

## Feb. 2024 Supt Beacon article – Budget update

**Subject:** Share your budget priorities

You might remember reading or hearing last year that Mukilteo School District had to make significant budget reductions. Our district and many other districts are still experiencing several factors that led to reducing this year's budget by about \$24 million. We shared those reasons with you last year and you can review them on the [budget-related webpages](#) under the Business Services Department website.

After looking at our current budget situation and our projected enrollment and income for next school year, our school district must reduce the 2024-25 budget by \$9.8 million to end the school year with a 3.2 percent fund balance (a three percent minimum is required). The thought of having to further reduce our budget is discouraging to say the least. Nonetheless, here we are, facing another round of difficult discussions and decisions and we'll do so with as much transparency and frequent communication as we can.

Building on what we learned last year through several input opportunities (ThoughtExchange, rating survey, Budget Advisory Committee, staff and administrator meetings, community webinar, and family meetings), we are not starting from scratch this year. You can review the results of several of the above-mentioned opportunities on the [budget-related webpages](#) under the Business Services Department section.

Through the input gathered last year, we heard loud and clear that any budget reductions should be kept away from students' experiences as much as possible. We will keep that priority as we embark on the process for next school year's budget. Personnel will be affected by these reductions as that is the largest portion of our expenditures. To get a jump on mitigating the impacts on staffing next year, we paused filling vacated positions beginning in late November.

Also, because of last year's input, we reduced expenditures this year by:

- reducing budgets and expenses at the district and school levels
- delaying curriculum adoptions
- increasing class sizes in secondary grades while staying within contractual limits
- reducing classified and certificated staff (including administrators) throughout the district

As part of the budget process, we are gathering thoughts about priorities for next year from staff, students, families and community members. We are kicking off that process with a budget survey. I invite you to share your budget priorities with us by completing the [brief budget survey](#) by **Sunday, Feb. 11**. The survey is available in Arabic, English, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

I want to ensure you know that district leaders and the school board have shared our concerns with the Legislature in person and through a [collaborative message with other school districts](#), but we don't anticipate any change at the state level this spring. If you'd like to share your thoughts about public education funding or any other topics, you can find a contact lookup link on the school board's [2024 Legislative Priorities webpage](#).

Again, we'll keep you informed as this process develops and will work hard to hear from as many people and different perspectives as possible.