



February 13, 2020

Dear Kentfield School District (KSD) Community,

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As board members and elected public officials, we take our fiduciary responsibility seriously to make prudent financial decisions for the short and long-term health of the Kentfield School District on behalf of all our students. We have been elected by the voters of Greenbrae and Kentfield to look out for the best interest of our students and to provide fiscal oversight to the Kentfield School District. On Tuesday night, during a seven hour board meeting in a packed Kent Multi-Purpose Room, we had to make extremely difficult choices and trade-offs to balance our budget.

In order to understand the context of why we are making budget cuts and to learn more about the process which led to the board meeting on Tuesday, we strongly encourage you to start with the [statement](#) read by Board President, Heather McPhail Sridharan during the meeting. The electronic version of the statement also has links to all of the relevant financial summaries and recommendations from the KSD Finance Committee and Superintendent Liz Schott that set the basis for Public Comment and board deliberation. As a reference, the [Marin IJ](#) also reported on the meeting.

At this time, we want to clarify an important point about our budget. In May, 2019, the Board adopted a budget for school year 2019-20 that included \$250,000 of deficit spending. After adoption, a 2% raise was agreed upon with the teachers union for 2019-20, and a 2.5% salary increase for 2020-2021, which the Board extended to all employee groups, as is its practice. In addition, adjustments were made to teachers' salary schedules to eliminate gaps between service years and to guarantee step increases each year. These changes, in combination with driven costs associated with them, totaled approximately \$600,000 and contributed to a \$1,000,000 gap between revenues and expenditures in our 2020-21 budget. Thus the need to identify reductions.

In sum, here is a brief overview of the targeted expenditure reductions we directed staff to pursue in the coming weeks.

<u>CATEGORY AND DESCRIPTION OF REDUCTION</u>	<u>ESTIMATED SAVINGS</u>
Reduce 0.2 FTE for Director of Student Services <i>- District level administrative reduction</i>	\$45,000
Reduce 0.2 FTE for Executive Assistant to the Superintendent <i>- District level administrative reduction</i>	\$29,000

Reduce 0.5 FTE for Assistant Principals at both schools; reassign 0.5 FTE of each to teaching position/salary <i>- School site administrative reduction</i>	\$171,000
Replace retiring Bacich Principal (potential compensation savings)	\$30,000
Reduce 0.5 FTE for Innovation coach; reassign 0.5 FTE to teaching position <i>- Non-classroom teacher reduction</i>	\$65,000
Return NGSS/Math Coach to classroom <i>- Non-classroom teacher reduction</i>	\$130,000
Eliminate Transitional Kindergarten; reduce 1.0 FTE teacher and paraprofessional (aide); could replace other teacher/aide <i>- While not discounting the benefit TK has provided in the years Kentfield has offered it, the Board does not feel it can continue to offer this program.</i>	\$145,000
Reduce 3.0 teacher FTEs across both schools; Increase class size by 1-3 students on average <i>- The Board felt the resulting class size increase is reasonable and might be offset by declining enrollment.*</i>	\$390,000
Reduce 1.0 FTE general education paraprofessionals (aides) across both schools <i>- Response to declining enrollment of 5% over the past six years</i>	\$30,000
Discontinue extra clerical assistance in school/district offices <i>- Response to declining enrollment of 5% over the past six years</i>	\$20,500
TOTAL	\$1,055,500**

*** Enrollment in the district has declined 5% over the past six years. A reduction of 3.0 FTE classroom teachers represents less than 4% of total FTEs in that employee category.**

**** Reductions and class size increases could be offset and made unnecessary by attrition, retirements, other unanticipated personnel changes.**

Rest assured that we carefully considered all reports and insight gathered from our KSD Finance Committee; read and responded to scores of emails from our community; and listened to over two hours of feedback during Public Comment in our board meeting. We did not take this process lightly and remain committed to meet

our community's expectations that KSD students have the highest quality teachers paid competitive salaries, and that retention of our amazing teachers/staff is a priority.

Finally, it can not be overstated how difficult, emotional, and deeply personal this process has been for us. Among the five of us, we have ten students currently attending Bacich and Kent, and three recent proud graduates of the Kentfield School District. In an ideal world, we would not be making any cuts to our truly exceptional program. But unfortunately, we do not have that choice right now.

If you have any questions or comments about any of these topics, please feel free to contact our Board President, Heather McPhail Sridharan, at hmcphailsridharan@kentfieldschools.org or our Superintendent Liz Schott at lschott@kentfieldschools.org .

You also are always invited to attend any of our monthly [board meetings](#) and provide feedback. Reading our [Board Meeting Highlights](#) is another efficient way to stay in the loop of what is happening in the district if you cannot make our monthly meetings.

With gratitude,

Davina Goldwasser
Sarah Killingsworth
Heather McPhail Sridharan
David Riedel
Quoc Tran

The Board of Trustees,
Kentfield School District