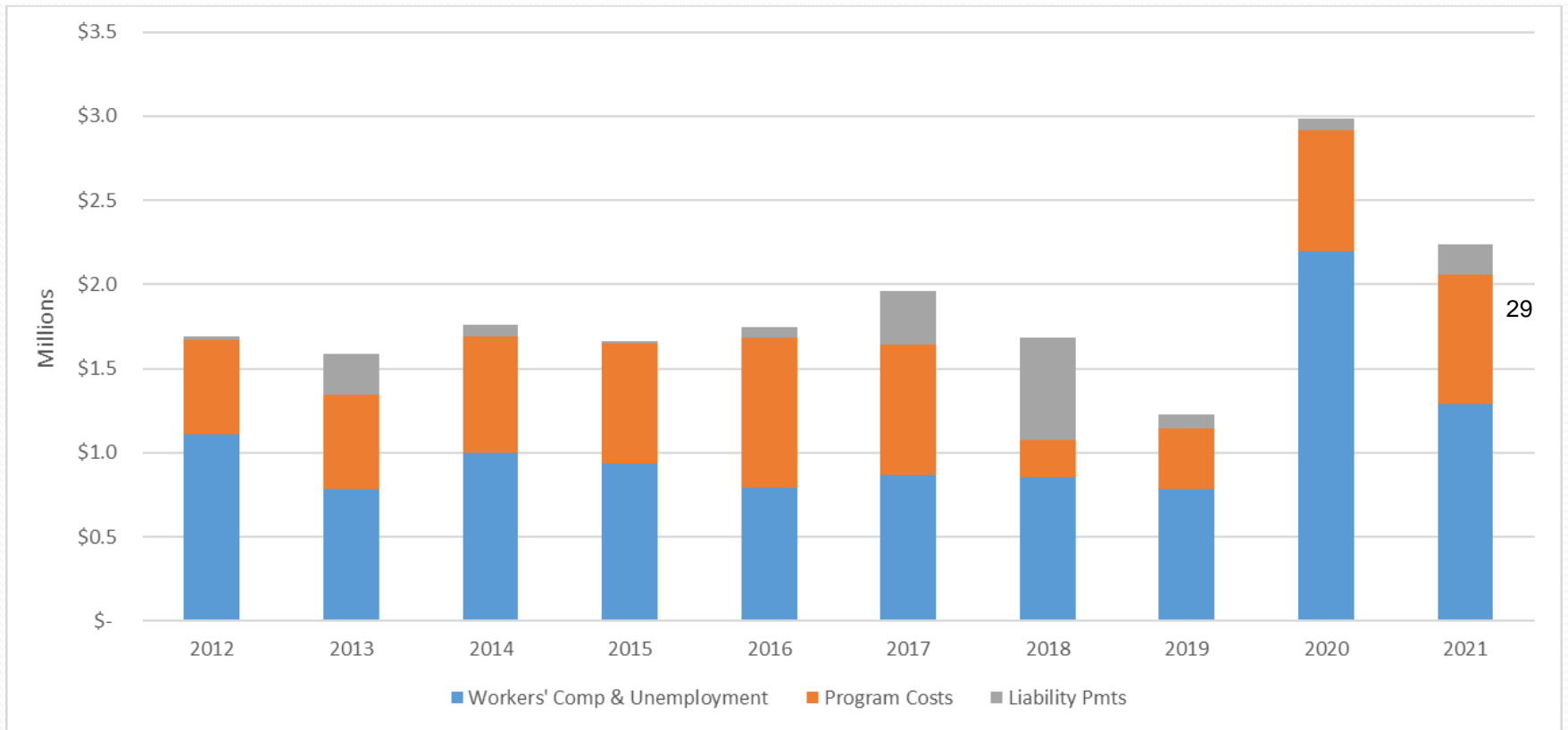
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Requirements: workers compensation and unemployment insurance payments, return to work and other employee programs, replacement of lost/stolen/damaged District property, payment of claims and settlements, and investigations and other risk-related legal services

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# Risk Management Operations



