

Episode 4: September 20 Seattle School Board Budget Work Session

In this episode of Seattle Hall Pass, we cover the first budget work session of the year. Christie and Jane talk about the new Deputy Superintendent Art Jarvis, the projected budget deficits for 2024-25, and school closures and consolidations

[School Board Agenda](#) (Source: Seattle Public Schools)
[YouTube meeting link](#)

How SPS got here

- To balance the budget for the 23-24 school year, SPS made deep cuts in Central Office and also used all of the Economic Stabilization Fund (aka rainy day fund), \$42.2 million. (Source: Seattle Public Schools, see page 12 of the agenda at [this link](#))
- Before balancing the budget for the 2023-24 school year, a \$131 shortfall was projected. (Source: Seattle Public Schools, see page 12 of the agenda at [this link](#))
- The option to dip into the Economic Stabilization Fund was mentioned by district staff in a Seattle Times article about the collective bargaining agreement with the Seattle Education Association from September 2002. (Source: [Seattle Times](#))
- In the last few years, SPS plugged budget holes with one-time funds from various sources, such as [ESSER](#), and [hold harmless enrollment and transportation funds](#). (Source: [YouTube video of meeting](#))
- The McCleary fix did no favors for SPS. It took away some of the tools for SPS to raise additional resources. (Source: [Washington's Paramount Duty](#))

Who is Art Jarvis?



- Most recently, Art Jarvis was the Interim Superintendent for Bellevue in 2021-23. (Source: [Bellevue School District](#))
- Under Jarvis's leadership in Bellevue, two elementary schools closed. In his Bellevue school closure proposal, he presented the Bellevue School Board with three options to reduce the budget shortfall: consolidating schools, postponing the decision by tapping into the district's reserve fund, or reducing staff. (Source: [Seattle Times](#))
- Jarvis was also Interim Superintendent in the Shelton, Renton, and Peninsula school districts (Source: [Bellevue LifeSpring](#) and [Open Payrolls](#))
- Jarvis was the CFO at SPS in 2007. (Source: [Westside Seattle](#))

- In 2011, as Tacoma Superintendent, Jarvis proposed closing four schools — all with fewer than 300 students — though two schools were spared after community outcry. McKinley Elementary and Wainwright Elementary were shuttered in the end. Later, Tacoma rebuilt [an Intermediate School grades 4-8](#) on the Wainwright site. (Source: [Seattle Times](#) and [Tacoma Public Schools](#))
- How long did it take the Bellevue School District (BSD) to decide which schools to close? BSD announced on January 12, 2023, that it was considering closing seven elementary schools. On February 7, 2023, BSD recommended three of those seven for closures, and on March 17, 2023, BSD school board voted to close two schools. Those school closures took effect in fall 2023. (Source: [Bellevue School District](#))

Prototypical school model

- The intent seems to be for SPS schools to get school spending closer to the state's Prototypical School Model for funding, which is encoded in state law. Here's the definition of a Prototypical School from the [RCW 28A.150.260](#) state law.
 - (i) A prototypical high school has six hundred (600) average annual full-time equivalent students in grades nine through twelve;
 - (ii) A prototypical middle school has four hundred thirty-two (432) average annual full-time equivalent students in grades seven and eight; and
 - (iii) A prototypical elementary school has four hundred (400) average annual full-time equivalent students in grades kindergarten through six.

(5)(a) The minimum allocation for each level of prototypical school shall include allocations for the following types of staff in addition to classroom teachers:

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Principals, assistant principals, and other certificated building-level administrators. . . .	1.253	1.353	1.880
Teacher-librarians, a function that includes information literacy, technology, and media to support school library media programs. . . .	0.663	0.519	0.523
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Teaching assistance, including any aspect of educational instructional services provided by classified employees. . . .	0.936	0.700	0.652
Office support and other noninstructional aides. . . .	2.012	2.325	3.269
Custodians. . . .	1.657	1.942	2.965
Nurses. . . .	0.246	0.336	0.339
Social workers. . . .	0.132	0.033	0.052
Psychologists. . . .	0.046	0.009	0.021
Counselors. . . .	0.660	1.383	2.706
Classified staff providing student and staff safety. . . .	0.079	0.092	0.141
Parent involvement coordinators. . . .	0.0825	0.00	0.00

- The current formula used to staff Seattle Public Schools, called the Weighted Staffing Standard, staffs only a nurse at 40% of a full time position, and a librarian for 50% of a full time position. Will these ratios change if schools are closed? See the relevant section from Weighted Staffing Standard chart on the next page, from Seattle Public Schools.

ELEMENTARY CORE ADMINISTRATIVE & SUPPORT

Elementary School Core Staffing Using Student AAFTE	≤ 300	301-450	451-500	501-600	601+
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Admin Secretary - 220	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Elementary Asst Secretary - 201	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Librarian	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.0
Elem Couns/Social Wrkr - Tier 1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Elem Couns/Social Wrkr - Tiers 2-3	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Elem Coun/Social Wrkr - Tier 4	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Nurse **	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5

** Nurses allocated thru the WSS formula are staffed centrally.

Proposed DRAFT budget policy

[Here's a DRAFT of the proposed Financial Policy](#), as emailed by Director Hampson to her fellow school board directors. (Source: Seattle Public Schools)

[Here's a list](#) of all grants, awards, and revenue-generating agreements currently active at Seattle Public Schools. This includes PTA funding for teaching and other staff positions (commonly called FTEs, for full-time equivalent). PTAs also fund many other things at schools that are not reflected on this document. (Source: [Seattle Public Schools](#))

The Building Leadership Team (BLT) is made up of the principal, teachers, classified staff, and parents representing the various stakeholders in the school. This group makes decisions and recommendations regarding a school site's program, funding, and policies.