

Public Questions

- 1. Why are charter schools continuing to take funds from neighborhood public schools? How much reduction in funds will they see?**
 - a. Public charter schools in Oregon are governed by ORS Chapter 338, which outlines the formation, operation, and accountability of these independent public schools. The District has sponsorship agreements with four charter schools and the payment from the State School Fund is mandated through those agreements; the district cannot change the amount. The amount passed through to the charter school for 2026-27 is estimated to be \$16,657,947.

- 2. With the proposed cuts to campus security, how do you plan to make sure that kids remain safe; especially at the high school level where my daughter constantly reports that there are fights happening in the halls?**
 - a. Campus monitors at RHS are not being reduced.

- 3. With your proposed cuts to both the Special Education supports I assume that the population of students with behavioral/mental health concerns would be affected as well; what is going to be implemented to ensure that these populations don't fall through the cracks and get left behind?**
 - a. The district will continue to partner with Multnomah County Mental and Behavioral Health services, the School Based Health Center at Reynolds High School, and SUN providers to refer students to care providers. In addition all schools will be staffed with full-time school counselors.

- 4. Please break down the reasons we are in a \$21 million deficit for 2026-2027, after already having been in a \$25 million deficit for 2025-2026.**
 - a. When we provide the initial estimate for the budget, it is based on “rolling” all expenses forward - keeping the same level of services and staffing, or “Current Service Level.” However, maintaining the same level costs more due to inflation and cost of living adjustments.
 - b. Staffing costs increase every year when the district provides the step and COLA adjustments - meaning those same staff (FTE) cost more than the prior year. For example, if a step is 4% and the COLA is 2%, the same staffing level costs at least 6% more in salary, plus the increase to related payroll taxes.
 - c. Similarly, our purchased services and supplies increase even if we purchase the same hours or items because costs increase for our vendors.
 - d. Our debt payments typically increase each year until the final year.
 - e. State mandates, such as changes to eligibility for unemployment in the summer and Paid Leave Oregon are adding to our costs. While these programs provide essential support to staff, these are additional costs to the district.
 - f. Insurance requirement changes have increased the cost to the district, such as increased costs related to workers compensation, sexual abuse, and cybersecurity insurance. The district is part of a state-wide pool. We have a limited amount of control over these costs.
 - g. PERS costs are increasing due to the state estimates of future payout of benefits. When so many districts increased staffing over the last five years, this impacted the actuarial calculation for future member benefits. Meaning, the more staff working now - the more benefits paid in the future. We are required to fully fund our PERS benefit, so as the future value of benefits

increases, our current rates increase. PERS accounts for more than 30 cents for every dollar expended on compensation.

- h. Note that while our staffing level and other costs have increased every year, our funding is based on student enrollment, which is declining. Since 2014-15 our student enrollment has dropped by 21% while our staffing has increased by the same amount. At the same time, the gap in our funding specific for special education relative to the cost of services is increasing while the number of students eligible for such services is increasing relative to the overall enrollment. So, our revenue driver is going down at the same rate as our expense drivers are going up. This results in a structural deficit.
- i. The structural deficit has been increasing yearly over the past decade, but the ESSER/COVID funds helped delay the impact of this deficit as regularly occurring operational funds were moved to grant funds and left a greater ending fund balance to carry forward than before these funds were available. With these costs moved back to the general fund, we are now experiencing the full impact of cost increases beyond our revenue sources.
- j. Specific to the differences from the current year to next year include:
 - Meeting employee agreement requirements: Employee agreements require provision of step and COLA amounts, along with other items like stipends, insurance contributions, additional pay, tuition reimbursement, substitute coverage, and other working conditions with a cost impact.
 - Return to a full school year: Furlough reductions to salaries saved approximately \$2,718,052 plus related payroll taxes, which will be added back in FY27
 - Less ending fund balance to carry forward: The district estimates a reduction of up to \$6 million in revenue due to less beginning fund balance (which is the remaining funds from the prior year)
 - Accounting for 5% Ending Fund Balance Requirement: Current service level expenses do not allow for meeting the board policy for retaining at least 5% of adopted revenues as the ending fund balance; we will expend about \$4 million more than budgeted. To restore the ending fund balance, we either need to reduce expenditures or increase revenue.

5. How many administrators have been cut (in FTE)?

- a. 9.2 FTE (Administrators, Supervisors, and Managing Officer) were cut
- b. 0.5 FTE was added to the General Fund for the Director of Federal and State Grants position, making the net reduction to General Fund 8.7 FTE.

6. How were individual student programs selected to be cut (e.g. JROTC)?

- a. The decision to discontinue JROTC was made based on student enrollment and projected interest.

