

# **Southern Oregon ESD STEPS Program**

Planning for the 2012-2013 School Year

- Education Service Districts were established in Oregon to provide services where it makes sense to provide a service on a regional basis

## **History & Background**

- Southern Oregon ESD (SOESD) serves Josephine, Jackson and Klamath Counties
  - 46,500 students, 13 school districts, nearly 100 schools
- Some services also provided in Douglas and Lake Counties

## **History & Background**

- Education Service Districts (ESDs), by law, provide the services to school districts that the school districts prioritize

(If districts don't see the program as a priority for the ESD to provide – the ESD doesn't provide it)

## **History & Background**

SOESD provides services to school districts in three important areas:

- Technology
- School Improvement
- Special Education

**Services of Southern Oregon ESD**

One of many valued special education services provided by SOESD is the STEPS Program

- Classrooms, located in various school buildings in Jackson and Klamath Counties
- Staffed by ESD teachers, education assistants, related service providers and supervisors
- Serving students with very significant disabilities and intense service needs

**What is the STEPS Program?**

A sampling of other special education services provided by SOESD:

- Audiology services
- Interpreters for students with hearing impairments
- Braillists and teachers for students with visual impairments
- Psychologists
- Speech pathologists
- Nurses
- Occupational/Physical Therapists
- Autism Specialists

**Other SOESD Special Education Services**

## Examples of technology services provided:

- Internet network for nearly all the schools in the region
- Repair and installation of computers, projectors, cameras – and the wiring and connections needed
- An extensive (and popular) media materials library for teachers
- Assistance with computer software, e-mail systems, data management systems
- On-line courses

# Technology Services



## Examples of school improvement services provided:

- Workshops for teachers on a variety of topics
- Oversight of services to students who are migrant and/or English Language Learners
- Oversight of regional Career and Technical Education programs
- Convening of regular meetings of those managing school curriculum, instruction and school staff development

**School Improvement Services**

## Funding

- SOESD receives funding from the state school fund (money comes from property taxes and state income tax) which makes up most of its general fund.

**How are services paid for?**

## Funding

- About 70% of the SOESD General Fund is allocated to special education services. Each district is allocated a share of those funds and then makes choices about which SOESD special education services it wants.

**How are services paid for?**

## Funding

- Six of our thirteen school districts buy more services from SOESD than can be paid for with the ESD money allocated to them. When this happens they pay for those additional services from their own funds.

**How are services paid for?**

## Funding

- Seven of our thirteen school districts buy fewer services from SOESD and don't end up spending all their ESD money. When this happens they receive that unspent money back from the ESD at the end of the year.

**How are services paid for?**

## Funding

- For both school districts and SOESD the cost of services has been increasing over the past few years while funding from the state has been decreasing due to state and federal budget decreases.

## Funding

- This has meant that some of our districts are having to use more of their district funds to pay for SOESD services at a time when their revenues have been cut and their own costs have risen.

## Funding

- To keep from making deep cuts to SOESD special education services over the past several years, school districts have asked SOESD to first reduce services in the school improvement and technology areas.



- SOESD has responded by sharply reducing school improvement services and also making significant cuts to technology services. These cuts have been painful for SOESD and for the school districts as they have depended on these services to help them serve all students (including students in special education).

- School districts recognize that SOESD can not keep cutting other services and, over this past year, school district superintendents have been asking SOESD to look for ways to provide services, especially STEPS services, more efficiently (in other words: reduce the cost of the services).

- STEPS services were the focus of the request for efficiencies because STEPS is by far the largest SOESD service.

- While the school districts served by SOESD were all wanting SOESD to become as efficient as possible to reduce costs, the Medford School District was very specific in its request...

- The Medford School District (the largest of those served by SOESD) asked that the cost-per-student be reduced through efficiencies from the current nearly \$30,000 per student to \$25,000 per student.

- The Medford School District indicated that it could provide a different program for these students for \$25,000 or less per student and thus needed SOESD to meet that same cost level.

Medford indicated that for these economic reasons, it would have to provide its own program if SOESD was unable to reduce program costs through efficiencies.

