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Public Comment: Interested residents can submit a request to provide public comment during the meeting by sending an email request to budget_comm@4j.lane.edu with the subject line "Public Comment Request." The deadline is noon (12 p.m.) on Monday before the Budget Committee meeting. District staff will contact requesters after the deadline to notify them whether they have been selected to speak and, if so, when and how to connect to provide public comment to the Budget Committee.

Residents can continue to submit written comments via email to budget_comm@4j.lane.edu , with "Written Public Comment" in the subject line. The Budget Committee members will read and take into consideration all comments submitted by noon on the day of the meeting.

**6:00 PM
Budget Committee Meeting**

- I. **6:00 p.m. Regular Budget Committee Meeting:**
- II. Call to Order, Roll Call (6:00 p.m.)
- III. Agenda Review (6:05 p.m.)
- IV. Items Raised by the Audience (6:10 p.m.)
- V. Items for Information
 - 1. Answers to Questions Raised during the April 25th Budget Committee Meeting (6:25 p.m.) 2
Presenter: Cydney Vandercar, Interim Superintendent
 - 2. Budget Committee Discussion (6:55 p.m.)
 - a. Follow-up Questions for 4J staff
- VI. Items for Action (7:25 p.m.)
 - a. Approve 2022–23 Proposed Budget
 - b. Declare Tax Rates and Debt Service Levy
- VII. Adjourn (7:30 p.m.)

THIS MEETING WILL BE BROADCAST OVER KRVM-AM (1280)

INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING:
To request interpreter services for this meeting, please call (541) 790-7850 or TDD (541) 790-7712 or the TDD Relay Number 1 (800) 735-2900



Eugene School District 4J

2022-23 Superintendent's Proposed Budget



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Budget Committee Meeting
May 2, 2022

Agenda



- Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Public Comment
- Items for Information
 - Answers to Budget Committee Member Questions 3
 - Committee Discussion
- Items for Action
 - Approve 2022-23 Proposed Budget
 - Declare Tax Rates & Debt Service Levy

Public Comment



Audience members who have signed up to provide public comment at this ⁴ meeting will have 3 minutes each to present their thoughts and considerations to the Budget Committee



Answers to questions raised during the April 25th Budget Committee meeting

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Committee Discussion

Questions and comments on the Proposed Budget

Requests for additional information or clarification of budget items



Items for Action

Approve Budget

- General Fund Total of **\$270,328,481** or as amended by the budget committee.
- Other Funds Total of **\$277,587,598** or as amended by the budget committee.

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Declare Taxes and Levies

- General Fund tax rate of **\$4.7485** per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of the district.
- Local Option Levy tax rate of **\$1.50** per \$1,000 of assessed valuation of the district.
- Debt Service Fund tax levy of **\$40,609,690**



2022-23 Budget Meeting Calendar

Budget Committee:

- May 2, 2022 – Discussion and approval of the 2022-23 Proposed Budget and declaration of Taxes and Levies
- May 16, 2022 – date held for additional meeting if needed to finalize the work of the Budget Committee

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Board of Directors:

- June 1, 2022 – Public budget hearing and consideration of the 2022-23 Proposed Budget, Taxes and Levies
- June 22, 2022 – Enact resolutions to adopt the 2022-23 Budget and declare Taxes and Levies



Responses to Questions from Budget Committee Members in April 25 Meeting

1. Isn't approving the budget and setting taxes a board action, not a budget committee action?

It is both. The budget committee approves the budget to forward to the school board for adoption. The budget committee has two statutory responsibilities: approval of the proposed budget (General Fund and Other Funds totals) and declaration of taxes and levies for the coming year. The 4J Board of Directors adopts the district budget and authorizes the tax and levy amounts for submission to Lane and Linn Counties.

2. The legislature passed a measure that gives school districts funding for staff recruitment and retention. Is there an estimate of how much is coming to 4J? Is it one-time or repeating funding? Is there information about how it can be used?

HB 4030 provides \$78 million in grants to support retention and recruitment of K–12 educators and support personnel in schools across Oregon.

Since our last budget committee meeting the district has received notice of a potential award of grant funds for educator retention and recruitment. The Oregon Department of Education has set aside up to \$2,017,622 in one-time funding for 4J in the coming year based on enrollment (weighted average daily membership, ADMw). To access these funds, the district must submit a grant application by May 27, 2022. The funds must be expended by June 30, 2023.