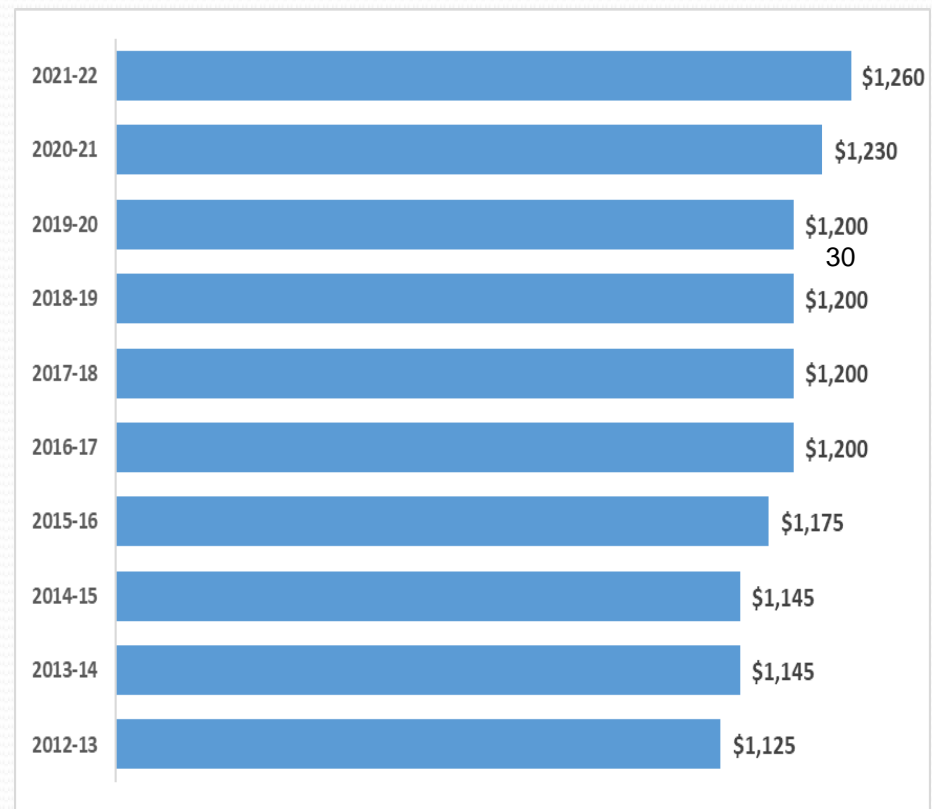


# Licensed Reserve Fund

## Budget

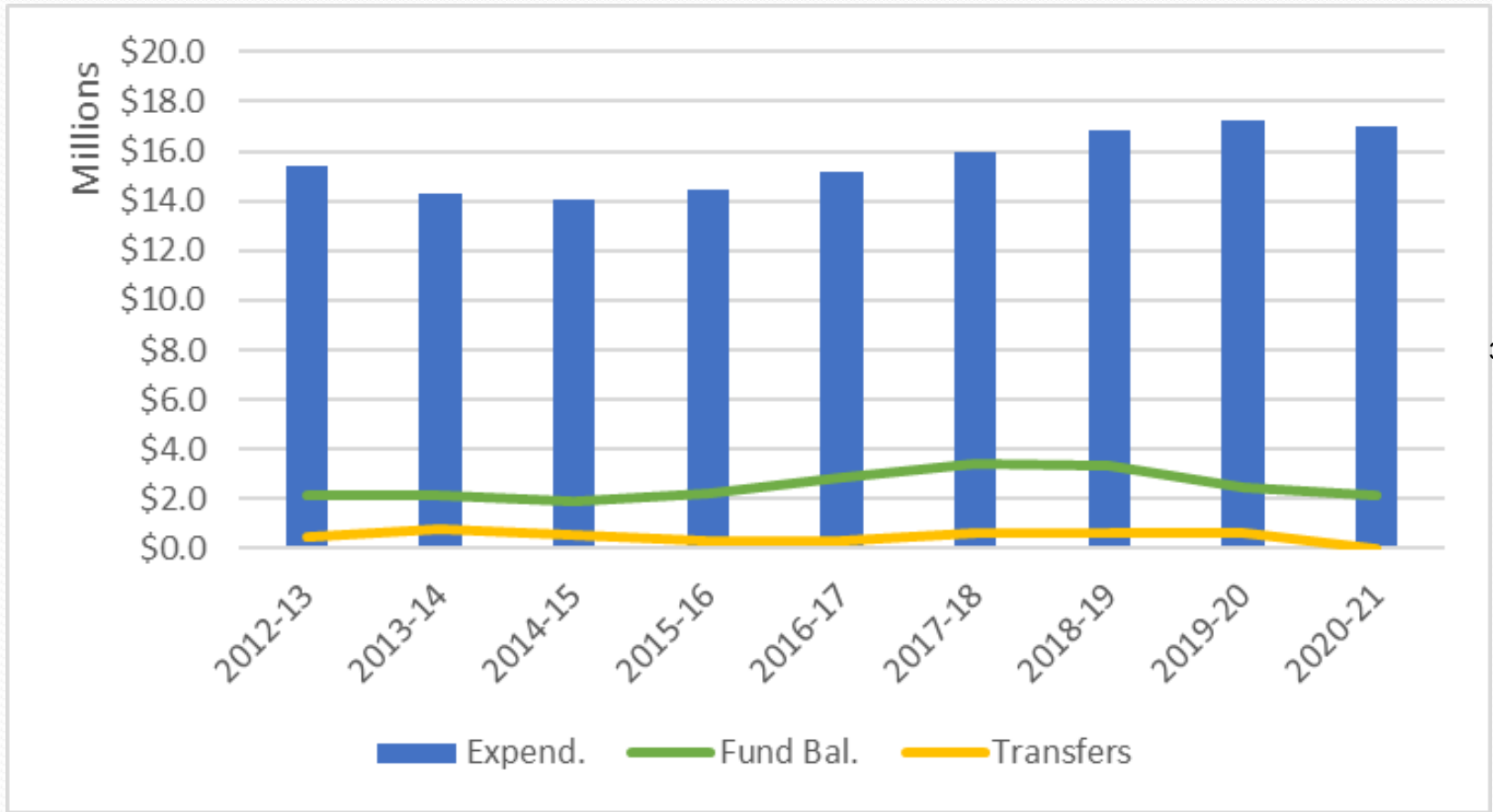
## District Contribution for full time employee

- Resources: District insurance contributions, TSA savings transfers and employee insurance payments
- Requirements: Payments for insurance coverage and program administration (0.5 FTE Licensed Benefits Coordinator and office supplies)





# Licensed Reserve Fund



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2017-20 EEA Agreement: beginning in 2020, this reserve fund balance is limited to \$2.5 million.

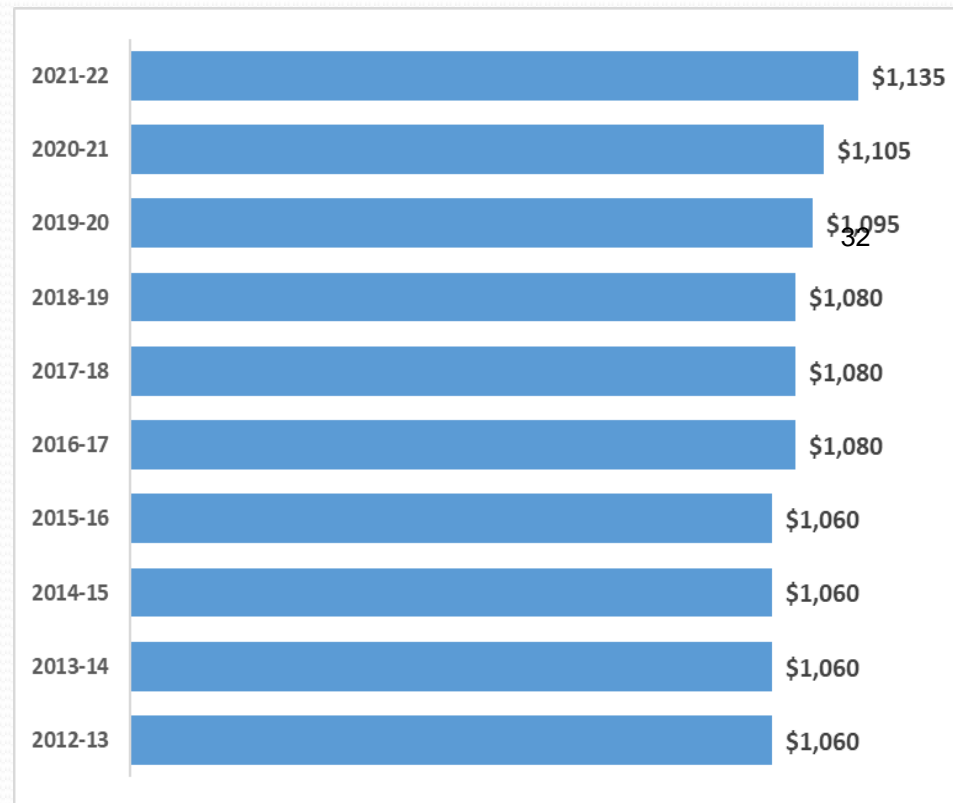


# Classified Reserve Fund

## Budget

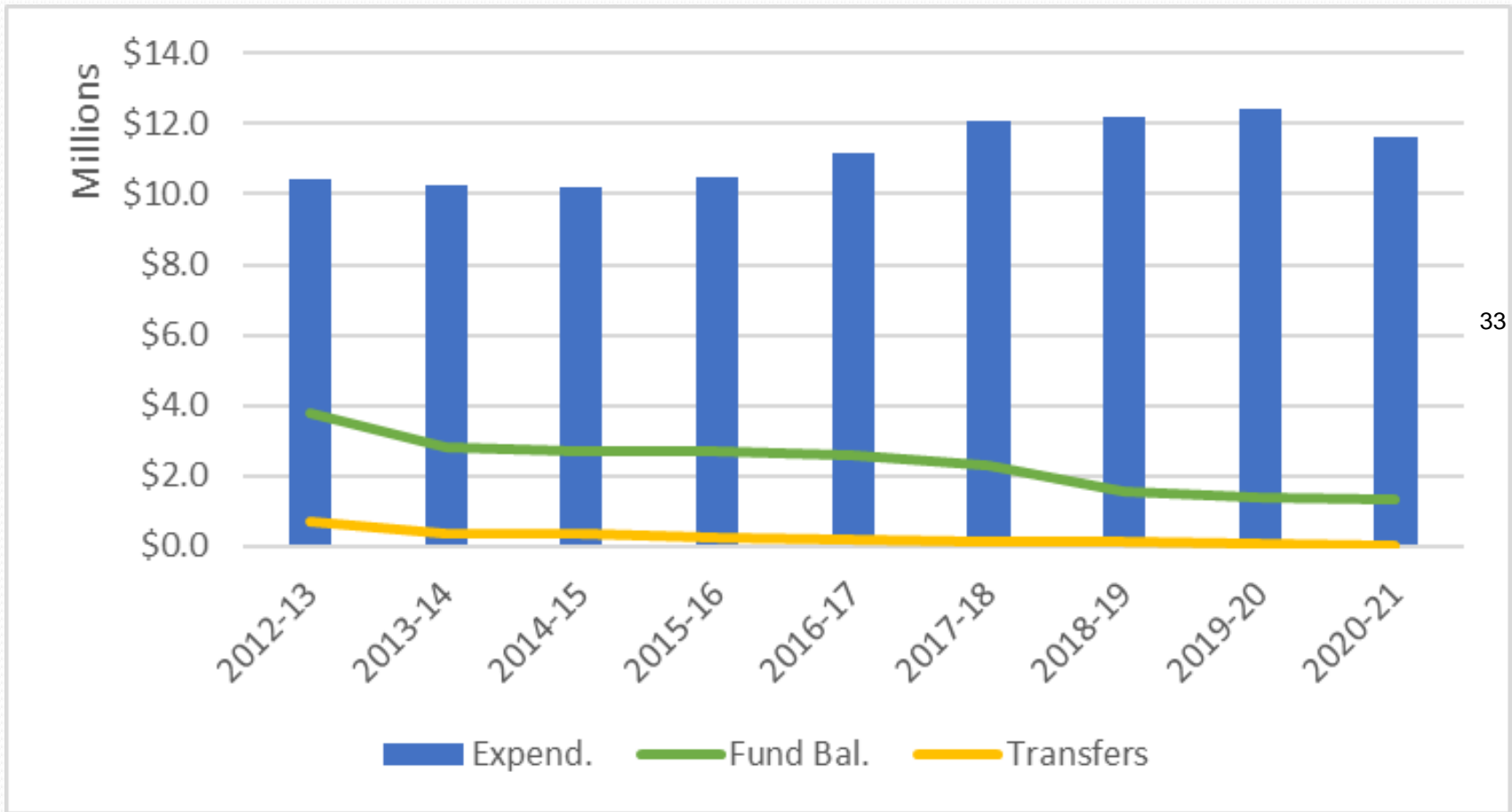
- Resources: District insurance contributions, TSA savings transfers and employee insurance payments
- Requirements: Payments for insurance coverage and program administration (office supplies)

