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Superintendent Budget Message 2016-2017

The Greater Albany Public Schools currently serve approximately 9,600 students, the largest student population ever in the district's history. Albany is currently growing as a community and employment and job creation is the best it has ever been since records have been kept. Overall, this is good news for our schools since we are funded based on student numbers along with various weights for certain categorical students. A growing student population is the only positive budget scenario a district can have since staying the same or losing students means that a district will have challenges due to roll up costs. Growth comes with challenges as well, given that our school district's buildings have more or less reached their capacity. The district is dealing with capacity issues by discussing a possible bond package for May 2017 and by adding modular classrooms in areas where growth exceeds building capacity. Last year we added modular classrooms to North Albany Elementary School and Clover Ridge Elementary School. The school board approved the addition of a four classroom modular for Periwinkle which will be built and placed on site this summer. Suffice it to say, the district will need to begin to address capacity issues in the near future given that even if we were better funded, we would not be able to reduce our class sizes or add elective or other new programs due to a lack of classroom space.

GAPS is in the process of hiring staff for new positions to deal with a growing student population and to address strategic needs to improve student outcomes and improve staff performance. Statewide, there is a shortage of people for administrative and teaching positions, educational assistants, bus drivers and certain specific disciplines. We now find ourselves in a situation where we will have to "grow" our own staff for certain strategic positions like Special Education and English Language Learner teachers. The district also has a need to improve student outcomes for specific categories of students including English Language Learners, students who live in poverty and special education students. Similar to the rest of the Willamette Valley, GAPS has seen an increase in the number of Hispanic students in recent years to where that population now reflects approximately 20% of our student population. Finally, the district has many other needs including improvement and maintenance of our aging facilities and a need for additional space for our transportation department. The district has completed a population study, an efficiency study and an initial community survey to help guide the superintendent and school board in making decisions into the near future. The district needs to engage the Greater Albany Community in a conversation about what we want from our schools as we look into the future.

In order to help the board and budget committee make decisions, the district is beginning the process of developing a new strategic plan, which will be ready for the 2017 budget process. In the meantime, the superintendent has identified the following filters to help guide the district in making decisions:

Great Public Schools!

All students graduate from high school and go on to successful post high school placements.

Public and private partnerships leverage resources to improve student outcomes.

Students are mentally and physically healthy and they are good citizens.

Furthermore, the superintendent has identified 5 pillars for becoming a “great” public school system. Those are:

Pillar 1: Schools produce good citizens

- **Mentally and physically healthy kids.**
- **People who give back to their communities through service.**
- **An inclusive community where all people are valued.**

Pillar 2: All students graduate and go on to successful post high school outcomes

- **Employability skills; good attendance, work habits and social skills.**
- **Lifelong learners (high school is not enough!).**
- **Degrees, certificates and personal improvement through more education.**

Pillar 3: Equity Lens

- **Schools are places that overcome individual circumstances purposefully.**
- **Resources are allocated in a manner that helps overcome issues of poverty and race. Outcomes for all groups are similar.**

Pillar 4: Continuous Improvement Principles are used system wide

- **The organization embraces a “Growth Mindset”.**
- **The organization utilizes continuous improvement principles and has a culture that has the technical training and believes in system thinking and improvement.**
- **Decisions are made using data and a culture of continuous improvement permeates the entire school system.**
- **Continual reflection on operations, continuous improvement. No shame, no blame, no excuses.**

Pillar 5: Efficient Operations

- **Schools are system oriented and seek to continuously improve operations.**
- **Transparent operations with explicit measurements.**
- **Public and private partnerships are sought out to leverage more resources to improve student outcomes.**

Using the filters the superintendent has identified, the school board and budget committee can thoughtfully use these tools in directing resources and improving outcomes for students in GAPS.

Specifically, we need to focus on the following 3 benchmarks to help us evaluate our progress in improving outcomes for all students:

1. 90% of all students will be at or above benchmark in reading by the end of grade 3.
2. 90% of all students will be ready for Algebra by 8th grade.
3. 90% of all GAPS students will graduate on time (within 4 years).

The superintendent has conducted extensive observations and visits to every school and facility in GAPS in order to assess the conditions that students and staff work in. For the upcoming school year 2016-2017; the superintendent with counsel from the school board, his executive team, and in depth conversations with teachers, principals, classified staff, community members and community leaders, has developed a budget. There are certainly many more district needs for investment than the proposed budget provides. In general, Oregon's schools are underfunded and have been so for many years. My hope is that we will see more investment into education from the State of Oregon in the new biennium to improve student outcomes statewide. In the meantime, we are in the second year of our two year funding cycle. Growth in this budget is due mostly to increased student enrollment across the district and in two relatively new programs (Albany Online and the 5th year program).