The grant funds may be spent in the following categories:

- Data collection and root cause analysis
- Reducing persistent local workforce shortages
- Supportive working conditions
- Local or regional career pathways
- Education pre-service and in-service training
- New staff support
- School-level structural conditions

Recipients will be required to expend funds in alignment with the categories noted above and demonstrate the use of an equity lens in making budget decisions. Grant funds should be used to meet local needs, and should be used to support evidence-based strategies which are proven to be effective. ODE notes that the legislative and executive intent of these funds is to use them for strategies identified and prioritized to address high-need specialties and workforce shortage areas for both classified and licensed staff, build on existing efforts which address root causes of workforce attrition while responding to urgent needs, and diversify the workforce, as well as

ensure every educator and staff member can meet the academic and well-being needs of students, particularly students from historically and persistently underserved groups.

For more information about this grant opportunity, please see <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/Pages/Education-Staff-Retention-and-Recruitment-Grants.aspx>.

3. Can you tell us more about your expectations for enrollment increases next year?

Our current revenue projections for the State School Fund assume a return to pre-pandemic levels of enrollment over the next two years, with increases of about 300 students a year in 2022–23 and 2023–24.

In 2021–22 the district planned for a significant increase in student enrollment, focused in kindergarten and 1st grade, in line with the expectation that the pandemic would no longer be a factor in enrollment. This was not the ultimate outcome for the school year, but the district has maintained higher staffing levels and will continue this level of staffing into 2022–23 with the support of General Fund reserves. Our plan is to use reserves as a “bridge” to support staffing until enrollment levels return to normal and State School Fund revenues can again support these costs.

4. How many staff members has the district hired and how many have left in the last two years?

The district has hired 638 staff members in the past two years (hire date between May 1, 2020, and April 29, 2022). In the same period, 591 staff members have left employment with the district. Of those, 101 individuals both began and ended their employment within the two years.

5. Does 4J look for ways to save on bond interest rates and reduce the debt burden on our taxpayers?

The district’s Financial Services team works closely with our financial advisor to monitor interest rates and identify opportunities to lower the total cost of interest on our new and existing bond issuances. Although it is different from refinancing a home mortgage loan, historically low interest rates also offer the potential of bond interest savings, and the district seeks out these opportunities.

For example, in September 2020 the district issued \$115 million in general obligation bonds to refinance a portion of the district’s Series 2011, Series 2012, Series 2013 and Series 2014 bonds. Savings to the taxpayers over the life of the refunded bonds were calculated to be over \$9.2 million, or a net present value of 8%. For more information about this bond refinancing please see <https://www.4j.lane.edu/2020/12/school-bond-resale-savings/>.

6. What kind of support is there for seniors getting ready for college?

A few examples of supports include: Each high school has a College & Career Center, a resource center for students and families focused on post high school planning.

All of the district's high schools offer College Now courses for dual high school and college credit, Advanced Placement courses with the opportunity for college credit or placement, and International Baccalaureate courses for students in the International High School program and at North Eugene High School. The district subsidizes the cost of IB and AP tests for all students and will cover the cost completely for students who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals upon request. We also offer funding to support the cost of courses at the UO through Duck Link.

Over the course of the summer between the 2020–21 and 2021–22 school year, the district contracted with a local tutoring organization to offer SAT and ACT prep courses free of charge to students and families.

Each summer the district offers the opportunity for students to participate in the UO's SAIL program, which is designed to expose students to college programs, students and professors. The program places an emphasis on first generation college students and students of a protected class. We also have the AVID program which is heavily focused on exposing students to colleges through campus visits and assistance navigating financial aid and scholarship processes. Each year, AVID seniors throughout the district receive hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarship money and grants as a result of the program.

7. We would like to learn more about the teacher mentor program, especially what does this mean for the new teachers?

We currently have 8 mentors, 5 full-time and 3 part-time. Going into next year we will have 8 full-time mentors and 2 part-time mentors.

All first and second year teachers have been matched with a member of the mentoring team. All teachers new to 4J with prior teaching experience have been matched with an elementary staff development specialist or currently practicing teachers at the secondary level.

The mentor team attended Coaching for Equity 101 and the Coaching for Equity Master Class to support having conversations around equity with their mentees.

