

Snohomish School District
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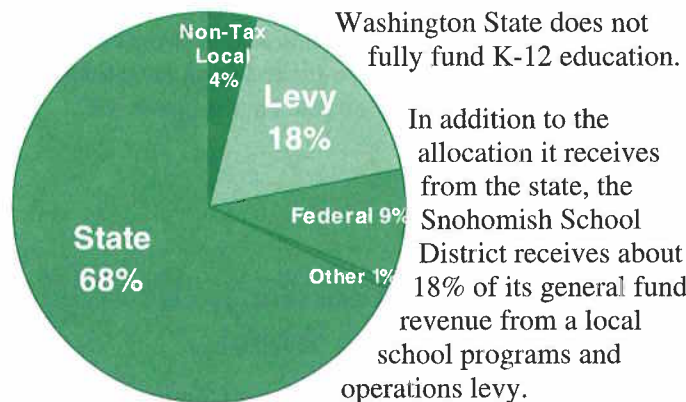
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SCHOOL VIEWS



A NEWSLETTER FOR THE SNOHOMISH SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY

School board puts replacement levy on the Feb. 9 ballot Current levy was approved in 2006 and is scheduled to expire next year



Washington State does not fully fund K-12 education.

In addition to the allocation it receives from the state, the Snohomish School District receives about 18% of its general fund revenue from a local school programs and operations levy.

Levies can be run for a maximum of four years. The current levy was approved by voters in 2006 and is scheduled to expire in 2010.

The proposed levy, if approved, would replace the one that is expiring and would maintain local levy funding for Snohomish schools through 2014.

What would the levy pay for?

The programs and operations levy funds the difference between what the state provides and what it actually costs to educate Snohomish students.

Some examples of services and costs that the levy would support because they are not funded – or are only partially funded – by the state's basic education allocation include:

- Teachers' support, curriculum, support staff, safety and student services
- Student transportation
- Athletics and co-curricular activities
- Maintenance and operation of our facilities
- Instructional technology

Where can I get more information?

A Voter Information Guide will be mailed to all district residents after the holidays. This information is also on the district website, www.sno.wednet.edu.

Levies are for learning (operations)

Schools receive local funding through levies and bond issues, both of which must be approved by voters. Levies and bonds are intended to meet different purposes and there are strict guidelines governing the use of these funds.

Program and operation levy

Levies support district and student programs and help pay for the day-to-day operations of schools. A program and operation levy can be proposed for up to four years, after which it expires. Snohomish School District's current levy was approved by voters in 2006 and is scheduled to expire in 2010.

By law, bond dollars must be used for capital projects and may not be used to pay for school operations.

Bonds are for building (capital projects)

Bonds

Bonds are financed over a longer period of time. Once approved by voters, bonds are sold to investors to provide funds for school construction and capital facility improvement projects. In 2004 and 2008, Snohomish voters approved bond measures that are providing for new and renovated schools across the district.

The next edition of our Capital Projects newsletter, *Building our Future*, will be mailed in January. For the latest news on our construction projects, including architectural renderings of the new elementary schools, visit sno.wednet.edu.

Pathway programs boost student career options Community support provides state-of-the-art training for students

Spencer Kemp bought plans to build a kayak in his machining class and is now improving the plans in his CAD I (Computer-Assisted Design) class. He plans to study architectural design at Washington State University.

Justin Jones, a senior, has taken classes in the Machining Pathway Program (MPP) since he was a freshman. Justin's training and networking through the program landed him a job designing custom jewelry for Sachi.

In the new Biotechnology Pathway Program at Glacier Peak, students are doing real research on a University of Washington project on genetic connections to smoking.

Real-world activities

These are just a few examples of how Snohomish students are engaging in real-world activities through career technical education (CTE) classes and pathway programs.

Glacier Peak and Snohomish High students choose from 13 pathways in topics such as marketing, early childhood development, and visual arts. More programs are being developed all the time, and plans are afoot for pathways in e-commerce as well as TV & radio broadcasting. Agri-biotech and bio-mechanics options will be added to the biotech program as funds become available.