One impact on our budget this year is the fact that the Oregon Supreme Court overturned most of the PERS reforms the legislature passed in the last session. Therefore we will see a larger increase in our PERS account to the tune of approximately 5% per year in 2017-2018. In order to position the district to pay for this PERS increase into the future, we have set aside a reserve of \$4,000,000. We have created an 8% reserve of \$7,557,661 for this budget year and we have proposed spending approximately \$3.5 million to handle the growth in our student populations and to begin to address strategic investments the district needs to make in order to improve student outcomes. Finally, there are some important one time spending priorities we need to make to address some of the deficiencies the district has in facilities, technology and safety. The superintendent is proposing approximately \$1.0 million in these one time spending priorities.

The proposed budget for 2016-2017 looks to provide more supports for district initiatives such as AVID, Math Studio, Response to Intervention, Dual Language, Latino Affairs and Special Education. The district is also adding more support staff to our two comprehensive high schools, increased funding for our maintenance department to add more capacity to address district facility needs and improve technology for teachers across the district. Finally, we have made one time purchases for band instruments, restroom upgrades at our high schools, carpeting, safety improvements across the district and playground improvements for ADA accessibility.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS 2016-2017

The ADMw estimated for 2016-17 (and thereby the estimated state revenue) is based off the recent student enrollment projection provided by Davis Demographics and Planning. The budget envisions spending down the fund balance by \$2.7 million (spending \$2.7 million more in 2016-17 than what we will bring in) primarily on a combination of needed investments to improve instruction as well as targeted one time expenditure. The remaining fund balance is divided between a \$4 million PERS Reserve to help offset anticipated increases in 2017-19 (and beyond) and an 8% targeted fund balance going forward.

Regular Program Direct Instruction (1111, 1121, 1131)

There are 13.2 additional FTE budgeted to handle anticipated growth and/or large class size projections in addition to holding a few in reserve to accommodate unanticipated student counts in the fall.

Middle School Cross Country (1222)

The spring Middle School cross country program has been very successful with over 400 participants. There is money budgeted to add a middle school cross-country program in 2016/17.

Dual Language Program (1111, 1121, 2210)

The budget includes additional FTE, one at South Shore (1111) and one at North Albany Middle School (1121), to assist in the staffing needs of a dual language program. In addition, the Superintendent proposes to add an additional duty assignment to an administrator to act as the District's Hispanic Community Outreach/Equity Coordinator (2210).

Secondary Band Instruments (1121-460, 1131-460)

Last year the district's secondary band teachers presented to DFAC a significant dollar need to replacement band instruments due to years of use and to address "holes" in the inventory. The Superintendent has included a one-time district allocation of \$150,000 to partially address this need.

High School Admin Support (1132, 2410)

To address needs at each of the two comprehensive high schools the Superintendent recommends adding an additional Vice-Principal at South Albany High School (2410) and the district assuming the responsibility of an Athletic Coordinator position at West Albany High School (1132). This will create additional needed support at both schools for working with students and performing teacher observations as the Athletic Coordinator work is currently being performed by a Vice-Principal at West Albany High School.

Special Education (1220, 1250, 2140)

1220: Restrictive Programs With Students With Disabilities (and 2140)

There are several additional FTE included in the Proposed Budget to address Special Education needs. In 1220 there is a new 1.0 FTE Autism Specialist to provide support, assessment and identification of students on the Autism Spectrum. Additionally, there is a 0.5 FTE to staff a full time K-2 Communication program for students on the Autism Spectrum whose behavior and communication needs are too intense for standard resource room support (currently a half-time program). Lastly there are funds budgeted for a new program to support the treatment and transition of high needs behavior students K-5. This includes \$50,000 budgeted for professional clinical assistance in assessing student needs (2140-313).

1250: Less Restrictive Programs With Students With Disabilities

The Proposed Budget includes an additional 1.5 FTE to address increasing resource caseloads at MMS, NAMS and WAHS.

ELL Program Improvements (1291, 2210)

The budget includes an additional ELL teacher for South Shore Elementary School (1291) as a result of their ELL numbers, additional classified hours across the district to better meet the needs of our ELL students, and a .75 FTE Teacher on Special Assignment to provide instructional support to ELL teachers and support management to non-ELL schools (2210).

AVID (1121, 1131, 2241)

After a year of planning, the district's AVID program will increase at South Albany and West Albany High Schools and will now also include students from Calapooia Middle School, Memorial Middle School, North Albany Middle School, and Timber Ridge School. The number of AVID sections district-wide will grow from 10 to approximately 20. This will involve about 250 students.

Where AVID expenses involve direct instruction (such as AVID class sections and AVID tutors) those costs are carried in either function 1121 or 1131. All other AVID costs are now being captured in a separate AVID Function 2241. Cost drivers in 2241 include staff development, site coordinators (1.7 FTE), and a 0.5 FTE District Coordinator. In 2016/17 total AVID costs are being partially offset by an \$80,000 grant.

