

## SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET MESSAGE FOR 2008-09

Over the past five years, in good financial times or bad, our district has maintained a clear focus on our primary purpose, our mission, and our district improvement goals when developing our budget. In the “down” years we have had to make difficult choices regarding staffing, programs and purchases but these choices were guided by our commitment to engage, inspire and educate all our students to the best of our ability, within our available resources. In the “up” years we have purposefully and strategically planned additions and program expansions that would be most likely to lead to success with our district goals of (1) increasing student achievement in language arts and math and (2) improving post-secondary options for graduates of our district. Because school funding in Oregon has been somewhat unstable for at least the past five years, our district budget committee and board members have worked hard to smooth out the bumps on our financial road.

Our district is facing a slight bump in the road next year, due to a decrease in our student enrollment by about 100 students from the 2006-07 school year. The good news is that we fully expect this decline in student count to reverse itself shortly and the even better news is that our strategic planning in past years will allow us to operate in a “maintain” mode despite the loss of revenue that corresponds with a loss of students. We are expecting a 2007-08 ending fund balance of about 1.4 million dollars. This balance will become the beginning fund balance for 2008-09 and will allow us to maintain essential and enriching programs at all our schools. The programs that we have worked so

hard to develop, fund, and implement in recent years will go on and our students will continue to enjoy and benefit from these programs.

Due to the decline in our student count and the retirement and/or resignation of a number of licensed staff members, we can plan to allow two licensed FTE to be lost to attrition without adversely affecting teacher to student ratios or impacting programs. This, when combined with not spending as much in one-time purchases as the budget has allowed in the past several years, should afford us some needed “breathing room” to operate in a “maintain” mode for the 2008-09 school year. Despite the downturn in our student count and corresponding revenue, we still intend to continue the end-of-year practice of completing transfers from the General Fund to Special Funds for technology, textbooks, maintenance and educational innovations. These transfers have been an important, forward-looking component of planning for large and/or multi-year expenditures that might otherwise be difficult for our district to address in a single annual budget cycle.

The budget presented for your approval is a “maintain” budget. This budget maintains our district’s commitment to educating all our students in a challenging core curriculum, in classes of reasonable size, in safe and healthy learning environments. It allows us to maintain vital support services for students with special education, remedial or second language needs, to continue to challenge and extend the opportunities for our highest achieving students, and to provide the arts, professional-technical, enrichment and co-curricular opportunities for our kids.

In looking to the future, I am optimistic that our student enrollment will increase, our financial outlook will improve and that our district will continue to be the kind of place where every child will receive a high quality, well-rounded education and preparation for a bright and fulfilling future.

We are grateful to you, the budget committee and the school board, for your vision, your leadership and your dedication. Thank you for gracefully balancing your financial stewardship with your heartfelt desire to do what is best for the students of the Junction City School District.

With deep appreciation for the opportunity to serve,

Kathleen Rodden-Nord, Ph.D.

Superintendent