## District Contribution for full time employee





# Classified Reserve Fund



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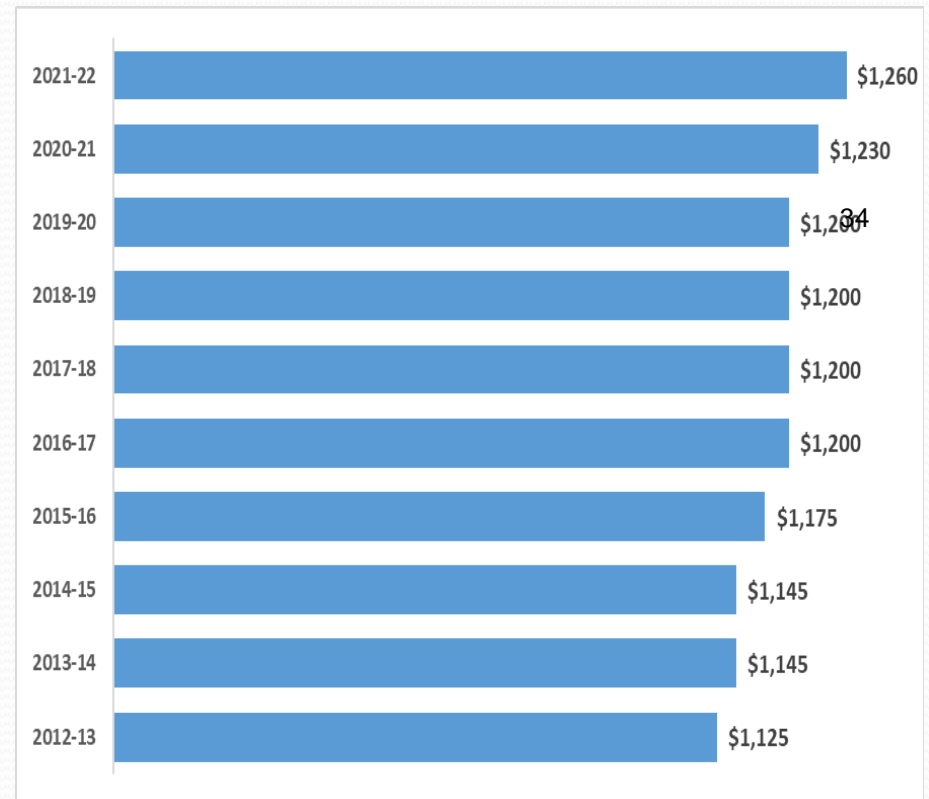


# Administrative Reserve Fund

## Budget

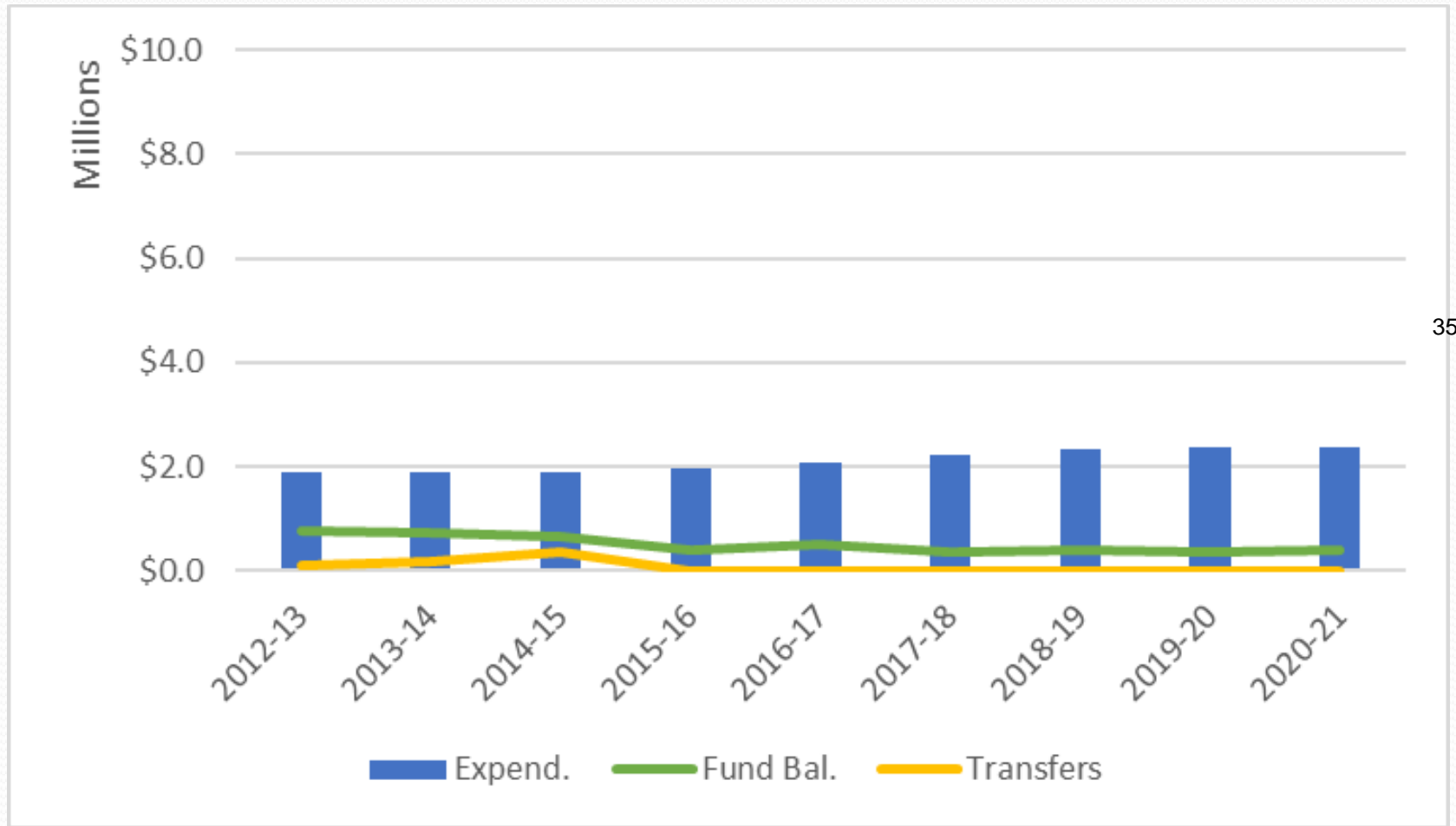
- Resources: District insurance contributions, TSA savings transfers and employee insurance payments
- Requirements: Payments for insurance coverage and program administration (office supplies)