Instructional Technology (object code 480 throughout the budget)

The budget includes funding for several instructional technology initiatives: \$180,000 for innovation grants (double the current allocation), \$95,000 to provide every elementary school with intermediate grades with a Chromebook cart (as contained in the District Technology Plan), \$150,000 for student/teacher PC replacement (five year cycle), and \$94,000 to complete an initiative begun in 2015/16 to provide every teacher with a Chromebook. Additional devices will be purchased using Textbook adoption money. All told there will be approximately 2,000 mobile devices implemented over the next 12 months.

School Nurse Program (2130)

The reduction in this function is not reflective of any changes to our School Nurse Program. It was believed that some of our high needs medical students would be served by Registered Nurses so the costs were budgeted here. This has not turned out to be the case so the costs are being carried in function 2160.

Psychological Service (2140)

The increase in this function is the result of .85 FTE being recoded (primarily from 2115) as well as increases as part of the planned elementary Behavior Intervention Classroom. The increases as a result of this new program are 0.5 FTE (111) and \$50,000 for the services of a child psychiatrist to consult on student treatment plans (313).

Student Treatment Services (2160-112)

Two classified FTE were added to assist anticipated medically fragile students who require nursing services to attend school (112). One of the FTE exists now but has been coded in 1220. It is further expected to need to contract for needed services (313).

Improvement of Instruction (2210)

Improvement of Instruction includes one middle school Teacher on Special Assignment to focus on math achievement (111). In addition, there are five Teachers on Special Assignment to provide elementary school coaching to more fully implement the school district's Response To Intervention (RTI) program and provide support to teachers in highly effective instructional practices (111).

A 1.0 FTE instruction coordinator has been added in place of the current Director 0.5 FTE to provide expanded and differentiated support to teachers across all content areas (113). Teachers will receive support in curriculum alignment, standards implementation, assessment, grading, and content area professional development.

Staff Development Improvements (2240)

This budget includes \$40,000 for Jan Leight, consultant from Focused Schools, to provide professional development to teacher leadership teams in our 15 elementary buildings (310) as well as \$25,000 to pay for Teacher Development Group consultants to continue Math Studio in our four middle schools (310).

Teachers will receive training primarily outside of their contract day rather than pay for substitutes; there is \$50,000 budgeted to pay teachers to attend (131). The function also continues budgeting for retired staff to mentor new teachers (some of the cost has been moved from 111 to 131).

Additional Administrator (2321-113)

An additional administrator position was included in the budget in the event a person was identified as an asset to the district but where an open position may not currently exist. There

is a general shortage of qualified administrative staff throughout the state, and this would allow the district to potentially bring one on board in anticipation of possible retirements or movements to another district from existing staff. The person hired would work on special assignments until another position opens up in the district.

Business Office Support: Loss Control/Facility Use (2520, 2528)

Three areas have been identified as needing additional support: loss control, managing district facility use, and centralized purchasing; this in addition to a general need for greater support in the Business Office to manage workloads. Loss control, although monitored by administrators, needs dedicated, consistent oversight for systemic prevention and problem solving. Tracking and monitoring use of district facilities is also an area in need of improvement to ensure insurance requirements are met and fees are properly assessed. This proposal creates a position in the Business Department which would allow more dedicated time to both loss control (2528) and district facility use (2520). These responsibilities are complimentary in nature and will allow for better review of current practices and better implementation of best practices.

Care and Upkeep of Ground (2543-542)

There is \$49,000 budgeted for replacement tractor/mower equipment.

District Facility Maintenance (2544-112)

There is a need to make progress on the significant backlog of building maintenance projects. Because it is more cost-effective to do this with in-house personnel the budget includes two additional FTE in Facilities Maintenance: One Boiler Tech Apprentice and one HVAC Tech Apprentice. Both boiler and HVAC technicians are very difficult to recruit and hire so the intent here is to hire apprentices and grow our own technicians internally.

In addition, there is a one-time addition of \$90,000 (542) to address the highest priority classroom carpet needs and \$85,000 (389) to obtain fiber connection at Tangent Elementary School.

District Vehicle Maintenance & Servicing (2545-541)

Funding is included to add and/or replace two vehicles in the non-student transport fleet.

Employee Wellness Program (2640-389)

The School District has applied for a \$25,000 wellness grant and has an additional \$50,000 budgeted to create a program that promotes and supports the health, safety, and well-being of all district employees.

District Technology (2260-112)

Funding is included for one additional district network technician. Over the next 12 months the district will add or replace over 350 computers and over 2,000 mobile devices. As long as

funding remains available this level of deployment is likely to continue and will require additional support.

Facility Improvements (4150)

Included in the recommended budgeted is \$160,000 to fully renovate a set of restrooms at each high school and \$90,000 to install ADA playground equipment at three schools that have specialized programs (Oak, Waverly, and Timber Ridge), and \$100,000 for further safety improvements district-wide (e.g. fencing, card lock systems, cameras).