

# Legislative budget writers propose \$7.24B school fund

By PETER WONG  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's education establishment was the big winner, and human services and Gov. John Kitzhaber's targeted spending on education priorities were the losers, in the two-year plan unveiled Wednesday by the Legislature's chief budget writers.

Sen. Richard Devlin of Tualatin and Rep. Peter Buckley of Ashland, both Democrats, proposed a state school fund of \$7.24 billion, up almost \$600 million from the current two-year cycle that ends June 30.

Kitzhaber had proposed about \$6.9 billion for the fund, from which Oregon's 197 school districts draw the lion's share of operating costs.

Many teachers, administrators and board members argued that the lower amount was insufficient for them to maintain programs. Kitzhaber said if Oregon is to make progress toward its goals of graduating all students from high school and 80 percent of them moving on to college or advanced training by 2025, the state needs to put more money in programs advancing those priorities.

The higher amount in the legislative budget assumes \$220 million for the cost of full-day kindergarten, which schools will start this fall.

That budget also proposes more state support for community colleges and state universities.

"Our goal is to move education forward in all parts," Buckley told reporters in the presentation.

The state school fund is the largest single chunk of the budget.

The proposal was contained in the framework drawn up by Devlin and Buckley, known as the "co-chairs' budget," that will guide the Legislature's budget committee in deciding how to spend more than \$18 billion from the tax-supported general fund and lottery proceeds.

This is the earliest in years that the framework has been unveiled.

"That's an amazing accomplishment in this day of dysfunctional governments across our country," Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said in a statement.

## Next steps

Unlike the governor's budget, which is presented as a single document, lawmakers approve spending bills for individual agencies within the framework, and do not vote on a single budget.

"There are still 10,000 different decisions that still have to be made," Devlin said in reference to the details of agency budgets that are reviewed by subcommittees.

tees.

All those budgets have to be signed by the governor.

Kitzhaber, in a statement released after the presentation, avoided an argument with the legislative budget writers.

"I commend the co-chairs for the work they have done this early in the year to put together this framework. It is an important starting point," Kitzhaber said.

But Senate Republicans came to the defense of Kitzhaber's education and public safety proposals.

Sen. Chuck Thomsen, R-Hood River, said the legislative plan gives short shrift to the governor's priorities, particularly in school-to-work programs and improved

**"Without meaningful investment in career education and STEM programs, our students will fall behind."**

— Sen. Chuck Thomsen, R-Hood River

instruction in science, technology, engineering and math.

"They may believe their education budget is adequate, but kids and teachers in classrooms across Oregon continue to feel the pressure," Thomsen said. "Without meaningful investment in career education and STEM programs, our students will fall behind."

Sen. Jackie Winters of Salem, the top Senate Republican on the budget committee, said Kitzhaber's budget contains money for local community corrections initiatives that the legislative plan slashes.

"We're disappointed that this budget violates the agreement made in 2013 to fund justice reinvestment grants supporting community corrections initiatives," Winters said. "While the governor honored the agreement in his budget, this proposed 65 percent cut will place a greater burden on our local public safety organizations."

## Differing allocations

The legislative budget also proposes \$535 million in state aid to Oregon's 17 community college districts, up from the current \$465 million and the \$500 million proposed by Kitzhaber.

The legislative budget proposes \$635 million in direct support for the seven state universities, which received full autonomy last year. That amount is up from the current \$521.5 million and the \$593.7 million proposed by Kitzhaber.

Much of the money for those in-

creases will come from the \$800 million Kitzhaber proposed for a variety of education priorities, such as early childhood and learning, reading skills improvements, high school and college completion, and school-to-work programs.

"We believe a number of the priorities that have been pointed out in education ... are very important," Devlin said.

The legislative budget proposes \$60 million, Devlin said, "to begin to look at how those investments will be made, but not making any decision on the divisions between those various items."

Kitzhaber had proposed formula shifts to carve out about \$120 million of the \$800 million. Some officials raised concerns about a proposal to reward districts based on their movement of students out of English-learning programs.

Devlin said the legislative budget assumes no formula shifts, but proposes \$34 million to assist districts with state grants for the education of higher-cost students with disabilities.

## Future forecasts

If future revenue forecasts project more money available in the next two years — there will be two more forecasts before the start of the budget cycle July 1 — Devlin and Buckley said they want to boost the state school fund by \$20 million more, community colleges and state universities each by \$15 million more, and early childhood programs by \$10 million more.

The biggest chunk for restorations, however, is \$40 million for human services, which Devlin and Buckley shaved by \$140 million in their framework.

Additional add-backs if more money become available are \$30 million for public safety, and \$15 million for economic development and natural resources.

Democrats outnumber Republicans in both chambers, but Democrats do not have the 60 percent majorities required to pass revenue-raising measures without at least one Republican vote in the House.

Although some agency budgets assume fee increases, the legislative budget plan envisions only a continuation of a 50-cent-per-bottle fee on state liquor sales.

