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Superintendent Budget Message 2018-2019

The 2017-2019 biennium has been an interesting one. Despite record state revenues, the increases to the State School Fund has been insufficient keep up with the funds needed to cover PERS rate increases or fund needed investments to address academic and behavior needs in our schools. The school district has been relying on reserves to accomplish this, and despite many reductions to the budget will continue to rely on reserves in the proposed 2018-2019 budget. Unless significant additional revenue is realized significant reductions to expenditures will have to occur in future budgets.

The district has much to be proud of, high school graduation rates for example. Throughout the district there is exciting and innovative teaching occurring. Opportunities for students are expanding such as technology integration, outdoor school, and increasing STEM offerings. Significant and exciting building improvements that will greatly benefit students are well underway. The district is maximizing the use of additional funding sources such as Measure 98 (High School Success), Title II, Title IV, Tier II, and Transformation Grant funds to address student needs.

We also continue to face the need to address issues regarding behavior and teacher training around trauma informed practices to meet the needs of students impacted by adverse childhood experiences.

The district remains in a state of flux, with not every detail nailed down for the 2018-2019 school year. The proposed budget provides future district leadership with the budgetary authority to address needs, along with the hope that they can continue to find ways to reduce expenditures without impacting the quality of instruction.

The recent groundbreaking for Meadow Ridge Elementary is a reminder of our growing student population. Between 2017-2018 and 2022-2023 our enrollment is projected to increase by 6%.

Lastly I feel we need to again thank our community for their generous support of our capital projects. Over the course of the 2018-2019 school year, construction will begin on the new Meadow Ridge Elementary, the Oak Grove Elementary replacement, the South Albany High CTE improvements and multipurpose space/gym, phase one of the West Albany replacement, and very needed repairs/improvements at 15 district sites. These are all welcome changes that will positively impact our students for generations to come.

Respectfully,

Tonja Everest
Acting Superintendent