## District Contribution for full time employee





# Administrative Reserve Fund



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# The Wellness Clinic

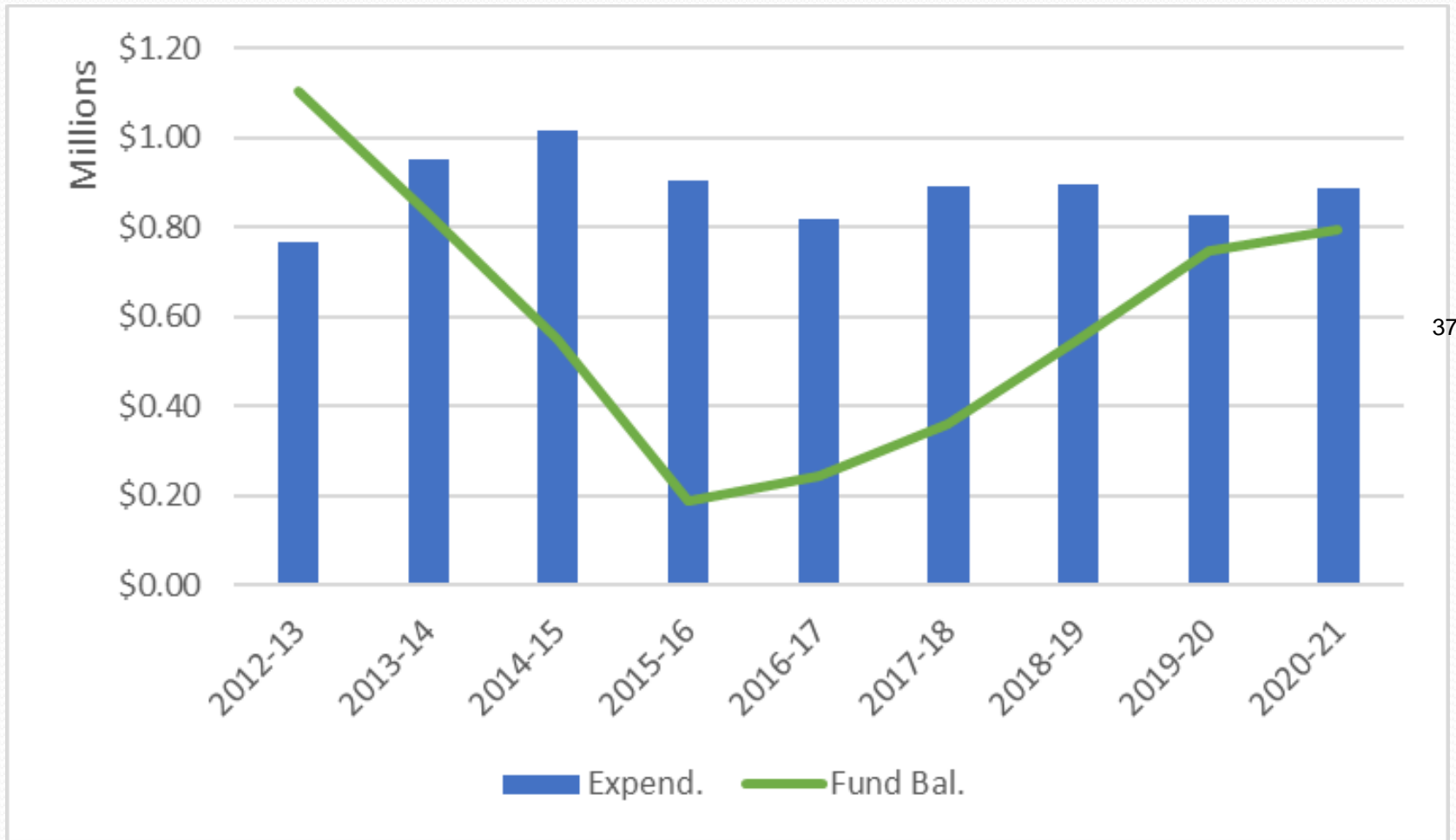
*A health care service, located at the District's Ed Center, available to most 4J employees since October of 1988*

Resources: funding is provided through a \$20/employee<sup>36</sup> monthly contribution and insurance billings for services provided

Requirements: clinic expenses include contractual payment to Cascade Health Solutions for healthcare services and miscellaneous office expenses



# The Wellness Clinic



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# Postemployment Benefits Fund

## Early Termination Stipend Benefits:

- Early retirement incentive plan previously offered to licensed and administrative employees
- Liability is currently \$1.1 million

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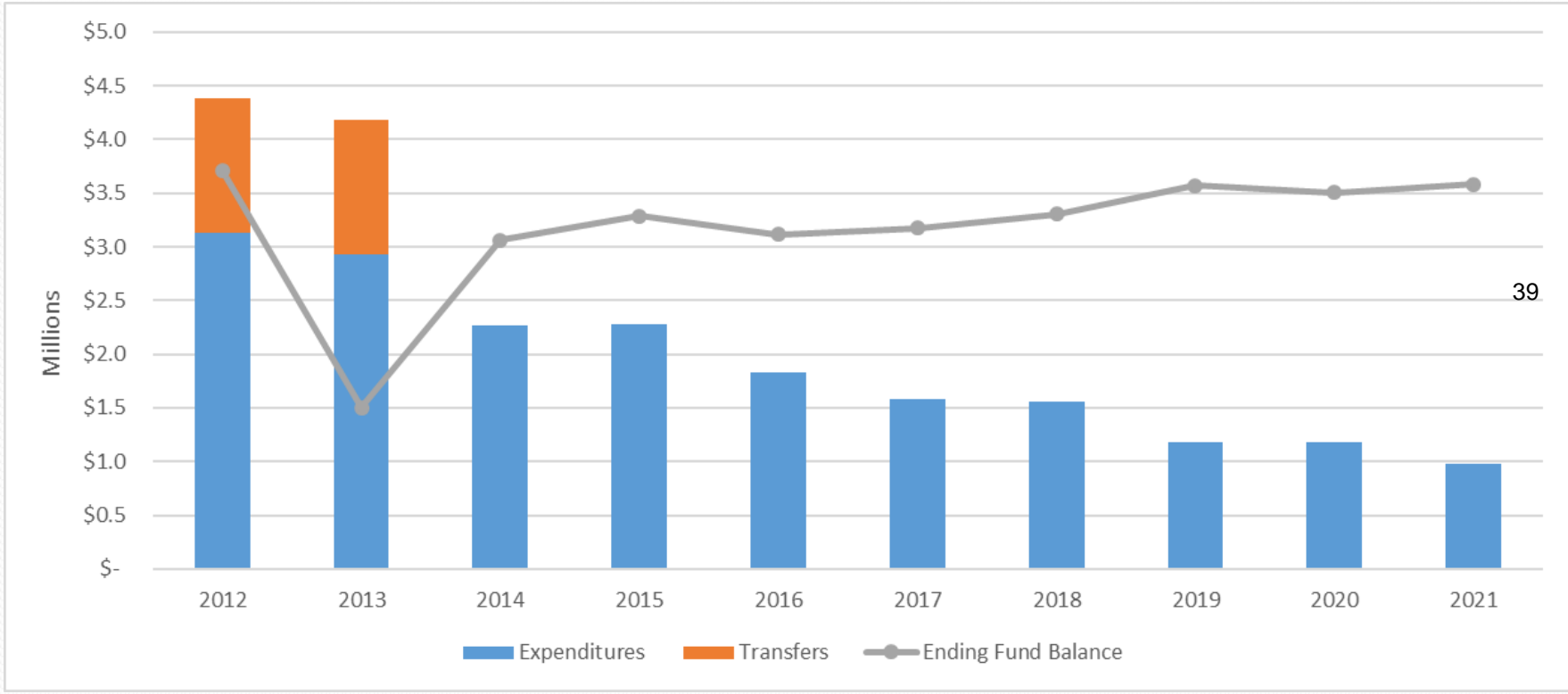
## Postemployment Medical and Life Insurance Benefits:

- Available to licensed, classified and administrative employees and their dependents
- Coverage typically continues until Medicare eligibility
- Liability is currently \$15.3 million