4J is partnering with the New Teacher Center to provide targeted professional development for the mentors as well as to support ongoing program design and development. We are also working in partnership with the WREN (Western Regional Educator Network) to provide intentional spaces of connection for BIPOC-identifying staff, both new to 4J and veteran teachers.

For more information about the mentor program please see: [Mentor Program Overview](#).

8. What does equity and inclusion mean and how do you measure success?

Equity ensures that each learner receives the necessary resources they need individually to succeed. The goal is to reduce the predictability of who succeeds and fails, create change to support underserved and historically excluded students, and cultivate every student's unique gifts and talents.

Success is measured individually, by the evaluation of projects or initiatives, and by measures including graduation rates, attendance, academic assessments, discipline data, school climate data, and harassment reports. Ultimately, complete success will be achieved when we have systematically eliminated gaps in opportunities, and barriers to access.

9. Please provide additional information on College Now and opportunities for high school students. Can "College Now" opportunities be expanded at 4J?

College Now classes are offered in all our high schools, free of cost and in a variety of content areas. These classes allow high school students the opportunity to earn dual credit through the high school and the community college with which the teacher is recognized.

We are always looking to increase the number of College Now courses we can offer, and we work to facilitate the process with the teacher. The limiting factor is the degree our teachers hold. Qualification is dependent upon the teacher having a master's degree in the subject area or being a native level speaker of the language with required coursework in college.

10. How does the SIA support the NATIVES program with the funding for 2 FTE?

The district staffs the NATIVES program with two positions—a 1.0 FTE licensed position and a 0.8 FTE classified position. Prior to the availability of funding through the Student Success Act—Student Investment Account (SIA), these positions were funded through a federal Title VI grant. The district has shifted funding for these positions to SIA, which will allow us to utilize the Title VI grant funds to increase direct student-support services, such as tutoring, summer camp and cultural, curricular and community building events. Expected outcomes include closing achievement gaps, improved attendance, closing graduation gaps for Native American students and strengthening relationships with Oregon's recognized tribes.

11. Please provide additional information about the SIA funding for improving 3rd grade reading.

Whether students are reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade is a significant predictor of future academic success. Funding from SIA has supported a targeted focus to create a support system for staff across the district to improve literacy for students in pre-K through 3rd grade.

These supports include the hiring of a Early Learning TOSA, K–3 Literacy TOSA, 4 reading specialists, and 8 FTE of 1st grade educational assistants. This TOSA team, combined with

existing staff, has created a multi-year plan to improve student literacy in Eugene 4J. This plan has included the implementation of professional development for teachers on best practice instruction and supported the curriculum adoption to acquire high-quality, culturally rich classroom materials. We also purchased thousands of culturally responsive books for elementary classroom libraries districtwide.

12. Please provide more specifics about the \$2.2 million in SIA for behavior framework and behavior consultant.

Additional details on this budget item are available within the [2022–23 Proposed Budget document](#) on pages 6 (Executive Summary) and 175 (Financial Plan). District administrators responsible for this program area will be available at the May 2 meeting to answer any additional questions you might have.

13. Why are kindergarten educational assistants staffed at 5.5 hours?

Previously, kindergarten educational assistant (kinder EA) time was allocated to schools on a per student basis. As a result, kindergarten class size impacted available EA time and the amount of hours for kinder EAs varied greatly from building to building. Two years ago we made an investment to bring all elementary schools to 5.5 hours of kinder EA support per classroom, providing consistency of support across the district. This puts the employee at the school for 6 hours (with a half-hour lunch), just under the 6.5 hour day for our elementary schools. We have also added 4-hour EA's to all first grade classrooms using SIA funds. We will continue to monitor in the future for investments at this level.

14. What is the SIA funding for emergent bilingual student success focused on? Is it focused on English language development or on language immersion education? Is any to support the maintenance or development of the student's native language?

The Emergent Bilingual Student Success Plan aims to support emergent bilinguals, also known as English learners, strengthening the district EL program. We have implemented a standard curriculum (Systematic ELD), delivered professional development for EL teachers, and hired additional staff to develop a newcomer program for recently arrived students. The overall goal of this plan is to facilitate and accelerate English language acquisition.

15. How will the district continue the ArtSpark program if other funding sources, such as Rotary Club support, are withdrawn?

