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THE NEWS TRIBUNE

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE SOUTH SOUND

Puyallup school cuts trade pool closure for more layoffs

BY ISABELA LUND
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A pool, three gymnastics teams and librarian-led instructional time for most elementary school students have been spared from the Puyallup School District's $15 million budget cuts.

But there is a trade-off: more positions on the chopping block.

During the March 13 school board study session, interim superintendent Richard Lasso presented the district's final budget reduction plan, which includes $15 million in cuts for the 2026-2027 school year.

The district's deficit is rooted in several factors, such as increased salary costs, lack of state funding and inflation on things like utilities and insurance, The News Tribune previously reported.

Sarah Gillispie, spokesperson for the school district, told The News Tribune on Tuesday that roughly 80 to 95 positions across the district will be eliminated or reduced – about 2% of the district's 4,100 staff positions.

In its initial budget reductions at a school board meeting on Feb. 17, the district planned to close the Puyallup High School pool, eliminate its high school gymnastics teams and slash weekly, librarian-led instructional time for fourth, fifth and sixth graders.

The updated plan still cuts $15 million, but saves the pool, the gymnastics teams and library services for fourth and fifth graders. The district plans to compensate for these restorations by cutting more positions in the central office and schools.

Librarian instructional time will still be eliminated for sixth graders, Gillispie told The News Tribune.

The updated cuts came less than two weeks after residents filled the Kessler Center during the March 2 school board meeting to protest the cuts. Many commenters condemned the idea of closing the pool or get-

SEE LAYOFFS, 4A

AVISHAG SHAAR-YASHUV NYT

A hospital staff member tends to a patient Wednesday in a temporary ward underneath Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan, Israel.

US considering steps on oil as attacks rattle energy markets

BY AURELIEN BREEDEN, TONY ROMM, HELENE COOPER, ERIC SCHMITT AND JOHN ISMAY
NYT News Service

The Trump administration said Thursday that it was considering new steps to try to keep a global energy crisis from spiraling further as tit-for-tat attacks in the Persian Gulf sent oil and natural gas prices soaring.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told Fox Business that the U.S. government "may unsanction the Iranian oil" that is already being shipped, about 140 million barrels, and that the U.S. could also release more oil from its own strategic reserves.

The administration appeared to be scrambling for solutions as news of the latest attacks on Gulf energy infrastructure sent the price of Brent crude, the international benchmark for oil, jumping nearly 10% to $118 a barrel Thursday morning. European natural gas prices surged as much as 30%.

Iran was continuing a barrage of attacks on energy infrastructure in the Gulf, in retaliation for an Israeli attack on a gas field Wednesday.

Qatar, a major global energy supplier, said Iranian attacks had damaged gas sites, including the Ras Laffan terminal, the world's largest liquefied natural gas facility.

Drone attacks caused fires at two state-owned refineries in Kuwait, and a drone fell at a key energy export terminal in Saudi Arabia. In the United Arab Emirates, officials said the authorities had responded to incidents at gas facilities and an oil field caused by debris from missile interceptions.

Still, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth projected confidence at a news briefing at the Pentagon on Thursday, telling reporters: "We're winning decisively

SEE OIL, 4A

Army has update on the fight to save its only museum on West Coast

BY SIMONE CARTER
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Last summer, U.S. Rep. Marilyn Strickland demanded answers from the Army secretary in a letter opposing the proposed closure of the only Army museum on the West Coast.

On Friday the Washington Democrat heard back.

In a response addressed to Strickland and shared with McClatchy by her office, the Army denied plans to shut down the Lewis Army Museum at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) as part of a purported push to shutter and consolidate dozens of similar museums nationwide.

Such downsizing efforts were pegged to save about $114 million over a decade, according to Stars and Stripes.

The Army previously cited closure criteria including building maintenance issues and waning visitor attendance. Proponents of the Lewis Army Museum, though, argued that neither was the case in this state.

Washington's facility displays and interprets Army artifacts, educating visitors about the role that the U.S. military branch plays in the region.

Strickland had asked U.S. Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll in June about the timeline for the supposed controversial shuttering.

"The Army does not currently plan to close the Lewis Army Museum," the answer from the Army, sent March 13 on behalf of Driscoll, reads.

SEE ARMY, 5A

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