

Est. 1883

B E N D  L A P I N E
S c h o o l s

EDUCATING THRIVING STUDENTS

April 9, 2024

Dear Esteemed Members of the Budget Committee, Bend-La Pine Schools' Staff, Students, Families, and Community Members:

As we start the budget process for the 2024-25 school year, it is vital that we reflect on whether we have delivered upon the commitments we've made as good stewards of our taxpayers' dollars.

Whether we are using taxpayer dollars for staffing, providing updated instructional materials, or enhancing our infrastructure, we take our responsibility of stewardship and community engagement very seriously at Bend-La Pine Schools. Deciding how to spend public dollars in service of the district goals is done with intentionality, public input, and feedback.

Over the past several years, we have dedicated substantial time and effort to engage our community in crucial conversations regarding the vision of the district. The feedback and listening sessions have given us clear priorities about what our community wants and needs for the students and families we serve.

We have historically built our budget on the promise that each Bend-La Pine Schools' student is known by name, strength

and need, and graduates ready for college, career, community engagement and life. To this end, the Bend-La Pine Schools' Board of Education established goals that serve as the true north for our system:

1. Students develop a strong academic foundation;
2. Students have a passion, purpose, and plan for their future;
3. Students, families, and staff experience inclusion and belonging; and
4. Operational systems align and support an academically effective and sustainable organization.

Significantly, this past year we established a district Culture and Climate Task Force, composed of classroom educators, support staff, and building and district administrators to collaboratively tackle challenges in our schools and determine how to deliver on the goals of the district. These collaborative conversations continue to provide invaluable insight into how we can better support our staff and optimize learning experiences within the fiscal constraints imposed by the state funding formula.

As a part of the integrated planning process required by the Oregon Department of Education, and to ensure alignment

with community expectations, we have engaged in substantive discussions with students and families across the district to assess our progress ensuring student success. Are we focusing on the right factors with the greatest impact on student success? Are we truly preparing graduates for the demands of college, career, and civic engagement? Are our systems the most effective and efficient they can be to produce the outcomes our families and community want and expect for our students? These are questions that require our collective attention.

From our conversations with these stakeholders, we know that our staff, students, families, and community believe that the following are high priorities:

- Strengthening and adding Career Technical Education pathways;
- Protecting and maintaining class sizes;
- Recruiting and retaining teachers and support staff;
- Increasing advanced academic offerings for students;
- Improving support systems for struggling students; and
- Enhancing elective offerings, including music, art, technology, business, and world languages.

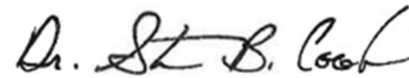
The 2024-25 budget is designed to reflect this feedback, refining our use of resources to provide the best learning environment for students in Bend-La Pine Schools.

Finally, I am pleased to confirm that this proposed budget adheres to the requirements outlined in Bend-La Pine Schools' Executive Limitation 4.3, Financial Planning and

Administration. The policy requires proposing a budget with an ending fund balance at least equal to 5% of resources in the General Fund Operations budget.

We are truly grateful for your ongoing support of the Bend-La Pine Schools.

In collaborative partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Steven Cook". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Steven Cook
Superintendent, Bend-La Pine Schools