

The writing—and re-writing—of our school district budget

By Karen Douglass, Superintendent, Stevenson-Carson School District

Most of us have experienced an unanticipated increase or decrease to our household cash flow that required a revision to the family budget.

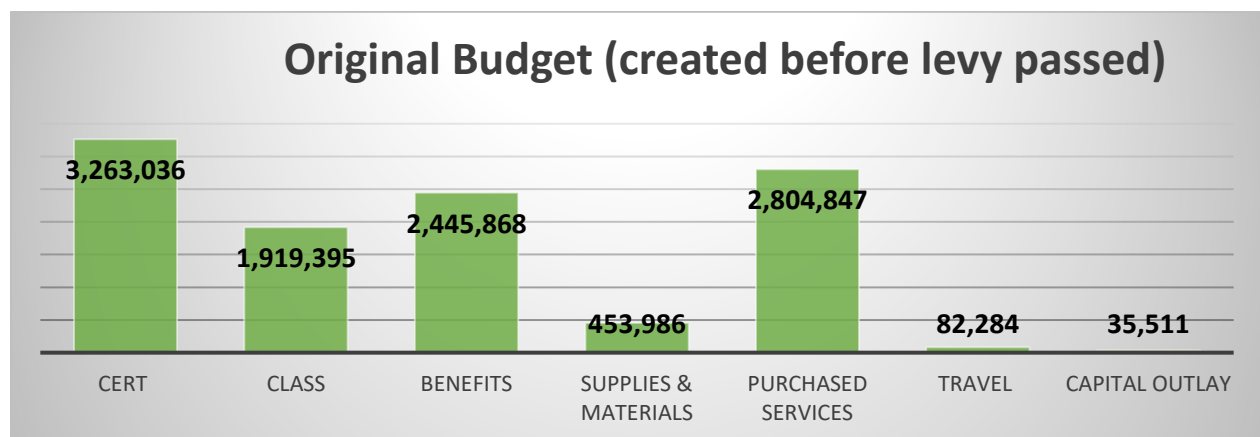
Something similar happened to the Stevenson-Carson School District's budget this year. I'm writing to explain why an extra budget hearing and board approval of a budget extension/revision was required this fiscal year.

As you are aware, the Maintenance and Operation Levy failed to achieve 50% approval on the April 2017 ballot—but then SCSD voters approved the levy in August 2017. This was a very welcome development, but the situation created a timing challenge in the budget adoption process. Here's why:

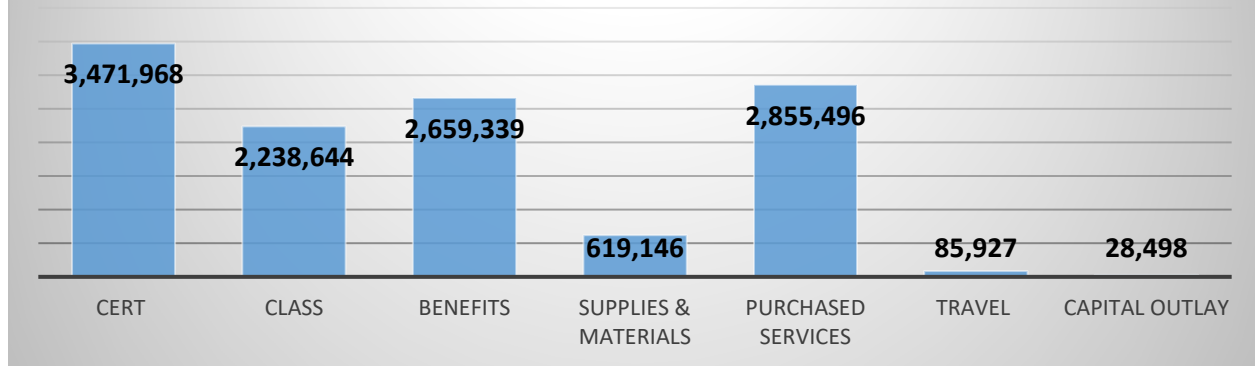
- In Washington State, school district operating budgets must be adopted on or before August 1 each fiscal year.
- Our second levy election—which voters approved—did not occur until August 1 and was not yet validated when we had to adopt the original budget.
- Therefore, it became necessary to develop and submit a budget that reflected the April levy failure.
- That meant our initial budget did not include any new local levy funding, so our budget reflected deep cuts to our district's programs and services.

But, thanks to the community's support on Aug. 1, we were able to rewrite the budget and restore some of the items that were cut in the original version.

The first chart below reflects the original 2017-18 operations budget, which was adopted by the Board in July. The second chart reflects the 2017-18 budget extension/revision, which was just approved by the Board on Thursday, January 25th. The budget extension includes the voter-approved levy funding, which added \$954,091 in to the district's budget for the 2017-18 fiscal year.



Budget Extension (after levy passed)



These are not just numbers. Local dollars help ensure the students of our community receive what they need to learn, grow and succeed. This levy money enables us to:

- Add back most of the reduced staffing positions and extracurricular staffing positions
- Add back extracurricular non-employee related costs
- Increase career technical education staff positions, adding our new business teacher position
- Increase building supply and material budgets
- Add back the curriculum supplies and materials funding

The budget extension/revision also includes \$596,000 from the Capital Project Fund that allows the district to move forward with the Energy Grant Project. Funding for this project will be covered partially by the general fund and partially by grant funds from the state's Department of Enterprise.

As you can imagine, the business of school budgeting is complex. Please contact me at DouglassK@SCSD303.org with questions or concerns. Thank you for your support of our schools and our community!

DID YOU KNOW?

A budget extension is simply a revision to an originally adopted budget. The term extension comes from when the Board extends the appropriation (expenditure) amount of the budget.