- SOESD has worked very hard, in collaboration with our school districts, to identify STEPS program efficiencies that could come close to meeting the \$25,000 target.

- These efforts have been important for a number of reasons. The most important being that the loss of Medford STEPS classrooms to the SOESD program would translate into a disruption in the education program for many of the STEPS students throughout the region.



- This is because the Medford classrooms are centrally located and without them children from other districts currently in those classrooms would have to go to other classrooms. In addition, teachers who might lose their jobs through SOESD layoffs would not necessarily be the teachers from the Medford classrooms, causing many reassignments of staff and therefore changes in student/teacher relationships.

- Over the last several months a series of meetings have been held with our district special education directors to study the service and costs of STEPS and other programs serving students with significant and multiple disabilities.

We looked at these programs:

- STEPS
- Other lifeskills programs in southern Oregon
- Other lifeskills programs in the state
- Ideas for other models

In looking at various other programs and models we examined things like:

- Description of programs and students served
- Staff assignments/work hours
- Administrative time and functions
- Percent specialist time spent in assessment
- Training provided to teachers and assistants

In developing ideas for efficiencies, SOESD, and the districts served by the STEPS Program were very interested in minimizing impact on the quality of education experiences for students and disruption to students and services.

We are presenting a proposal here that will help us achieve significant efficiencies while preserving as much service as possible for students. It does include changes that will have an impact on students.

These proposed changes would not happen until next Fall (September, 2012).

We are seeking your ideas about this proposal including:

1. What are your concerns about the possible impact of the proposal on your child's education?

2. What other ideas might you have for us to achieve efficiencies?



3. What kinds of things would you recommend that we do over the next several months to help ensure that students have a smooth and successful adjustment to any program changes?

Here is our draft proposal. It includes reductions in the following areas:

1. Administrative
2. Supports
3. Services
4. Classroom Consolidation

**Proposal**

1. Reduce the contracts of administrators overseeing the program by 8%.

Savings = \$109 per student

**Administrative**

2. Change the procedures for obtaining substitute teachers and substitute education assistants when substitutes are necessary.

Savings = \$112 per student

**Administrative**

3. Reduce travel costs (more participation in meetings by phone and video conference)

Savings = \$19 per student

**Administrative**

1. Reduce education assistant preparation time (aligning their work hours with student attendance hours)

Savings = \$434 per student

**Support**

2. Have a supervised, certified Speech Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) work with students instead of one of the SOESD Speech Language Pathologists.

Savings = \$52 per student

**Support**

3. Reduce School Psychologist assessment time.

Savings = \$162 per student

**Support**



1. Reduce teacher days (through furlough days) by 10 days (includes 6 student contact days and 4 non-contact days)

Savings = \$320 per student

**Services**

2. Reduce education assistant service hours (to include only services required by IEPs) at the transition level.

Savings = \$1,280 per student

**Services**

1. Consolidate four classrooms in Jackson County.

Note: This will increase class sizes by an average of about 3 students per class.

Savings = \$2,189 per student

**Classroom Consolidation**

- This proposal, while consolidating four classrooms, is designed to keep the impact on the adult:student ratio to a minimum.

Currently we have 2.09 students per adult in our classrooms.

This proposal would increase that ratio to 2.22 students per adult.

This proposal would be to consolidate one classroom at each of four levels to keep class size impact even across levels:

- One elementary classroom
- One middle school classroom
- One high school classroom
- One transition classroom

**Classroom Consolidation**

3. The consolidation of four classrooms means a reduction of four teaching positions and three education assistant positions. Savings from these cuts is figured into the \$2,189 total.

## **Classroom Consolidation**

2. Close the Woodlands transition facility (located in Medford).

Savings = \$52 per student

**Classroom Consolidation**

## Total Savings Per Student:

Admin contracts:	\$ 109
Substitute changes:	112
Travel:	19
Ed Assistant time:	434
SLPA Use:	52
Psychologist time:	162
Teacher furlough days:	320
Transition hours:	1,280
Consolidate four classrooms:	2,189
Woodlands facility:	52
<b>TOTAL Per Student Saving</b>	<b>\$4,729</b>

# Classroom Consolidation



**We want your ideas...**