



Columbia School District #400

755 MAPLE STREET
BURBANK, WA 99323
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WWW.CSD400.ORG

TODD HILBERG, SUPERINTENDENT

April 9, 2021

ATTENTION: Lauren Prentice
Community Development Director
Walla Walla County
310 W. Poplar Street, Suite 200
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Dear Lauren Prentice:

The following communication is in response to your request for information from the Columbia School District regarding potential modification of residential density in the Burbank Urban Growth Area. I have outlined our responses to your questions below as indicated in the letter dated on March 19, 2021.

Question- *Could you please provide Walla Walla County Community Development with a statement addressing any concerns the School District may have with regard to increased density and growth in the Burbank area?*

Columbia School District is not opposed to growth. We are a district that has been slowly declining in enrollment for many years so we have the capacity for limited growth. **We are in favor of growth that can be predicted, planned, and prepared for.** This includes adding the additional staffing, materials, and support needed for increased enrollment. Unfortunately due to our limited growth potential in our elementary and middle schools, **we are not in favor of high density housing of any kind due to our limited space and infrastructure.** Due to limited housing costs, high density housing developments typically result in an increase of young families and our primary grades are very limited in our ability to absorb a significant increase in enrollment.

Our current building infrastructure has the ability to provide an additional 50 students at Columbia Elementary School and 70 students at Columbia Middle School. Numbers beyond that would push our buildings beyond our capacity. Any large or rapid developments of any kind would tax our system and force district officials to look for alternative space or options for staff and students. Due to the size of our district, we do not have options to send students to "other schools" in the district to balance schools or class sizes. Again, we are not against growth. **We welcome the responsible development of our community that can be predicted, planned, and prepared for.** This would entail a moderate/steady increase over time.



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In consultation with the District Board of Directors and feedback from community members, residents continue to oppose high density housing as they prefer the rural setting that our community has afforded our residents. Again, not against development but against the type of development that would occupy housing in a high density setting. **As you can see, CSD has the ability to sustain growth within our community, but the impact of sudden or large growth of our community would have a drastic impact on our ability to serve our students and community.** Thank you for seeking input pertaining to the impact of growth and development of the Columbia School District community. District officials look forward to continuing to work with you to support our community through this process.

Question- *Could you please provide a map delineating school attendance zones?*

We do not have any attendance zones. We only have one elementary, middle and high school. Students attending preschool through 5th grade attend Columbia Elementary School while students at Columbia Middle School range from 6th-8th grade and Columbia High School hosts a traditional 9th-12th grade configuration.

Question- *What is your current school enrollment broken down by grade?*

District Enrollment as of April 2021					
Preschool-	49	4th Grade-	75	9th Grade-	68
Kinder-	40	5th Grade-	63	10th Grade-	46
1st Grade-	53	6th Grade-	60	11th Grade-	50
2nd Grade-	51	7th Grade-	63	<u>12th Grade-</u>	<u>48</u>
3rd Grade-	37	8th Grade-	55	Total-	758

* See attachment for district enrollment history (reminder- Preschool count not included in these numbers)

Question- *What is your current school capacity?*

Columbia Elementary School- could add an additional 50 students

Columbia Middle School- could add an additional 70 students

Columbia High School- could add an additional 175 students

Question- *What is your projected enrollment for the next 10 years?*

Unknown, the district's projected enrollment is done yearly using a formula. The formula uses numbers from the previous year to predict. Currently CSD officials are projecting a decrease in enrollment from this year to next year. Those numbers will not be finalized until later this spring.



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Question- What is your projected capacity for the next 10 years?

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Columbia High School- could add an additional 175 students

Question- Any plans for any expansion of the school(s) or new facilities?

Not currently. This would have to be done by the CSD Board of Directors and a vote of the community via a bond project in the future.

Question- Any capacity or enrollment studies currently underway or which have been conducted for the Burbank School District in the past 10 years?

None

Thank you again for seeking input and feedback into the proposed modifications of residential density in the Burbank Urban Growth Area. The above information outlines the potential impact on the district and students within the Columbia School District. **As stated previously, CSD has the ability to sustain growth within our community, however the impact of sudden or large growth of our community would have a drastic impact on our ability to serve our students and community.** If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Todd Hilberg
Superintendent
Columbia School District #400

Columbia School District Enrollment

OSPI Enrollment Numbers
(*October: K-12, Preschool not included)