The top House Republican on the joint budget committee, Rep. Greg Smith of Heppner, said Republicans will resist general tax increases to raise more money.

"We know that passing a state budget that pays our bills and delivers essential services to Oregonians will require bipartisan cooperation," Smith said. "However, we will not support tax increase proposals that hurt working families, small businesses and rural communities."



AP Photo/Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Dr. Colin Gillin

## Fallen bear needs home

This undated photo provided by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife shows a young bear at the Wildlife Health Services Lab in Corvallis, who fell from a tree earlier this month in Southern Oregon. Veterinarians are appealing to accredited zoos across the continent to rehabilitate the scrawny but otherwise healthy young bear. The female black bear weighed slightly more than 13 pounds when it was found upside down in blackberry bushes. Biologists say that at 9 to 12 months old, it should have weighed 40 to 60 pounds going into winter.

## No new cases of avian flu in Tri-Cities

KENNEWICK, Wash. (AP) — No new cases of avian flu have been found in Benton County.

Federal and state investigators have visited nearly 730 properties near the Richland and Benton City flocks that were recently diagnosed with avian influenza.

The state Department of Agriculture said Thursday

that samples were taken from birds at 66 different properties. All of the samples submitted have been negative for avian flu.

This form of avian flu is not contagious to humans.

Chickens, turkeys, ducks and other birds belonging to the two flocks were euthanized last week to control the spread of disease.

## Corrections

Rep. Peter Buckley, D-Ashland, not Senate President Peter Courtney, met Wednesday with Rep. Greg. Smith, R-Heppner, and others to discuss the budget framework for the 2015 Legislature.

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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**AccuWeather.com Forecast**

| TODAY                        | SATURDAY                        | SUNDAY                          | MONDAY                         | TUESDAY        |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
|                              |                                 |                                 |                                |                |
| Occasional rain this morning | Spotty showers in the afternoon | Breezy with rain, then some sun | Mostly cloudy, a shower or two | Mostly cloudy  |
| <b>51° 34°</b>               | <b>43° 40°</b>                  | <b>52° 39°</b>                  | <b>49° 32°</b>                 | <b>42° 28°</b> |
| <b>53° 33°</b>               | <b>43° 39°</b>                  | <b>54° 39°</b>                  | <b>53° 33°</b>                 | <b>46° 28°</b> |

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST  
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

## ALMANAC

### PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

### TEMPERATURE

| HIGH               | LOW        |
|--------------------|------------|
| Yesterday 37°      | 28°        |
| Normals 41°        | 27°        |
| Records 68° (1974) | -8° (1907) |

### PRECIPITATION

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| 24 hours ending 3 p.m. | Trace |
| Month to date          | 0.25" |
| Normal month to date   | 0.81" |
| Year to date           | 0.25" |
| Last year to date      | 0.38" |
| Normal year to date    | 0.81" |

### HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

### TEMPERATURE

| HIGH               | LOW         |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Yesterday 41°      | 34°         |
| Normals 41°        | 28°         |
| Records 63° (1961) | -10° (1950) |

### PRECIPITATION

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| 24 hours ending 3 p.m. | 0.00" |
| Month to date          | 0.15" |
| Normal month to date   | 0.62" |
| Year to date           | 0.15" |
| Last year to date      | 0.27" |
| Normal year to date    | 0.62" |

### SUN AND MOON

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Sunrise today  | 7:32 a.m. |
| Sunset tonight | 4:38 p.m. |
| Moonrise today | 3:28 a.m. |
| Moonset today  | 1:21 p.m. |

| New    | First  | Full  | Last   |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|
|        |        |       |        |
| Jan 20 | Jan 26 | Feb 3 | Feb 11 |

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

Seattle 50/39, Wenatchee 43/28, Spokane 40/25, Tacoma 50/36, Moses Lake 44/27, Pullman 42/30, Olympia 50/39, Longview 50/40, Kennewick 54/31, Walla Walla 51/35, Lewiston 48/31, Astoria 52/43, Portland 52/42, The Dalles 52/34, Hermiston 53/33, Pendleton 41/20, Enterprise 41/20, Corvallis 53/46, Eugene 55/46, Bend 47/31, John Day 44/26, Ontario 36/24, Caldwell 39/26, Medford 56/47, Klamath Falls 49/37

## REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Variable clouds today. A shower, morning downpours, then a few showers in the south.  
Eastern and Central Oregon: Morning snow and rain today; in upper Treasure Valley, any time in the south. Afternoon rain; arriving in upper Treasure Valley.  
Western Washington: A shower or two in the morning; otherwise, variable clouds today.  
Eastern Washington: Rain near the Idaho border today; snow in the mountains. Showers of rain and snow in the north. A shower across the south.  
Cascades: A little rain in the morning; otherwise, mostly cloudy and breezy today.  
Northern California: Downpours today; snow, accumulating 1-3 inches in the interior mountains.