Pathways allow students to pursue a career interest for at least two years in preparation for higher education and/or high-demand, higher-wage jobs. Each program is tied to a college or university and students can earn up to 45 college credits while still in H.S.

Community partnerships expand opportunities

Although many schools have pathways, community support and business partnerships ensure our students have state-of-the-art machines, equipment, and software.

Snohomish HS (SHS) CAD teacher Brad Johnson says, "Our students get to design and build their creations. This is pretty unique; most schools just have one or the other."

The new biotech program was made possible by a \$50,000 grant from the Snohomish Education Foundation. The Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center, Seattle Bio Medical Research Institute, and the U of W have teamed up as curricular and technical support partners. Amgen has offered students the rare opportunity to tour their plant. Teacher Tami Caraballo adds, "Our students are getting an opportunity no one else is getting. It should equip them to open incredible doors." If enough students sign up, the program will be available at SHS next fall.

AIM High School students prepare their working portfolio and comprehensive senior project every semester. Work-based learning provides credit and support for their jobs. Administrator June Shirey comments, "Our staff works hard to help students find their passion and connect them with careers."

Thank you, Snohomish!

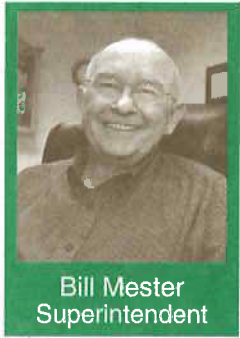
Steve Cotterill, Director of CTE, comments, "There are not many communities that have been as generous and supportive of our programs as Snohomish has been. Our community clearly values education and our students know it. It is incredible!"



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"Our students are getting an opportunity no one else is getting. It should equip them to open incredible doors."

A Message from Dr. Mester Pathway programs provide great opportunity



Bill Mester
Superintendent

On the cover of this newsletter you'll find information about our district's newest "pathway program," this one focused on biotechnology.

Students in this and our other pathway programs represent the full spectrum of learners. Some students will use their high school pathway work to springboard into a college or university program while others will choose to put their skills to use in the

workforce right away. This is one of the strengths of the pathways concept as we have applied it here in Snohomish. Our pathways are available for students with a wide variety of educational goals. Whether a student wants to become a lab technician, a research scientist, or a surgeon, they will find the Biotech Pathway helpful.

Foundation, community support critical

Through a very generous contribution from the Snohomish Education Foundation, we were able to purchase a 3-D color printer for our biotech program. This will allow students to make and study 3-D models of proteins and related items. I want to thank the foundation and all the community members who contributed to the fundraising effort. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Janet Kusler for providing much of the enthusiasm behind this effort. I also want to recognize the work of Glacier Peak teacher, Tami Caraballo. It took an extraordinary amount of energy and dedication on the part of many to make this important program possible.

Replacement levy on the February 9, 2010 ballot

I would also like to draw your attention to the last page of this newsletter. Our current levy provides 18%, or nearly one out of every five dollars, in our operating fund. It is scheduled to expire next year, so the school board voted earlier this month to put a replacement school programs and operations levy on the February 9, 2010 ballot.

More information about this proposal is available on our website, www.sno.wednet.edu, and we will mail a Voter Information Guide to all district residents after the holidays. I hope you will take the time to read this information and contact us if you have questions.

Take in a student performance this holiday season

Finally, the holidays offer us many opportunities to come together as a community. There will be many great student performances in the next month. Please visit our website for a listing of these events and plan to attend one this year. Students appreciate seeing community members in the audience.

Happy holidays,

William A. Mester

Doing more & more Snohomish Education Foundation supports students and teachers

The Snohomish Education Foundation (SEF) raised \$50,000 to cover the initial equipment and supplies for the new Biotechnology Pathway Program. (See page 1 for more on this.)

SEF board member Janet Kusler says, "We wanted to work with the district on special programs that enhance student learning but are typically not covered with public funds. Fundraising is never easy, but it was easy to get excited about this program."

"Everyone knows state funding doesn't do it all. What better way to help kids and teachers than to raise money for grants and scholarships?!"

