We are fortunate to live in a country where every child, regardless of their race, religion, creed, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, or presence of any sensory, mental, or physical ability, has access to a public education.

I am thankful to live in a state that has the nation’s strongest language in its constitution relating to public education:

“It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste or sex.” Washington State Constitution, Article IX

We are also fortunate to live in a community that consistently demonstrates its care and support for its greatest asset – its young people. Providing adequate funding to meet the needs of all children is an ongoing challenge, but so worth the investment at the federal, state and local level.

Our revenue comes primarily from three sources:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>24%</td>
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As a school district, we are accountable for every dollar we receive to provide the best educational programs for our students. We take this job extremely seriously and know that you have entrusted us with our community’s most precious resource – our children. You also expect the utmost care and stewardship of financial resources and we are laser-focused on that responsibility. In addition to an annual audit by the state of Washington, we routinely monitor and inspect our practices.

We are proud of our current strong and stable financial condition. We have received commendations from our recent audits and were also recognized by the state for financial stewardship. We know that we must demonstrate a strong return on investment for every dollar spent and are proud of the progress we’ve made.

Our team is working hard to provide exciting, engaging, and innovative programs to meet the needs of all students we serve. Just this school year, we have added:

- Full-time kindergarten in all elementary schools
• Art specialists in all elementary schools
• Student leadership through The Leader in Me program at Presidents Elementary
• Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) project-based classes at Post Middle School and Weston High School
• Manufacturing Program of Study at Arlington High School
• Construction Geometry course at Arlington High School

The local portion of our school funding will be coming to our voters on February 9. It is the Educational Programs and Operations Levy (formerly known as the “Maintenance and Operations Levy”). This is a renewal of the current expiring levy. Our local levy supports programs, staffing, technology, extra-curricular activities and safety/emergency preparedness (which includes our School Resource Officer). The estimated tax rate is $3.56 per $1,000 of assessed valuation. That is expected to remain stable over the four-year term of the levy and is four cents lower than our current collection rate.

For more information about the upcoming levy, how your schools are funded, or how every dollar invested in public education has a great return on investment, please visit our website at www.asd.wednet.edu. You are also invited to attend one of the following events:

Levy Information Community Meeting
Wednesday, January 20 at 7:00 p.m.
District Administration Office, 315 N. French Ave.

and

The Annual State of the District Address
Thursday, January 28 at 6:00 p.m.
Eagle Creek Elementary School, 1216 East 5th St.

You may also contact me at kmcduffy@asd.wednet.edu or (360) 618-6202.

Proud to be superintendent in this great community,

Dr. Kristine McDuffy