## REGIONAL CITIES

|               | Today |    |    | Sat. |    |    |
|---------------|-------|----|----|------|----|----|
|               | Hi    | Lo | W  | Hi   | Lo | W  |
| Astoria       | 52    | 43 | c  | 53   | 49 | r  |
| Baker City    | 38    | 21 | sn | 34   | 33 | h  |
| Bend          | 47    | 31 | r  | 49   | 41 | sh |
| Brookings     | 56    | 52 | r  | 57   | 52 | r  |
| Burns         | 43    | 24 | sh | 42   | 37 | sh |
| Enterprise    | 41    | 20 | r  | 37   | 32 | sh |
| Eugene        | 55    | 46 | sh | 56   | 51 | r  |
| Heppner       | 49    | 30 | r  | 43   | 40 | sh |
| Hermiston     | 53    | 33 | pc | 43   | 39 | sh |
| John Day      | 44    | 26 | r  | 43   | 38 | sh |
| Klamath Falls | 49    | 37 | sh | 52   | 42 | sh |
| La Grande     | 44    | 23 | r  | 40   | 38 | sh |
| Meacham       | 41    | 26 | r  | 40   | 36 | sh |
| Medford       | 56    | 47 | r  | 55   | 49 | r  |
| Newport       | 54    | 49 | c  | 56   | 51 | r  |
| North Bend    | 58    | 51 | c  | 60   | 53 | r  |
| Ontario       | 36    | 24 | r  | 37   | 36 | sh |
| Pasco         | 53    | 32 | pc | 41   | 37 | sh |
| Pendleton     | 51    | 34 | r  | 43   | 40 | sh |
| Portland      | 52    | 42 | sh | 51   | 48 | sh |
| Redmond       | 51    | 32 | pc | 50   | 44 | sh |
| Salem         | 54    | 45 | sh | 55   | 51 | r  |
| Spokane       | 40    | 25 | r  | 37   | 35 | sh |
| Ukiah         | 45    | 25 | r  | 42   | 37 | sh |
| Vancouver     | 52    | 41 | sh | 51   | 47 | r  |
| Walla Walla   | 51    | 35 | r  | 45   | 42 | sh |
| Yakima        | 48    | 27 | pc | 41   | 35 | sh |

## WORLD CITIES

|             | Today |    |    | Sat. |    |    |
|-------------|-------|----|----|------|----|----|
|             | Hi    | Lo | W  | Hi   | Lo | W  |
| Beijing     | 41    | 15 | s  | 39   | 19 | pc |
| Hong Kong   | 67    | 55 | s  | 66   | 54 | pc |
| Jerusalem   | 49    | 40 | sh | 48   | 37 | sh |
| London      | 43    | 30 | pc | 43   | 32 | pc |
| Mexico City | 73    | 47 | pc | 73   | 48 | pc |
| Moscow      | 29    | 24 | pc | 30   | 28 | c  |
| Paris       | 45    | 35 | pc | 43   | 35 | pc |
| Rome        | 59    | 53 | c  | 60   | 46 | r  |
| Seoul       | 39    | 16 | c  | 34   | 18 | s  |
| Sydney      | 85    | 68 | s  | 89   | 69 | s  |
| Tokyo       | 51    | 40 | sh | 50   | 36 | pc |

## WINDS

| (in mph)  | Today     | Saturday |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Boardman  | WSW 10-20 | NE 3-6   |
| Pendleton | WSW 10-20 | SE 4-8   |

## UV INDEX TODAY

0 1 1 1 0 0

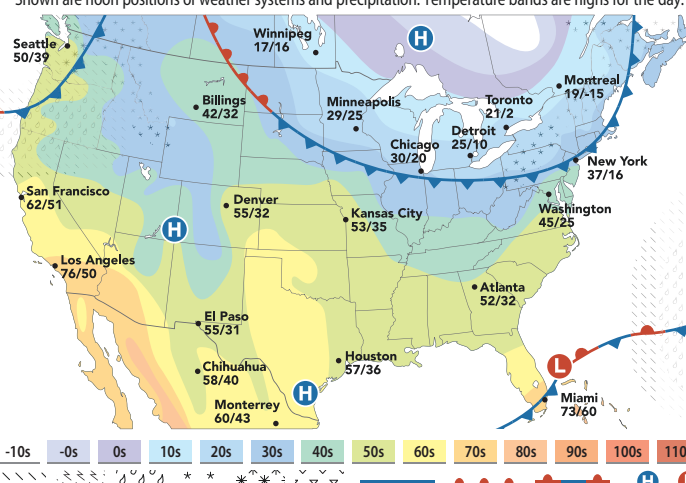
8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.  
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



National Summary: Chilly air will race across the Northeast with gusty winds and flurries today. Much of the area from the Southwest to the Plains and Southeast will be mild. Rain and snow will affect the Northwest.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 79° in Tamiami, Fla. Low -26° in Presque Isle, Maine

## NATIONAL CITIES

|  | Today |    |  | Sat. |  |  |
|--|-------|----|--|------|--|--|
|  | Hi    | Lo |  |      |  |  |