*General Fund Support for 2021-22: \$1.0 million*

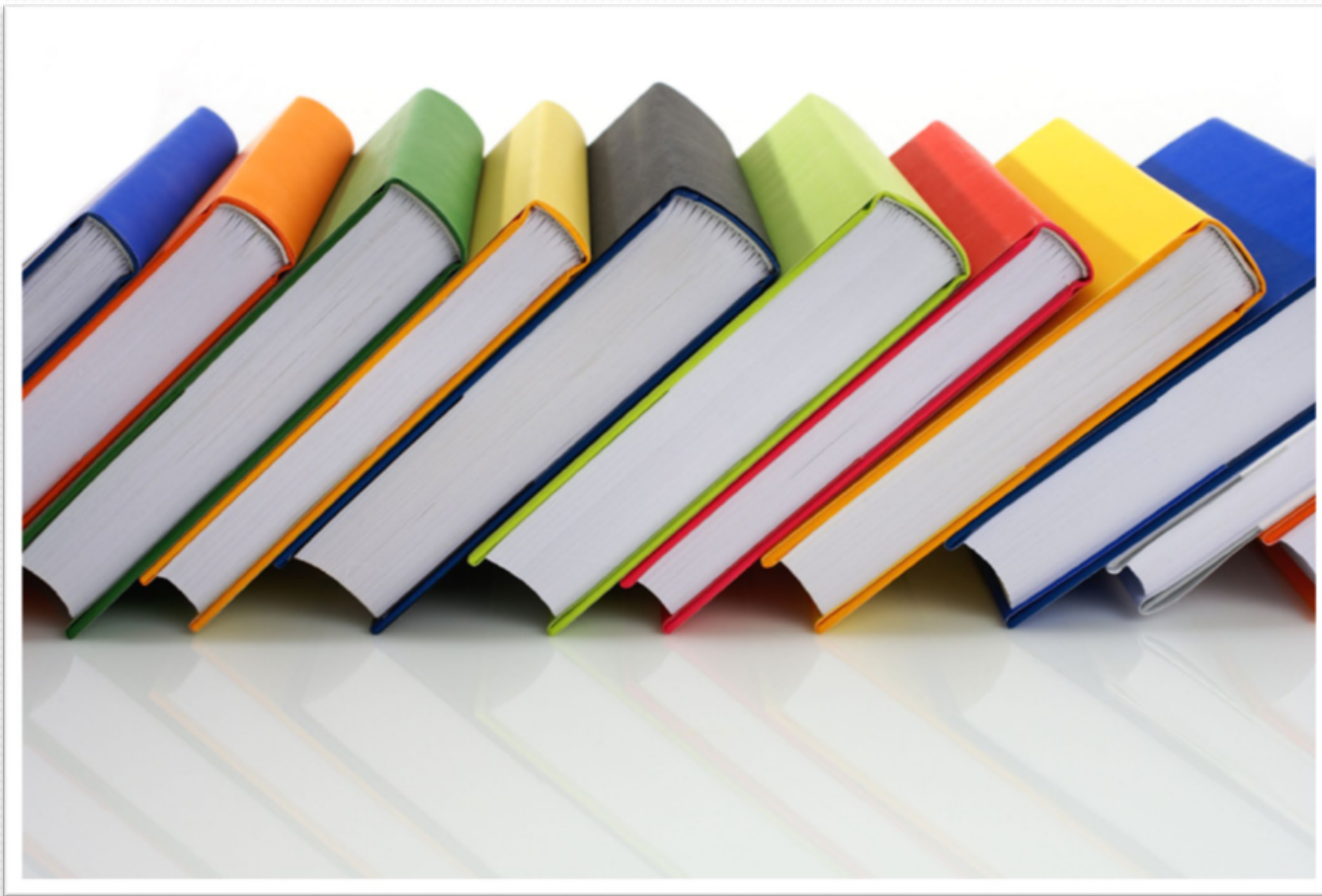


# Postemployment Benefits Fund





# Questions Raised by Committee Members





# Elementary Librarians Pilot

- The cost to add a librarian would be approximately \$116,760 a year (average teacher cost)
- We will have 13 Title I elementary schools in the 2022-2023 school year
- Our top five elementary schools receiving Title I funding Cesar E Chavez, Howard, Bertha Holt, McCornack and Family School.

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Potential Funding: ESSER III staffing pool funds (approx. \$1.4 million/year) are available for the next 2 years.



# South Eugene HS Child Development Center

This program is currently down a staff person due to a vacancy that has proven hard to fill. The licensed position requires a CTE teaching designation for child development, which is not widely held by teaching staff. The funding for this position, however, has always remained in the budget and will continue into the 2022-23 school year.

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# Kids Eat Free Next Year?

The federal government will not continue their support for free meals for all in the coming school year.

Given 4J's current CEP participation level (19 schools), it would cost \$650,000 next year to continue feeding all students for free. This cost jumps to \$1.7 million in the 2024-25 school year, when CEP school eligibility is expected to decline to 4 schools.

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Funding to replace this revenue in the Nutrition Services fund must come from non-federal funds (e.g. General Fund, private grants or donations).



# Current Social/Emotional Health Supports at 4J

## 4J Staffing:

- School Psychologists
- Social Workers
- Mental Health Therapists
- School-based Counselors
- Behavior Consultants
- Behavior Support staff
- Behavioral Safety Assessment Coordinator
- Student Success Coordinators (ELEM)
- Nurses
- Suicide Prevention Coordinator
- Regional Equity Coordinators

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# Current Social/Emotional Health Supports at 4J

Partnerships including:

- Roseburg Therapy
- HOOTS
- Oregon Social Learning Center
- Looking Glass
- School-based Health Centers – Peace Health (Churchill/North)
- Lines for Life
- Lane County Behavioral Health
- NEW - Care Solace



# Potential New Social/Emotional Health Supports at 4J

Additional supports could be provided through district positions and/or third party providers. Given the difficulty school districts are experiencing in recruiting staff to these types of positions, it would be wise to provide flexibility if additional funds were made available. <sup>46</sup>

Potential Funding: ESSER III staffing pool funds (approx. \$1.4 million/year) are available for the next 2 years.



# Questions and Budget Committee Discussion



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## MINUTES OF THE 4J BUDGET COMMITTEE

School District 4J, Lane County, Oregon  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

February 28, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Josh Burstein, Chair; Dakota Boulette, Gary Campbell, Tom Di Liberto, Anne Fifield, Ericka Thessen, Juan Carlos Valle, Appointed Committee members; Alicia Hays, Laural O'Rourke, Judy Newman, Gordon Lafer, Maya Rabasa, Mary Walston, Board Committee members; Cydney Vandercar, Andrea Belz, Brook Wager, Kerry Delf, staff.

### I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Burstein called the 4J Budget Committee to order and called the roll. A quorum was established.

### II. Agenda Review

Mr. Burstein reviewed the agenda.

Mr. Valle asked that the agenda include requests for information from committee members under V.a. Items Raised By Committee Members. There were no objections.

Ms. Hays and Ms. Newman announced they would need to leave the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

### III. Items Raised by the Audience

Mr. Burstein reviewed procedures for providing testimony and invited comments from the audience.

**Chelsea Hardrath** spoke to the need for certified teacher libraries and equitable funding and support for all schools and Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB). She described her experiences volunteering in libraries at her children's schools for several years. She said libraries had large inventories of assets that were not being managed and urged the District to determine if the budget could support teacher librarians. She noted that other District assets, like its school buses, were not managed by parent volunteers. A certified teacher librarian at all schools would support teachers. She encouraged the District to inspect school libraries and see the vast differences among schools. She would email additional comments to Budget Committee members.

**Danielle Bowerman** said her story was similar to Ms. Hardrath's as she had also volunteered in different school libraries. She concurred with remarks about the differences in student access and how libraries were operated, and stressed the positive impact on teachers and students of having full-time library staff. She asked that librarians be a priority, particularly in elementary schools, if there were funds available. She also hoped the District would continue with paid lunches for all students, as well as breakfasts, although lunch was preferred if both could not be supported. She suggested that an acoustic engineer review how baffle panels could be used to reduce echoing to improve students' mealtime experience.

**Sheila Waggoner**, OSEA Eugene Chapter 1 president, said that classified employees were the most unnoticed staff that supported District operations. She explained the roles of classified employees such as bus drivers, food service workers, custodians, grounds workers and clerical and technology staff and their contributions to the educational environment.

**Katherine Tagwerker** said she had been employed by the District as a "lunch lady" for 34 years, a job she loved. She said it was important to provide children who might not otherwise receive it with good nutrition at school. She said food service employees continued to work in the cafeterias throughout the District during the pandemic. She said the District was short on food service employees in the fall of 2021, several kitchens were closed and food had to be brought in from other schools. There was still a staff shortage and it was difficult to find staff with the wages being offered, which were lower than wages at fast food businesses. She urged the District to review the salary schedule and longevity policy.

**Melanie Namkoong**, OSEA Eugene Chapter 1 member, spoke to Goal 5, Stable, Sustainable Stewardship. She said that if it was only viewed as bottom line financial stability the human investment would be lost. Many classified staff had left during the past two years because of the difficulty of the working environment and many changes in their job assignments. Many found better opportunities in neighboring districts. She said the loss of skilled knowledgeable personnel had left the District understaffed. The proposed budget appeared to anticipate some enrollment increase and an increase in teaching staff by 1.6-1.8 percent each year, but a drop in classified employees. She explained the challenges classified staff encountered when there were not enough employees and said the appropriate environment for staff and students could not be provided at schools.

