

2015-16 Budget Process and Timeline

During the past several years, our families, community and staff have helped develop The Bellingham Promise, the strategic plan of Bellingham Public Schools.

The Promise holds our vision, mission, core beliefs, desired outcomes for students and graduates, and the five key strategies to achieve this work: Great Teaching with Strong Support; A One Schoolhouse Approach; Early Childhood Education; Student, Family and Community Engagement; and Innovation and Flexibility.

Within each of these strategies are work priorities that we call Priorities for Progress. Our Priorities for Progress emerged to enhance our budget development process in recent years with feedback from staff, families and our community about the top priorities to invest resources. The Priorities for Progress describes in detail much of the work that's underway in Bellingham Public Schools.

While we review our priorities as a school system, the state Legislature is in session trying to determine the extent to which they will fulfill their obligation to fully fund public education as recently mandated by the state Supreme Court. Because the state currently underfunds schools so significantly, we expect some increase in funding when the Legislature finishes its work later this spring, but that it will take many years to fully deliver. Thankfully, our local levies are continuing and make up approximately 30 percent of our total budget.

With our budget development process, we'll be ready to invest in our priorities depending on the level of state funding approved by the Legislature later this spring.

Budget Process Timeline 2015

Note: The Washington State Legislative session is scheduled to occur from Jan. 12 to April 27, 2015. This may impact the following timeline.

Times/Dates	Communication Method	Purpose	Status
December 2014- Summer 2015	Regular budget updates via website, email and newsletters.	Keep students, staff, families and community informed regarding Legislative updates and budget development process.	Ongoing
January - February 2015	Issue call for above-baseline requests (what is not currently funded) and budget reduction proposals.	Principals and district leaders work with staff and school communities to determine priorities and make recommendations to the Department of Teaching	Complete

		and Learning and Finance and Operations.	
March 2-6, 2015	Gather Feedback on Priorities for Progress and draft budget priorities through an online survey.	Superintendent shares and gathers feedback and ideas from all staff and families to help form draft budget.	Complete
March 2015	Review above-baseline requests and budget reduction proposals.	The Deputy Superintendent/Executive Director of Teaching and Learning (for instructional-related staffing and items) and Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations (for facility and operational-related staffing and items) review proposals and continue processing with principals and staff to establish priorities and recommendations.	Complete
March 2015	Build draft budget priorities and gather input.	Staff uses available information, requests and feedback to build draft budget.	Complete
April - May 2015	Present draft budget and gather feedback.	Draft Budget Highlights	Complete
May - June 2015	Incorporate feedback and develop final budget.		Complete
June 2015	School Board receives proposed 2015-16 budget.		Complete
August 2015	Budget public hearing and	Budget Highlights	Complete

	adoption.	2015-16 Budget	
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