



BUELLTON UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Buellton USD Budget Reductions Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Why is the District making budget reductions?*

Nearly all (~90%) of the District's funds (income/revenue) come from student enrollment that is based on a state-approved funding model. Last spring, the District lost 50 students (over 8% of its enrollment and over \$400,000 per school year), due to the historically large class that graduated from Jonata School. This funding will not come back to the District unless enrollment increases significantly in the future. Previous projections made in 2015-2016 assumed significant growth from local housing developments. These assumptions have *NOT* materialized, and the District has seen an essentially "flat" enrollment trend. Buellton USD has also been required by the state to transition to the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). As a result of the inadequacies of this formula, Buellton USD is in the lowest 25% of school funding in the state. The District's loss of enrollment has made this situation worse and put the District at risk of insolvency without these reductions. If the District does not make the required adjustments to balance its budget, the State of California can step in and take away all local decision-making authority.

2. *Why wouldn't reductions be spread out more evenly over multiple years?*

Reductions that are made now enable the District to minimize the need for deeper reductions in the following school year(s).

3. *How did the District decide what or who would be reduced?*

The District's priority is the core mission to educate all students. Each decision has been made with the goal of minimizing disruption to the classroom while building a budget that "lives within our means." The District works in conjunction with the Buellton Education Association (CTA/NEA) which represents teachers and staff while staying within constraints of the Collective Bargaining Agreement ("Contract") and legal regulations.

4. *How much are Counseling Services being reduced?*

Buellton USD has student support and mental health services available to its students including counseling, mental health therapy, and Psychologist support. Next year's student support/mental health services (including counseling) are going from 92 hours/week (2.3 FTE, 2017-2018) to 76 hours/week (1.9 FTE, 2018-2019). While it is difficult to make reductions of this type, the level of support at the District remains significantly higher than any other TK-8 district in the Santa Ynez Valley. The total student support/mental health services for all five of the other TK-8 districts in the Valley

combined in 2017-2018 was 2.4 FTE. The District will continue to provide crisis counseling to support student mental wellness, as well as implementing a school-wide curriculum to support all learners in their social and emotional development. The District will also maintain a service agreement through a community partnership with *People Helping People* to staff the “Family Resource Center” on the Jonata Middle School campus to provide support for students and their families, including family counseling services.

5. *Are the number of classroom teachers being reduced?*

Yes. There will be one less classroom teacher at Oak Valley Elementary, and one less classroom teacher at Jonata Middle School.

6. *Will administration be reduced?*

District administrative staff has decreased by 9% over the last two years. Additional reductions in administrative budgets are being reviewed.

7. *What are the reductions to Instructional Assistants?*

- a. In 2017-2018, Oak Valley Elementary has 190 hours/week of Instructional Assistant support in “general education” (not including Special Education services).
- b. In 2018-2019, Oak Valley Elementary is projected to have 158 hours/week of Instructional Assistant support. This represents a decrease of two part-time positions totaling 32 hours/week or 0.79 FTE.
- c. In 2018-2019, Jonata Middle School’s Instructional Assistant support will remain at approximately 20 hours/week in “general education” with no change (not including Special Education services).

8. *What will the average class size be next year?*

Targets for class sizes will be less than 23 students per classroom on average in grades TK-3, and less than 27 students per classroom on average in grades 4-8. These targets are below the state averages for these grade ranges.

9. *Will there be combination (multi-grade) classes at Oak Valley?*

Yes. The goal will be to minimize these combinations while providing flexibility to keep class sizes as low as possible.

10. *What schedule will be maintained at Jonata Middle School next school year?*

Students will interact with multiple teachers in a daily schedule that includes a strong academic core and increased elective options each day.

11. *Are Special Education (Consortium) services being reduced?*

No. Services to students with disabilities are defined in the terms of their Individualized Education Program (IEP). This program has the force of law, and the services must be maintained unless agreed by the IEP team.

12. *Can a “Foundation” be formed to help the District?*

This is a great idea. A foundation already exists with the Buellton Educational Foundation, and there is interest in the community in expanding the scope of its fund-raising activities to benefit programs at Buellton USD schools. Examples include a foundation to support Arts/Music education in Solvang, and a foundation in Napa Valley which is working to establish “Wellness Centers” in Napa schools. A foundation such as this must be independent from the District, with a separate Board and by-laws. It is important that the Jonata/Oak Valley PTSA for District schools is fully involved in this process to avoid “competition” for fund-raising. It is also important that no individuals or

organizations solicit donations or engage in fund-raising on behalf of the District without approval by the BUSD Board of Trustees.

Thank you! If you have other questions, please contact Mr. Rheinschild, Dr. Haggard, or the District Office and someone will reach out to provide answers or direct you to resources. The district's goal is to provide the very best educational opportunities for all learners.

Acronyms and Definitions:

FTE - full time equivalent. Positions are calculated at 1.0 FTE for a full-time employee, or some portion of 1.0 (for example, a 20-hour per week employee is 0.5 FTE).

LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula) - this is the way the Buellton Union School District receives most of its "income," or revenue. We are not funded from property taxes like most of our neighboring Districts, but instead receive funding for actual daily attendance (no absences, including excused absences, result in the funding needed to run school programs and pay salaries, only if the student is in class).

CTA – California Teachers Association

NEA – National Education Association