Ms. Walston applauded the work of nutrition service employees. She recently volunteered at Adams Elementary School and appreciated their contributions as public employees.

Mr. Burstein disclosed that he was employed by Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) and Eugene School District 4J was a member and represented on LCOG's Board. His work at LCOG was separate from and not influenced by his participation on the Budget Committee.

Mr. Valle disclosed that he was employed by the federal government. He asked if the District had ever had all library positions filled in all schools. He also asked about staff attrition over the past five years and particularly the past two years for classified employees and teachers and how that affected the budget. He was pleased that people were providing the committee with stories about the work of District employees and volunteers.

Ms. Thessen thanked the speakers and concurred that the need for certified librarians had been under discussion for some time and needed to be addressed. She listed the ways in which certified librarians provided essential assistance to students. She also agreed that free meals at schools were life-changing for many students and efforts to reduce noise in cafeterias would be very beneficial to students who were neurodivergent.

Mr. Burstein reminded people that other options for providing feedback to the Budget Committee were through the 4J website, contacting the superintendent's office and submitting public comment.

#### **IV. Items for Information**

##### **1. Financial Update**

Ms. Belz provided the financial update. She noted that some areas of the 5-year forecast were still unknown at the committee's January 24, 2022, meeting. She said the initial understanding that a six percent increase in the 2023-25 and 2025-27 biennium was conservative, it now appeared that could be an optimistic viewpoint. The legislature could direct additional revenues to other areas that were in desperate need of funding. Staff would continue to monitor the issue closely. She said a three percentage point increase in the PERS rate going into the 2023-25 biennium was estimated in the initial forecast in January, based on preliminary reports from PERS. Since that time PERS investment returns were well above projections and a rate (increase) of one percent in 2023-24 was more likely. She said a tentative agreement had been reached with licensed employees and that contained a four percent COLA for the current year and the next two years. She said an equivalent value would be provided to other employee groups. She said approximately \$2.9 million of the PERS reserve would remain at the end of the 5-year forecast and a full five percent in the ending fund balance, equal to about one month's payroll.

## **2. Budget Committee Discussion**

Mr. Lafer said the Oregon School Board Association (OSBA) released a statement that legislative leadership had decided to add \$275 million to k-12 funding, mostly for summer programs and staff recruitment and retention. He asked how much of that amount the District might receive. Ms. Belz said the District estimated it would receive about the same amount of funding for summer programs that it had last year, with a match requirement that could be met with carry over Student Investment Account (SIA) funding and other sources. She said there would likely be a child care component. She noted that there had not been sufficient time for districts to plan for and spend all of the funds available last year and the legislature would try to make those funds available earlier this year. She said discussions were underway on options for allocation and use of retention funding.

Ms. Fifield asked if there was concern about a reduction in the ending fund balance and the impact reserves had on the District's ability to bond. Ms. Belz said it was important to ensure sufficient reserves to cover basic needs and avoid impacting the District's bond rating. As long as reserves did not drop below the Board's mandated five percent minimum she was not concerned.

## **3. Review Statutory Responsibilities of the Budget Committee**

Ms. Belz summarized the following responsibilities of the Budget Committee:

- conduct at least one meeting where the proposed budget was presented
  - the proposed budget must be balanced
  - program budget detail report must be included
  - the Superintendent's Message must be included
- public testimony must be requested at the meeting
- budget appropriations (General Fund and other funds) and tax levies and rates must be forwarded to the Board for action in June

## **4. Discuss Community Engagement in Developing Spending Plans**

Ms. Belz said that previous budget committees had frequently expressed concern that they were not a part of budget development and could not assure that the community's voices, as represented by committee members and through public feedback, were being heard. She asked for the committee's assistance in looking to the future and helping the District implement a new directive from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) entitled *Aligning for Student Success* -

Integrated Guidance for Six ODE Initiatives. She described the six initiatives, their common elements and associated goals:

1. High School Success
2. Student Investment Account
3. Continuous Improvement Planning
4. Career and Technical Education
5. Every Day Matters
6. Early Indicator and Intervention Systems

Ms. Belz said the document would be distributed to committee members. The intent was to create a new process which had the common elements of consistent engagement across all initiatives, an equity-based decision process, a focus on students historically marginalized by the education system, completing a comprehensive needs assessment for the area, and a continuous improvement cycle.

Mr. Valle asked if the initiatives were in priority order, what baseline tool would be used and how/when they could be refined to reflect the community. He also asked if progress would be measured by specific years or on an ongoing basis. Ms. Belz replied there was no order of priority among initiatives. She said ODE would be providing training in the spring on initiating the various processes within the directive.

Speaking as an individual Board member, Ms. Rabasa agreed the process should be implemented using an equity tool and the committee's interest would provide leverage to assure that happened and hold the District accountable.

Ms. Vanderkar said obtaining information from the public on spending priorities would include an equity lens in the questions. She said for example, questions about funding for library and food service staff could also address which item would help the most students and responses could help inform budget decisions. She said the Board would determine the approach to be taken during community engagement.

Ms. Rabasa said the Equity Committee was close to being finalized and that was a subject that the previous committee had discussed. She asked if ODE had incorporated direction to districts about formation of equity committees and use of equity tools. Ms. Belz said ODE provided an equity tool, but also gave districts the option of using its own tool.

Mr. Di Liberto cautioned the District not to wait for guidance from ODE because it already possessed expertise within its system to begin the job of better community engagement.

Ms. Newman commented that she was pleased to see all six funding streams brought together in a way that would help the District focus clearly and utilize funds more efficiently.

Mr. Burstein reflected on Budget Committee discussions in previous years about a needs assessment and ways to assure funds could be directed towards the greatest needs. He commended ODE for the guidance. Regarding public engagement, he said the District needed to hear from students and others whose voices were not heard at meetings. Many people did not have access because of lack of time or technology.

Mr. Valle said it was important to bring in stories from the community. He was pleased an equity tool was being developed and said it should be updated at least every three years. He hoped to see all six initiatives funded. Regarding community engagement, he urged the District to go to the people instead of expecting them to come to the District.

Ms. O'Rourke arrived at 7:12 p.m.

Ms. Belz reviewed a 12-step summary of the planning and application process and timeline and said the District was already beginning the process and the application was due in March 2023. Funding estimates would be used until final figures were available at the conclusion of the legislation session. She encouraged committee members to read Appendix A: Community Engagement Toolkit to prepare for its March 14 meeting. Members of the committee noted the statement "the right people" as problematic (slide 13 showing page 11 from the ODE Aligning for Student Success document), as not inclusive and historically indicates a wish to omit certain groups or viewpoints. Ms. Vandercar said she would ask ODE to change that language.

Mr. Lafer said librarians were critical to helping students like reading and encouraging them to read materials outside of those they were required to read. He said 4J used to have librarians in every school and the last elementary school librarian left in 2010. There were currently no librarians assigned to elementary or middle schools. He proposed that the District try to find funds for a five-year pilot program to place librarians at three elementary schools with the greatest need as determined by senior staff. He would like to see that program considered in the budget being considered to the next school year. He asked that staff provide information on the cost of such a program and how that would impact other areas of the budget.

Mr. Valle said community engagement in the 1990s typically involved talking to one person representative of a community. That was slowly changing by bringing in stakeholders with an interest in improving education for the District's students. He said communities across the state were all interested in education, but populations and demographics were different. He said community engagement should not consist only of testimony from the public as many people would not connect in that way, although they had things to say. The District should be willing to reach out to different communities and secure participation in different ways.

Ms. Thessen agreed with Mr. Valle on the need in providing input on the budget more accessible, such as an online survey, text and email. She supported the proposal to get librarians back in elementary and middle schools.

Mr. Burstein noted staff could provide cost estimates on proposals such as placing librarians in three elementary schools.

Mr. Di Liberto said in his experience librarians were a huge asset to students in promoting enthusiasm for reading and providing guidance on reading materials, and in developing researching skills. He supported efforts to put more librarians in schools. He was pleased with improvements in the District's engagement with the Spanish-speaking community, but improvements could still be made in gathering input. There was staff in the District's buildings and in the community who could assist in that effort.

Mr. Burstein said the committee's role was to represent the community and identify needs during the planning process. Local values and priorities should be addressed along with ODE guidelines.

