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More than 420,000 students left teetering on edge of “levy cliff”

Education Leaders Urge Lawmakers To Extend Existing Levy Limits

WHO: Parents, school board members and superintendents from the Puget Sound Educational Service District’s 35 individual school districts, which **serve 420,000-plus students – almost 40 percent of the state’s public school children.**

WHAT: A news conference calling for state lawmakers to craft a bi-partisan solution to the **“levy cliff” issue – which threatens to tear a \$228 million hole in local school budgets.** Advocates speaking at press conference include:

- Art Jarvis, Renton School District superintendent;
- Warren Smith, Sr., Bethel School District board president;
- Erika Kapur, Parent, Lake Washington School District; and,
- John Welch, superintendent of the Puget Sound Educational Service District.

Reporters will have **access to Renton High School classrooms for photos, standups and shooting B-Roll post-press conference.** In addition, school board members and superintendents from most of the PSEDS’s 35 districts will be available after the event to talk with reporters.

WHEN: Thursday, January 12 at 10 a.m.

WHERE: Renton High School, 400 S. 2nd Street, Renton, WA, 98057, in Library.

WHY: If the Legislature is unable to come up with a bi-partisan solution to eliminate the impending “levy cliff,” local schools won’t be able to raise as much money in 2018 as they did in 2016 – creating an estimated \$228 million gap in local school budgets for the 35 districts in the Puget Sound ESD. Lawmakers gave districts limited authority to increase local school levies in anticipation of a fix to the unconstitutional way the state now funds K-12 education. That limited authority is sun-setting, and the Legislature has not yet approved a new school funding plan. Legislative action is needed to extend existing levy limits so that districts can bridge the gap until lawmakers adopt a new state school funding formula that satisfies the Supreme Court’s McCleary decision. Absent such action, local district budgets for the 2017-18 academic year will have to reflect a loss of these levy dollars without a clear indication of whether increased state dollars will be available, forcing the use of reserves (where available) and potential reductions in teachers and educational programs.