

January 16, 2024

Dear Superintendent Tolley and Northshore School District Board,

Northshore Council PTSA members resolve that Northshore School District (NSD) is underfunded by the State of Washington. Our district and many school districts across Washington are experiencing severe budget shortfalls because they are not provided with enough funding to cover the cost of basic education for our students. NSD's deficit is about 26 million dollars or 5% of its operating budget.

Throughout the fall, Superintendent Tolley and his staff have provided various opportunities for our community to learn about the budget and inform the changes the district will make for the 2024-2025 school year. Northshore Council PTSA would like to thank the district and school board for their efforts to give the community a voice in the budget development process.

The options for potential budget cuts are hard and horrible. These include but are not limited to changing the schedule for all high schools from a seven-period day to a six-period day, cutting all elementary and middle school sports and music, and closing the Bear Creek Campus.

While you, the NSD administration and school board directors, have the difficult job of deciding what will be cut from next year's budget, we request that you look at NSD's strategic plan which includes ensuring that all students have equitable access and enrollment in the arts, social sciences, sciences, career and technology classes.

Today, we ask that the district make and communicate detailed plans to mitigate the impact of cuts on all students, ensuring students can equitably obtain the credit needed for an on-time and meaningful graduation. Specifically, we would like to ask the district to determine the number of students in the graduating classes of 2025 and 2026 who will not meet their graduation requirements if credit opportunities are reduced. This number may include students with fewer than 24 credits and students who may have 24 credits but cannot fulfill course graduation requirements. If credit opportunities are reduced, we ask that the district immediately inform students and their families of the student's risk to graduation and provide additional support and counseling to students needing credit retrieval. We ask that the district ensures that the path to a four-year graduation is free, obtainable, and equitable to all students.

Finally, we ask that this plan includes ensuring that students furthest from educational justice can fully participate in all classes including, but not limited to electives, AP, technical, mathematical, and career readiness at the same rate as their peers.

Thank you for addressing our concerns. We appreciate your dedication to supporting our students, developing the whole child, and maintaining a strong, vibrant school environment.

Sincerely,

Northshore Council PTSA Members and Board of Directors