Mr. Valle supported Mr. Lafer's proposal to fund a pilot program to place librarians in some elementary schools and hoped the committee could make that happen. He asked staff to provide information about how that could happen. He stressed the importance of an equity lens to view the system from that perspective, including looking at issues such as language barriers and bilingual/bicultural librarians.

Mr. Burstein stressed the importance of the committee's discussions about what was best for the District's children. He said the budget was a moral document and would benefit from the committee's candid conversations and different perspectives. He appreciated the contributions of each committee member.

#### **5. Review Upcoming Budget Committee Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Burstein reviewed the schedule for remaining committee meetings and determined there was consensus to allot 90 minutes for each meeting.

Ms. Belz asked that committee members review the ODE guidance section on community engagement and be prepared to discuss how the District could make that process efficient and effective and unique to 4J. She also asked for suggestions on ways to reach people that had not been engaged in previous budget cycles in order to achieve the best outcomes. Information on other parts of the budget would be presented at the March 28 meeting. The 2022-23 Superintendent's proposed budget would be presented at the April 25 meeting.

### **V. Budget Committee Wrap-up**

#### **a. Items Raised by Committee Members**

Ms. Rabasa asked how Budget Committee agendas were established and when discussions about issues such as librarians and other priorities would occur. Mr. Burstein said he met with Ms. Vanderkar to represent the committee's interests and develop meeting agendas. He also discussed agendas with Mr. Valle. He invited input from all committee members on agenda topics.

#### **b. Items for Next Meeting**

Ms. Vanderkar asked committee members to let staff know if there were discussion items they wanted to add to an agenda. She said committee members could email their requests to Mr. Burstein or to her.

Ms. O'Rourke suggested emailing the committee chair and vice chair, along with Ms. Newman and Ms. Vanderkar with agenda item requests.

Ms. Vanderkar clarified that there should be no email discussions among committee members about agenda items to avoid violations of Oregon's public meeting laws. Mr. Burstein indicated he was comfortable with Ms. O'Rourke's proposal. He determined there was consensus among members to provide agenda requests as described.

### **VII. Adjourn**

Mr. Burstein thanked everyone for their participation in the budget process and adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

*(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)*

## MINUTES OF THE 4J BUDGET COMMITTEE

School District 4J, Lane County, Oregon

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

March 14, 2022

6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Josh Burstein, Chair; Dakota Boulette, Gary Campbell, Tom Di Liberto, Anne Fifield, Ericka Thessen, Juan Carlos Valle, Appointed Committee members; Laural O'Rourke, Judy Newman, Gordon Lafer, Maya Rabasa, Mary Walston, Board Committee members; Cydney Vandercar, Andrea Belz, Brook Wager, Kerry Delf, Jeffry Johnson, staff.

### I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Burstein called the 4J Budget Committee to order and called the roll. A quorum was established. Mr. Burstein reviewed the agenda.

### II. Items for Action at this Meeting

#### 1.a. Approval of Minutes for the January 24, 2022, Budget Committee Meeting

**MOTION:** Ms. Thessen moved, seconded by Mr. Valle, to approve the January 24, 2022, Budget Committee meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

### III. Items Raised by the Audience

Mr. Burstein determined there was no one wishing to speak.

### IV. Budget Committee Discussion.

#### 1. Opportunities to Strengthen Community Engagement Activities in the Fall

Ms. Belz provided an overview of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) guidance document entitled *Aligning for Student Success* that had been distributed to committee members. She invited questions and comments on the community engagement section, particularly regarding previous community engagement processes and where improvements could be made to strengthen future community engagement activities.

Mr. Valle thought the document section on community engagement was well crafted. He hoped the committee could focus its discussion on how previous community engagements had been conducted and how groups and individuals had been involved. He wanted to build upon previous activities instead of starting over. He said the term "systemic racism" was used frequently and while he understood that, he asked when and how the transition from systematic racism to systemic racism occurred and what impact that would have on the District's activities with respect to racism.

Ms. Vandercar said she did not know when the change in terminology had occurred. She said 4J's previous public engagement presentations and outreach strategies were considered a good model and the District had been asked to share them with other districts. Ms. Wagner described the types of outreach activities that were conducted. She would raise Mr. Valle's question with ODE as staff began to receive training on the new guidance.

Mr. Di Liberto commented that the outreach activities were conducted for the Student Investment Account (SIA) funds and he was pleased to see that happen, including connecting with

stakeholders in the District. He said there was still much improvement needed and the District could no rely on the same methods as it emerged from the pandemic. He agreed comments at earlier committee meetings that it was essential to go out to communities and groups instead of just making it easier for them to come to the committee. He said outreach efforts should be redoubled as use of one-time funds was being considered and those efforts sustained during future budget cycles so people in the community understood how the District would connect with them.

Ms. Newman agreed that the previous community engagement addressed the SIA, one of the six initiatives, and was pleased to see the effort to pull all six plans into one strategic plan. She asked for a brief description of the other five plans, particularly Every Day Matters, Early Indicator and Intervention Systems, and Continuous Improvement Planning. Ms. Wagner said as staff received more state guidance and became more familiar with the other initiatives they would share that information to the committee.

Mr. Lafer said in his opinion the public input on budgets in past years had little meaning despite the extensive outreach. It generated an enormous word cloud that indicated everyone wanted more of everything. He said in order to obtain meaningful input from the community District staff needed to provide in advance of outreach ideas for the best and smartest use of funds. The public needed to understand the tradeoffs involved and how making greater investments in areas such as library staff and suicide prevention programs would impact other areas of the budget. That would form the basis of initial conversations with the community and lead to discussions of what else should be a priority instead of just a list of improvements to all areas of the education system. He said that should be the process in future budget cycles as the proposed budget was already before the committee.

Mr. Lafer asked staff to provide ideas for how to fund a pilot program in the proposed budget to put librarians back in a small number of Title 1 elementary schools in ways that would be minimally disruptive to District operations. He noted that the child development center in South Eugene High School might soon be down one staff person and would be interested in how funding could be restored. He also asked for proposals at the next committee meeting to add funding for additional mental health support services.

Ms. Rabasa pointed out that beginning on Page 22 of the guidance document there was a summary of each of the six initiatives, how they were integrated, the intent of each one and the permitted use of funds.

Mr. Burstein was pleased to see schools listed as an outreach location because parents were familiar with those facilities. He had attended sessions at his children's schools and there was good attendance and the meetings were helpful. He said there was an urgency associated with connecting with the community and while there was a limited amount of time for outreach in the current budget cycle, robust outreach strategies should be used in the next cycle.

Ms. Fifield agreed with Mr. Lafer that when people were asked generally about their priorities it generated a word cloud in which everything was a priority. Further complicating the discussion was the fact that requirements attached to funds often limited how they could be used and allowed little flexibility.

Mr. Valle pointed out that on page 104 of the guidance document there were steps for getting started and three could be implemented immediately. He said the second step was getting clear

on the core engagement team and that was the one that should be revisited. It was important to make expectations of the team clear and that the community's input would be valued, listened to and implemented. Page 105 identified specific student populations and a wide range of focal groups, including students and their families and District staff. He hoped the committee could discuss how to support the families of those students and staff. A chart on Page 110 indicated levels of community engagement and strategies, but missing was returning those groups that had been engaged in the outreach process and informing them about the information captured from their feedback and what would be done with that information. He said that step had also been missing from previous public engagement processes.

Mr. Di Liberto cautioned that input should not be solicited for things that could not be changed; the focus should be on areas of discretion in spending. Be clear with the public on funding streams that were targeted or restricted to certain uses. Do not give people the impression that they could have input on everything in the budget and identify the ways in which discretionary funds could be used. He also wanted to see some meetings focus on a specific issue and involve stakeholders with an interest in that topic. For example, if the topic was special education, it would be useful to invite parents of students with special needs and staff that were engaged with those students and invite them to discuss the best ways to use special education resources.

Mr. Burstein suggested beginning outreach with schools with the greatest needs to help achieve equity.

Ms. O'Rourke thought that currently one of the biggest issues was student suicide and if the District wanted to facilitate a zero tolerance policy on losing children to death by suicide, it would need to be a funding priority. She wanted the Budget Committee to have that discussion. Having mental health counselors in schools to deal with emotional and behavioral issues, support staff and remove barriers to accessing mental health services should be a focal point of the committee's budget work this year.

