

Junction City School District #69
BUDGET MESSAGE
May 4, 2009

Once again, Oregon school districts are faced with making extremely difficult budget decisions due to a number of factors including state revenue shortfalls. The Junction City School District is planning for a significant reduction in revenue due to the current economic crisis; our situation is further compounded by the decline in our student enrollment over the past several years. One thing that will not change, however, is our commitment to aligning our budget with our district goals to (1) increase student achievement in language arts and math and (2) to improve post-secondary options for graduates of our district. The challenge will be to maintain our focus on quality and improved outcomes for students in the face of this drastic decline in our resources.

Global economic conditions necessitate that our district's budget for the 2009-10 school year is an extremely lean one. Our budget document reflects the 2008-09 budgeted expenditures plus 2009-2010 contract salary and benefit adjustments, increases for unemployment, increased transportation costs, and reduced revenue equaling a \$1.8 million dollar reduction. These reductions are being made in all areas: reductions in staff in every employee group, fewer dollars for instructional materials, textbooks and supplies, less money for our infrastructure systems and facilities, professional development and enrichment activities for our students. As much as we wish it weren't so, a loss of this magnitude is sure to affect our classrooms, our students, our staff, our community and our local economy.

The reductions detailed in this budget document are not just numbers on a page. They represent talented people employed at our district, they represent instructional programs, and they represent loss of opportunity for our students. We will reduce in force over 22% of our administrative staff, 14% of our teaching staff, 10% of our classified staff and 6% of our confidential staff. We must make the difficult decision to mothball our auto shop program, eliminate the wonderful drama program at the high school and the all-day kindergarten program at Laurel, drastically reduce media services to elementary students and eliminate almost all district support for middle school athletics and activities, and our middle school assistant principal position. We will lose many instructional assistants throughout the district, as well as custodial and secretarial time.

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While it is painful to articulate what we will lose, it is equally as important to remember what we will maintain. We will continue to offer support services for students with special education and English language learning needs as well for those students who have been identified as talented and gifted. The federal stimulus package, in addition to decreasing the state shortfall at the legislative level, increases the amount of funds available in Title I and IDEA thus ensuring that high poverty schools and special needs students will continue to receive supplemental programs. All our students, in grades kindergarten through twelve, will continue to have access to physical education and music education. Students in grades 7 through 12 will continue to benefit from the guidance and wisdom of our “college and career coaching” staff. We will continue to have a district nurse, counselors at the high school and middle school, and transportation services for our students. While our class sizes will increase and will be larger than optimal, our district will maintain high academic expectations and students will learn.

The budget document has been prepared based on the March, 2009 State School Fund estimate, which was based on the November, 2008 economic forecast rather than the more dismal February, 2009 estimate. We have every reason to believe that the May economic forecast will be even worse; because the budget document has been planned and printed based on the earlier revenue estimate, an addendum has been prepared for the budget committee and board’s review. This addendum details the additional planned reductions, depending upon the particular amount of the additional shortfall in the state’s revenue for the 2009-11 biennium.

As of this writing, the Governor and State Superintendent of Public Instruction have instructed districts to prepare for further reductions that would be based on a 5.9B, 5.8B, 5.6B and 5.4 billion-dollar allocation for K-12 education. For our district, that implicates an additional \$300,000 to \$950,000 dollars in further decreased revenue beyond the \$1,800,000 dollars in reductions represented in the budget document. The addendum provided with the budget is our district’s plan for how to deal with ever-changing worst case scenarios.

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I hope that each of us can view these challenges facing us right now as an opportunity and invitation to expand our capacity to be patient, courageous, flexible, forgiving, wise, and to see things from a wider perspective. As always, but especially in these difficult times, I am extraordinarily grateful to our wonderful staff, supportive community and of course our wise and dedicated budget committee and board. Thank you for your leadership, your commitment and your willingness to guide our district through these troubled waters.

With deep appreciation for the opportunity to serve,

Kathleen Rodden-Nord, Ph.D.

Superintendent

Junction City School District No. 69