Program	Semester 1 Enrollment	Semester 2 Enrollment	Total Enrollment
JROTC	98	89	187
Leadership	133	123	256
Business and Marketing	136	139	275
Computer Science	165	172	337
Woods/Construction Trades	179	175	354
Graphics	177	181	358

Engineering	177	182	359
Cosmotology	181	182	363
Metals/Welding Technology	185	180	365
Automotive Technology	183	193	376
Early Childhood Education	331	352	683
Culinary Arts	406	386	792

- 7. Why are student-facing staff being cut before non-student-facing staff?**
- Both types of positions are being reduced. There are fewer non-student facing positions to reduce as many were eliminated or reduced over the past several years. The majority of positions in a school district are student facing.
- 8. Why did Reynolds School District not use Oregon's SB 849 funds from 2025 for PERS relief? How can the district guarantee to its staff that if it receives dollars from the state that these dollars are used on our students?**
- The district's PERS rates are inclusive of the 1.68% rate reduction applied through SB 849, which expires with this biennium (June 2027)
 - The district is required to use funding as outlined by Oregon Department of Education, and spending is audited annually through a financial audit and through ODE desk audits (program reporting and reviews).
- 9. Why are temporary grant funds being used to make permanent changes to Reynolds High School's building, staff, and programming (i.e. the dental program)?**
- The Intensive Coaching Program funds are being used to fund the renovations necessary to establish a dental assisting program. High-interest programs at RHS are needed to engage students in pathways to living-wage jobs and future career opportunities.
- 10. Will we be cutting our contract with the Center for Advanced Learning (CAL)'s dental program?**
- For 2026-27, RHS students will be able to access three areas of study at CAL that are not presently offered at RHS: Nursing, Media, and Fabric Design.
- 11. Can we expect to have the same amount of reductions again next year? At what point does the district determine it has insufficient resources to operate?**
- Student enrollment is the main factor in the State Schools Fund allocation that Reynolds receives. For 2027-28 the amount of SSF will be determined by the Oregon Legislature at next year's long session.
- 12. I am wondering what the thought process was in keeping AP positions while teachers are facing teaching blended classes next year with 30 or more students?**
- Assistant principal positions were reduced by 7 FTE—one each at RHS, RMS, RLA, and HB Lee, Hartley, Alder, and Salish Ponds. The elementary schools in which an AP was discontinued are projected to have enrollments at/under 350 and do not host specialized special education programs. Facing a deficit of this magnitude required balancing difficult choices throughout the organization.

13. What will the reduction to PE and music at the elementary level look like?

- a. PE and music will continue to be offered at all elementary schools. PE and music staff will be shared between smaller schools. Larger elementary schools will continue to be staffed with full-time specialists.
- b. Additionally, Glenfair and Wilkes will have full time art teachers. Alder and Margaret Scott will share an art teacher. The art teacher positions (3 FTE) are funded through Portland Arts Tax.
- c. Schools that share PE and music staff will develop schedules to alternate days or weeks at each school.
- d. Sample weekly time allocations based on the number of specialists available at each school confirm that adequate staffing will be available to cover contracted prep time: [Sample Schedules](#)

14. Why are we cutting counselors from elementary schools?

- a. There will still be a full-time counselor staffed at every elementary school. One FTE was cut. It was shared between two schools as an additional .5 at each school. Facing a deficit of this magnitude required balancing difficult choices throughout the organization.

15. Are we cutting music or theater for middle school or high school?

- a. No.

16. Why are OSEA and RAA getting COLAs this year? Why didn't you cut benefits from the admin contract? In 2026-27 OSEA and RAA both will be in the third year of their three-year agreement which includes a 2% COLA. REA opted for a two-year agreement which ends on June 30th, 2026.

- a. The budget includes the negotiated pay and benefits negotiated in the OSEA and RAA agreements.

17. Is Cabinet getting a COLA or steps?

- a. The COLA increase stipulated in the Superintendent's contract matches whatever COLA is received by REA, so 0% for 26-27. The Superintendent voluntarily will reduce pay by scheduled 3% step (the equivalent of seven days).
- b. The Assistant Superintendent and Managing Officers for Human Resources, Finance, and Operations do not receive steps and were scheduled to receive a 3% COLA. The full time positions will voluntarily reduce pay by that 3% (the equivalent of seven days). The Managing Operations Officer is reducing by .2 FTE.

JROTC

18. Given that the program is heavily subsidized by federal dollars, all the ways that students benefit from this program, and its increasing popularity, why has the program been cut from the high school?

- a. Total federal reimbursement is \$45,255 for salary and related benefits. The cost of the FTE assigned to ROTC is \$159,058 (before changes for FY27 budget) leaving a net cost of \$116,803 to the general fund.

19. How much does this program cost the school district? What are the actual dollar savings from this elimination?

- a. Federal reimbursement is \$45,255 for salary and related benefits. Cost of the position assigned to ROTC is \$159,058 (before changes for FY27 budget) leaving a net cost of \$116,803 to the general fund.

20. Aren't we in the process of expanding our CTE program at the high school? JROTC is actually a CTE pathway in some states. Why are we cutting an inexpensive and growing program that fits within the CTE framework?

- a. The program has a cost, like all others. Student interest in JROTC has decreased year over year and it is currently the lowest enrolled CTE program.