The Instruction Department has budgeted \$75,000 to support this program for next year and will continue to partner with ArtSpark and other community partners to fund this elementary program into the future.

16. What would it cost to increase the base wage for 4J employees to \$18 an hour and raise other wages accordingly?

Employee compensation, including salary, payroll costs and benefits, must be negotiated with our classified and licensed employee union representatives. During negotiations the district's authorized negotiator (in-house counsel) reviews possible compensation terms with the board in preparation for meetings with union negotiations teams.

The board has previously received an estimate of costs related to setting the district's minimum wage amount at \$17/hour. This information was provided, in writing, during a previous executive session. The estimate of costs for the new request, to move this minimum to \$18/hour, will be presented at the next scheduled executive session on May 4.

17. How many staff do we have and how many have benefits? At what point do staff get benefits?

Employees regularly scheduled to work at least half-time (0.5 FTE) are eligible for benefits including health coverage. The district does not constrain employees' FTE to prevent them from being eligible for benefits. Eligibility begins on the first day of employment or the first day of a new position in which the employee becomes benefit eligible.

The district contributes a certain amount per month per employee toward health coverage, as established by labor negotiations. Employees choose among plans with different coverage and costs, which are provided thru OEBB. The 4J Joint Benefits Committee selects medical, vision, and dental plans from the OEBB offerings. At this time there are individual plan options with no cost to the employee offered for all benefit-eligible employees, both full-time and part-time:

<https://www.4j.lane.edu/hr/benefits/health-and-medical-plans/plan-rates-2/>

As of April 29, 2022, out of more than 2,000 staff, not including retirees, the district has 29 regular staff members who are employed less than half-time (under 0.5 FTE or 4 hours a day) and do not qualify for benefits.

Employees who are eligible for benefits may choose to waive coverage, such as in circumstances where an employee is covered by a family member's insurance. About 94% of benefit eligible employees have elected coverage and 6% have waived it.

18. What are the different positions related to mental health and student wellbeing and how do they differ?

Many different positions have duties related to student wellbeing, mental health, and social, emotional and behavioral learning. Some positions mentioned, with links to job descriptions, include:

[Mental Health Specialist](#)
[School Psychologist](#)
[School Counselor](#)
[Social Worker](#)
[Suicide Prevention & Safety Assessment Specialist](#)
[Behavioral Threat Assessment Specialist](#)
[Human Services Coordinator](#)
[Prevention Services Administrator](#)

19. The 3.5 FTE for special ed and the 4.0 FTE for 504 plans in the budget presentation, are these for new positions or continuing previously budgeted positions?

These are new positions for the upcoming school year.

20. The budget presentation included 2.1 FTE licensed speech specialists—does the plan include improving augmented communication, AAC devices and things for students that are not always speaking?

We currently have 22 speech and language specialists (SLPs), including SLPs who have AAC background experience and lead that work. We are losing one of our AAC specialists so are hoping to find a replacement with an equal amount of experience in this area. We have offered to send staff to trainings to increase their AAC skills to better serve our student population.

21. What are the qualifications and training for mental health specialists and behavior consultants?

The mental health specialist position requires related experience and licensure. This information is included in the [position description](#).

Behavior consultants must be licensed teachers, and most have worked in behavior classrooms and/or with students with emotional or behavioral concerns. The position does not require a specialized license. The district does offer to send them to a multitude of relevant trainings including social emotional learning (SEL) work (curriculums, programs etc.), MANDT, restorative justice, and collaborative problem solving, just to name a few. Behavior consultants are required to be facilitators of certain programs so they become extensively trained in a train-the-trainers model—so they have the skills to not only support staff, students and families, but train staff to be trainers in their buildings. We are currently restructuring some of the ways behavior specialists support the district.

22. The BEST after-school program is being expanded. How many schools already had BEST programs on-site and how many have been added?

Established sites are Chávez, Howard, McCornack and River Road/El Camino del Río elementary schools and Kelly Middle School, paid for with 21st Century Community Learning Centers federal grant funds. This funding will expire at the end of the 2022–23 school year and we will reapply for the grant.

This year we have been able to expand BEST to Holt and Willagillespie elementary schools with SIA support. Next year we are intent on opening another elementary site with a combination of ESSER and SIA funds. Expanding BEST is dependent on community partners and locating qualified staff.