In addition to the biotech grant, last spring the SEF provided each school with age-appropriate class sets of *Three Cups of Tea* in support of the Pennies for Peace campaign. They also awarded \$26,700 in classroom grants and another \$67,600 in scholarships to Snohomish students.

To raise money, the SEF holds an auction each November and a walk-a-thon each spring, and accepts donations year-round.

Marian Berge, former Communications Director for the district, co-founded the SEF in 1986. Berge, who has served on the SEF board since her retirement in 1992, says, "It's fun to be involved and to see how it's developed and progressed. We're able to do more and more. Community support has been fantastic."

Steve Thomas, who has served on the SEF board over a decade, says, "Everyone knows state funding doesn't do it all. What better way to help kids and teachers than to raise money for grants and scholarships?!"

Want more information?
Visit SnohomishEducationFoundation.org



Dads on Campus Watch DOGS enters 3rd year

Jeff Talmadge wasn't planning to volunteer with Watch DOGS (Dads of Great Students) at Cascade View Elementary two years ago.

He recalls, "I was shocked by how many dads got right up to join. My wife said, 'If you don't do this, you'll be the only dad who doesn't!'" Now Jeff is the Top DOG at Centennial and is passionate about the program. "This is a hands-on way to be involved with our kids at school."

"We're a community that looks out for our kids."

Andy O'Shea, another Top DOG, works with a team to recruit and organize the program at Central. Last spring, Central/Emerson dads put on a well-attended carnival geared towards making good memories for kids.

Watch DOGS is a father involvement initiative that now boasts programs in more than 1,500 schools nationwide. In Snohomish, the program started two years ago, and now around 1,000 Snohomish dads are involved in their kids' schools. The Kiwanis of Snohomish generously provided a \$2000 donation to pay for each school's renewal kit this year.

Watch DOGS is for dads, uncles, and grandfathers who volunteer to spend one day at school during the year. Typical duties include bus loading and unloading and monitoring the campus. Dads also work in the classroom with their own kids and become buddies to other students. Many dads find the experience so enjoyable, they sign up for more. O'Shea adds, "Teachers love us being around."

O'Shea, who makes a point of talking with kids who aren't part of a group, often dons a hot dog costume for the delight of primary students. "I like showing other dads how easy it is to have fun with the kids. We get lots of dads involved when they see how easy it is," he says.

Talmadge commented on the Snohomish men who mentored his uncle, Evan, after the death of Evan's father. He says, "We're a community that looks out for our kids."

Snohomish teachers use PGF time to improve teaching

Visitors to Dutch Hill Elementary during Professional Growth Friday (PGF) afternoons will find teachers working together in professional learning communities.

Research suggests that teacher collaboration around student work is a key component for improved student learning. Dutch Hill's teachers use PGF time to identify the essential content in each subject area and develop assessments to determine whether their students understand those core concepts. They use these regular assessments to identify areas where students need additional instruction or enrichment and develop learning activities targeted to their students' needs.

"The staff work really hard," Principal Donna Kapustka says. "And every time they reassess, they have picked up at least another 30 kids who have met the proficiency target. This is powerful!"

Routes & stops & training, oh my! A new supervisor takes the wheel ...

Veronica Schmidt, the district's new Supervisor of Transportation, hit the ground running when she assumed her role this September.

Coming from the South Whidbey School District, where she served as Supervisor of Transportation and Food Services, Schmidt brings a wealth of training and experience to the job. In addition to the Pupil Transportation Management Program she took at Central Washington University, she is an authorized driver trainer, and has received accident investigation and "Train the Trainer" training.

Evaluation of bus stops a high priority

As a result of state funding cuts, the district transportation budget was reduced by \$500,000 this year, causing many changes to bus routes and stops across the district. One of Schmidt's first priorities has been to review and provide additional evaluation to those stop decisions. "I want to make sure that each decision is in the best interest of students and families," she says.

About three years ago, the school district instituted an automated routing system called Versatrans. Schmidt notes, "It would be nearly impossible to do routing by hand now with the size of our district."

Improving the system is an ongoing process. "Every year it gets better as we increase the accuracy of our data," Schmidt says.

Schmidt is excited about the job. "I enjoy working with students and adults and have a passion around making it all more efficient."