Mr. Boulette said when he had been a student in 4J schools he had seen or experienced many of the issues, such as access to free or reduced lunch and mental health services. Universal free lunch and in-school access to mental health services were needed in the schools and should be a funding priority.

Mr. Campbell said the previous superintendent had developed a formula for identifying staffing needs in schools when additional funding was available. He asked Ms. Belz and Ms. Vandercar to discuss in their presentation of the budget what model was used to making decisions about staffing in schools and any increase in staffing at a school. He agreed with Mr. Valle that it was important to return to those groups that provided input and let them know how that information was used. Another opportunity in the current budget cycle was to discuss how decisions were made based on community input in the previous SIA cycle and how conversations with the community affected District priorities.

Ms. Thessen asked about the level of community engagement achieved through surveys. She strongly urged the District to consider providing food and child care for in-person meetings. She said as a single parent she would be far more likely to participate in such an event if food and child care was available. Making food available could also encourage participation of students.

Ms. Rabasa felt it was important before beginning a new round of community engagement activities to reflect on past processes and determine if they were successful from the

community's perspective. Some people had felt disenfranchised when participating in the last SIA public engagement process when they did not feel their input was reflected in decisions that were made.

Ms. Newman said one way to avoid problems with past community engagement processes was to identify the resources available and those issues and problems the District wanted to address. That would focus the conversations on priority areas and avoid generating a word cloud in which everything was a priority.

Mr. Di Liberto agreed with Ms. Newman's suggestion to focus discussions at meetings on certain topics. He also felt there should be opportunities for other issues and areas of concern to be raised by the community. A two-way communications conduit with the community should be maintained on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Burstein said it would be helpful for the committee to have an understanding of one-time and ongoing funding streams and any restrictions on the use of those different funds.

In response to a question from Ms. O'Rourke, Ms. Belz said the discussions of community engagement and incorporation of equity-based processes and decision-making into budget development were not applicable to the current budget cycle. They were to prepare for implementation of those concepts in the fall of 2022 in the next budget cycle.

Ms. O'Rourke said she was interested in knowing if mental health counselors in all high schools and a base wage increase for all employees could be funded in the budget currently under discussion, whether with one-time or ongoing resources. Ms. Belz said a discussion of different funds and how they could be used was scheduled for the next Budget Committee meeting.

Mr. Lafer asked if the Budget Committee could direct staff to determine how to fund more mental health support and more librarians in the least disruptive way in the budget to be adopted in May. He said the committee would need that type of information in order to inform potential recommendations to the Board.

Mr. Valle again stressed the importance of informing the community of what the District had heard from them and what was being done with that feedback. He said the committee would need to be cognizant of where funds would come from if it was going to discuss issues such as increasing mental health services and library staffing. He said teachers needed more tools and those should not be provided as a Band-Aid through one-time funding; it required ongoing support.

Ms. Thessen asked if the Budget Committee was capable of making a change in the upcoming budget to provide more mental health services.

Mr. Campbell said the Budget Committee was interested in discussing prioritizations in the current budget and that had not occurred in the committee's meetings to date. He was interested in scheduling time for that discussion prior to staff presenting the budget. He said the committee would need a framework of how to fit the funding pieces together, identify one-time versus ongoing funding and eligible uses for available funds.

Ms. Rabasa agreed with Mr. Campbell that the committee needed to devote some time to discussing priorities and how mental health support could be tackled now and what could be done next year.

Ms. Walston said a discussion of increasing mental health services should begin with understanding what resources already existed in the District. She said the pandemic and other factors had resulted in a lot of despair in the world and lack of counselors in schools should not be blamed. Schools were not in a position to provide the type of professional support that some students needed, nor was Lane County Mental Health able to address all of the needs. The District had done considerable work during the past two years to provide more services, but the problem was much larger than not having counselors in schools.

Ms. Newman said it was necessary to identify gaps in counseling services in order to inform any targeted decisions about the budget.

Mr. Lafer said there was no intent to blame suicides on deficiencies in schools, but rather to recognize the scale of the crisis and try to act as quickly as possible. He suggested a task force of District leadership, educators close of the problem, and parents to come up with the best recommendations for trying to address the problem.

Ms. Rabasa agreed with Ms. Walston that it was necessary to understand what mental health services were currently available before calling for new things. She appreciated the District's recent efforts to add counselors, particularly in elementary schools. She noted that the counselors in elementary schools were entirely dedicated to mental health support and did not have to worry about students' academic issues. She said that dedication of staff to solely providing mental health support was needed at middle and high schools and if there was agreement that this was a priority it would benefit the Budget Committee to conduct an inventory of what was in place and understand what was working well and what could be improved.

Mr. Burstein agreed with Ms. Walston and Ms. Rabasa on the need to understand what was in place in the District and where more resources were needed. The committee had also discussed other needs such as free lunch for all and more librarians in schools. He said committee members, whether elected or appointed, represented the public in different ways and should remember who was not at the meeting.

Ms. Belz stressed that one of the Budget Committee's most powerful tools was the ability to ask questions and receive answers. The next meeting would provide information from people working in the system about what services were available and where there were gaps so the committee could continue its analysis.

Mr. Valle said the committee should provide specific guidance to staff before adjourning concerning the information it wanted to receive, such as how many mental health counselors were in the District currently and options for providing funding to add more counselors. This would allow the committee to give advice to the Board, which would make final decisions on the budget.

Mr. Di Liberto said he was interested in hearing from staff that made decisions about mental health services about current resources and what resources might be available to expand those services. However, the committee had limited time and could not examine all aspects of District

operations. He would like to hear from experts about what areas they would improve if more resources were available.

Ms. Fifield asked if the Budget Committee could make changes to the proposed budget and what procedures that would involve.

Ms. O'Rourke said her understanding was the Budget Committee made recommendations on the budget to the Board. She said in the past the committee had reviewed the proposed budget and agreed with staff. This year the committee had asked about needs that were not being addressed and how those needs could be met.

Ms. Vandercar appreciated the committee's questions about existing needs and available resources. She said staff would work with the committee to identify those issues it felt were most important. She said a majority of the budget was personnel and most of the current staff would be working for the District next year; otherwise due process would have occurred to let employees know contracts would not be continued. Any plans for major changes would have to be for the following year. She appreciated the recommendation to return to the community after public engagement to let people know what was heard and how funds would be spent. She said staff was already considering how middle and high school counselors could be given more time for mental health by shifting some duties to other staff. She said it was challenging to find qualified applicants for mental health services positions.

Ms. O'Rourke said she wanted clear information on the funding available this year and how it could be spent. She said wages should be high enough to attract seasoned mental health counselors. The current system was not working and students were dying. Students were in schools for seven hours a day and the District should reduce barriers to students seeking help. The District should adopt a zero tolerance for student suicide and while free lunches and more librarians were desirable, they did not represent lives. Counseling functions should be separated to allow for a focus on mental health support. She said there were very limited mental health services available in the community.

Mr. Lafer said the Budget Committee existed to obtain feedback from the community on priorities for use of funds and make recommendations to the Board. The Board made budget decisions. He felt there was more that could be done immediately to increase mental health support in schools and that some funds could be found in the current budget. He would also support using Elementary And Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) dollars for mental health services even if it meant those staff would only be there two years in order to address the current situation. He wanted to hear from staff where resources could be found in this year's budget to address the mental health crisis.

Ms. Thessen described how Lane County Mental Health and PeaceHealth partnered with the health centers at North and Churchill high schools to provide nurse practitioners and counselors. There could be other strategies to address the crisis such as expanding those partnerships and incorporating mental health services into the mandated health classes.

## **2. Opportunities to Incorporate Equity-based Processes and Decision-making Into Budget Development**

This topic was postponed.

## **V. Budget Committee Wrap-up**

**a. Items Raised by Committee Members**

**b. Items for Next Meeting**

The next meeting agenda could include an Other Funds budget presentation, continued discussions of Opportunities to Strengthen Community Engagement Activities in the Fall and Opportunities to Incorporate Equity-based Processes and Decision-making into Budget Development, responses from staff to questions from the committee about areas of interest and priorities and an open discussion about priority areas.

**VII. Adjourn**

Mr. Burstein thanked everyone for their participation in the budget process and adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

*(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)*

DRAFT