23. There are a lot of one-time funds (such as ESSER and ARP funds) being expended in the budget to hire staff and pay for programs, which is a concern. What will happen when these monies are no longer available?

Over the next two years, as these one-time funding sources end, the district will look to incorporate new staff members hired with ESSER and ARP funding into ongoing funding models such as SIA, grants and General Fund.

All positions that are bond-funded and grant-funded have the potential to end once their funding sources are exhausted or terminated, so the district has experience planning for this eventuality and identifying staff retention opportunities. Like all organizations, the district experiences normal staff attrition through retirements and resignations and will have opportunities to retain many staff beyond the grant funding term.

24. Will the Eugene Online Academy continue to be an option for 4J students after the pandemic?

Yes. The Eugene Online Academy was launched before the pandemic but awareness and interest has been higher during the pandemic. The district expects to continue offering the online academy as long as there is sufficient interest (i.e. enrollment) from students and families.

25. What are we doing to encourage enrollment in our schools?

Schools have each held kindergarten orientation events over the past month, welcoming families and encouraging them to register now. Information about kindergarten orientation was shared widely including through parent emails, social media, news media, and postal mail to preschools and every family enrolled in 4J. Families' school choice options also are communicated extensively through numerous channels.

26. Are there any other districts in Oregon that have adopted a universal free lunch program?

There are districts offering universal free meals with federal funding through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Provision 2 programs. We do not know of other districts that are funding universal free meals from a general fund transfer.

Additional strategies may be implemented to reduce the cost to the general fund for supporting no-charge meals to students, such as:

Expand federal reimbursement programs. The ability to claim more meals for reimbursement would reduce the burden on the general fund to provide no-charge meals to all students. Nutrition Services is analyzing expanding federal programs that allow districts to offer universal meals, based on income eligibility set by federal poverty rates. Universal meals can be offered and reimbursed through the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) or Provision 2 when the district can provide evidence that a school or group of schools has 40% or more students eligible for free meals through a government program (such as SNAP, TANF, McKinney Vento, foster program) but not by parent submitted applications. When CEP became available, the district started with five schools, expanded to 10, and now 19 of our schools. For the remaining sites, we are reassessing for Provision 2 eligibility for the 2022–23 school year.

Increase eligibility for free meals. Districts are able to increase the number of families who qualify for free meals (and the district for reimbursement) through Oregon Expanded Income Guidelines (OEIG). This allows a state reimbursement for families that do not qualify for the federal free and reduced meals threshold. For example, eligibility for a family of four under federal guidelines for annual income is \$49,025 while OEIG includes income up to \$79,500. For many families, they will now qualify for free meals, but the first year of implementation would have been this year when federal waivers allowed all students to eat for free. Next year will be the first year of implementation for most school districts, and we will know better the gap that is covered between the federal and state reimbursements.

Write off negative balances more frequently. The Oregon No Lunch Shaming Bill allows all students to eat the same meals regardless of ability to pay. Students not eligible through federal or state eligibility requirements for free meals may charge the meal to a student meal account. An email, phone call, or mailed letter from Nutrition Services reminds families to submit a payment for low balance or negative balance meal accounts. One option is to underwrite negative meal balances when a family requests assistance, or when a balance is negative for a period of time, such as every month. The district wrote off all negative meal account balances for students as part of the pandemic relief at a cost of around \$150,000.

27. How much does a mental health therapist cost? How much does a librarian cost?

The average cost to add a full-time (1.0 FTE) licensed position (such as a teacher, librarian or mental health specialist) in 2022–23 is \$116,760. This amount reflects an average salary of \$72,170 and payroll costs and benefits of \$44,590.

28. Will 4J receive additional state funding as a result of statewide enrollment declines?

The State School Fund estimate for each fiscal year is recalculated regularly by the Oregon Department of Education, and can change for a variety of reasons including statewide and district enrollment, teacher experience levels, local revenue collections, transportation costs, poverty levels, program weights, and other calculation factors.

The latest estimate has been adjusted for a significant drop in statewide enrollment, resulting in a higher per-student payment to districts. Based on this latest estimate (which is subject to more adjustments in future), the district expects to receive approximately \$2.1 million in additional funding for the 2021–22 school year, bringing our estimated State School Fund revenue up to \$97 million. This is still \$0.8 million less than our 2021–22 adopted budget estimate.