

## **Draft budget highlights for 2021-22 school years, last updated April 2021**

While we are proposing some new investments for 2021-22 school year, we will be ready to adjust as needed based on funding from the state and federal government.

### **Proposed new investments:**

1. **Staff compensation:** ~ \$4.2 million

Our largest investment and our most important asset continue to be employees; we keep **Great Teaching with Strong Support** at the center of our six key strategies for achieving The Bellingham Promise. This budget reflects the district prioritization of resources towards staff compensation through salary increases –state cost of living adjustment, locally bargained increases, as well as staff movement along steps of the salary schedule. We will also continue investments in staff training and professional learning, including the use of technology.

2. **Great Teaching with Strong Support:** ~ \$ 1.8 million

We will invest in **instructional coaches** at elementary schools to work toward a goal of a full-time teaching coach per building. Coaches will support a myriad of student and staff learning needs including educational technology integration and International Baccalaureate programs. We will also hire additional staff to support students who speak other languages as part of our **English Language Learners** program. A silver lining to the pandemic is the way it has highlighted our district's ability to offer **innovative and flexible** teaching and learning models. We will invest in **Bellingham Virtual Learning** for students and families who want to continue with remote learning into the future.

3. **Special Education:** ~ \$1 million

The budget reflects continued investment in supporting students who receive Special Education services. The increased investment is mostly a reflection of growth in enrollment of students with special needs in our **BRIDGES, Life Skills and Community Transitions** programs.

4. **Health and well-being of our students and staff:** ~ \$600,000

We continue to invest in the health and well-being of our students and staff by adding a **director of health services, wellness coordinator, health room aides, and a second mental health specialist**. As with 2020-21, we will continue to invest in personal protective equipment (PPE) and measures that support a safe environment such as additional furniture and improved ventilation. We are also hiring a **director of athletics and activities** who will continue our commitment to provide equitable opportunities for all students in [Project Free Education](#).

5. **Family engagement:** ~ \$200,000

One of The Promise's key strategies that has been of utmost importance during the pandemic is Student, Family and Community Engagement. We are investing in additional staff for our **family engagement team** to provide more outreach and support of families for the future.

6. **One Schoolhouse** ~ \$200,000

Our One Schoolhouse Approach focuses on providing equitable distribution of resources and service to ensure excellence for all students. Project Free Education is an initiative and budget priority that aims to reduce the amount of money families are asked to pay toward school supplies and activities. We will invest in Project Free Education by providing yearbooks to all

secondary students at no cost and eliminating fees to join our schools' associated student body (ASB). Many of our afterschool activities and events require a membership and card to ASB.

We encourage your participation in our annual budget survey, and we will continue to provide timely updates to our community on the 2021-22 school year budget.