Projected Benefits of the *Ashland Attainable Housing Project* to ASD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sunstone Housing Collaborative's proposed *Ashland Attainable Housing Project (AAHP)* for the Ashland School District (ASD) is more than a housing initiative. It is a strategic, education-supportive investment that aligns with national research on the link between stable housing, early childhood education, and student achievement. The project will sustainably grow ASD's enrollment, strengthen its financial footing, and enhance long-term educational outcomes for generations of Ashland families.

Key Impacts

- **Initial enrollment boost:** The development will yield **~128 school-aged children**, of whom **~109 are projected to be new to ASD**, increasing total district enrollment upon full occupancy.
- **Peak and steady-state enrollment gains:** Enrollment impact will **peak at ~175 students around year seven** and **stabilize long-term at ~150 additional students** distributed across elementary, middle, and high schools. The initial impact will be most pronounced in elementary grades.
- **Turnover adds a continual stream of net new students:** With a 6-year average turnover cycle, **~15–20 students per year** will be added to total district enrollment as families move into other Ashland housing as it becomes available and new families move in, sustaining long-term enrollment gains.
- **General fund revenue:** At ~$12,000 per student (2025 dollars), adjusted annually for 2% inflation, the project will generate over **$200 million in cumulative revenue** over 60 years.
- **Early childhood education integration:** Two on-site classrooms (serving 44 children from ages 0-5) will enhance school readiness, increase ASD kindergarten enrollment, and provide stability for working families, including district staff.
- **Academic and operational benefits:**
    - Stable, affordable housing improves **attendance, academic performance, and behavioral outcomes**.
    - Prioritized access for ASD staff may improve **recruitment and retention** of educators.
    - Proximity to schools and on-site early learning strengthens **parent engagement** and **school continuity**.

BACKGROUND & ASSUMPTIONS

- **Housing Development:** ~92 units are proposed in the draft Master Plan for the *AAHP,* providing a mix of affordable and moderate-income housing on a bus line within 0.5 miles of three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school.

- **Unit Mix & Affordability:** Approximately 70 units are Low-Income / "Affordable" for households <80% Area Median Income (averaging 60% AMI), 22 are Low Market Rate / "Workforce" for moderate-income (80–120% AMI), and 22 are Community

Land Trust homeownership units for households <80% AMI. The majority of units are family-sized (2-bedroom and 3-bedroom). We assume a representative mix of about 46 two-bedroom and 41 three-bedroom units for modeling purposes.

- **School-Age Children per Unit:** Following guidance from research, we assume one school-aged child per 2-bedroom unit and two school-aged children per 3-bedroom unit on average. This yields approximately 128 children living in the 92 units once fully occupied. This is an average of ~1.46 students per unit, which is on the higher end of typical multipliers. For comparison, a Rutgers University study found 0.72 public school children per 2-bedroom and 1.09 per 3-bedroom in low-income rental housing, and ~0.57 and 0.63 respectively in moderate-income developments. Our assumption is higher to reflect the priority for families with children in this project.

- **Priority for District Families and Staff:** Housing applications will be weighted according to legal precedent and guidance to prioritize families with students enrolled in ASD and district staff (and their families). This means many units will be occupied by households that either already have school-aged children or soon will. School districts that have built workforce housing have seen improved staff retention and success in recruiting new staff, as nearly all such developments fill up and often have waiting lists. By providing affordable homes to ASD employees, the project can help retain teachers and staff, indirectly benefiting educational quality.

- **Turnover Rate:** Families are expected to stay between 5-7 years in these units, after which they may move on (often into market-rate homeownership or other housing as their situation improves). We model a 16.7% turnover per year (approx. one-sixth of units turning over annually).

- **New vs. Existing District Students:** We assume 85% of families moving into the development come from outside the district, bringing new children into ASD, and 15% are already local (their children were already enrolled in ASD). In other words, ~85% of the resident children represent net new enrollment for the district, while ~15% simply relocate within the district (no net enrollment change). This aligns with the priority to attract new families and employees to Ashland.

Summary of Initial Impact: With the above assumptions, full occupancy would yield about 128 school-age children on site, of whom roughly 109 would be new to ASD (128 × 85% ≈ 109). These students would enroll across elementary, middle, and high school grades.

School-Age Enrollment Yield Calculation

Using the assumptions, we can calculate the initial yield of students and the ongoing enrollment impact:

- **Initial School-Age Children:** We assume 46 two-bedroom units (1 student each) and 41 three-bedroom units (2 students each).

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Initial children = (46 units × 1)+ (41 units × 2) = 128 students

- This is the total number of K-12 students living in the housing development when fully occupied. It includes both new-to-district and already-enrolled children.

- **New ASD Enrollment (Year 1):** Applying the 85% factor for new families:

  New ASD students in Year 1 = 128 × 85% ≈ 109 students.

- **About 109 new students** would be added to ASD's enrollment in the first year as a direct result of the project. The remaining ~20 students were already in ASD and would transfer from other local housing, resulting in no net gain. They are important for school planning but do not increase total enrollment.

- **Distribution by Grade Level (Initial):** Families in affordable housing tend to have younger children, so we expect a majority of the 109 new students to be in elementary grades. For modeling, we allocate roughly 60% of new students to elementary (K–5), 20% to middle school (6–8), and 20% to high school (9–12). This yields approximately:
  - **Elementary** (K–5): ~65 new students (around 11–12 per grade K through 5)
  - **Middle** (6–8): ~22 new students (around 7–8 per grade 6–8)
  - **High** (9–12): ~22 new students (around 5–6 per grade 9–12)

- These are estimates; actual grade distribution could vary. But initially, elementary schools would see the largest enrollment bump, which is beneficial since the housing is located near elementary campuses. Research shows that providing stable, affordable housing near schools can improve school attendance and readiness. Frequent moves and housing instability are linked to worse performance and absenteeism, so enrolling these children in a stable situation sets them up for success.

Enrollment Impact Over 60 Years

We projected the enrollment impact year-by-year over a 60-year horizon, accounting for the annual turnover of units and the progression of students through grades. Key points of this projection include:

- **Annual Turnover Adds New Students:** Each year, about 1/6 of the units turn over (~15 units per year on average). New families move in and (by assumption) 85% of those are from outside the district. Thus, each year after the initial influx, additional students will enroll in ASD from the project. We can estimate:

  New Families per Year ≈ 92 units / 6 ≈ 15.3 families/year

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New Students per Year ≈ 15.3 families × 1.46 students/family × 85% ≈ 19 new students/year

Roughly ~15–16 new students (net) will be added to the district *each year* as the development "refreshes" with new families and students graduate out of the district after the first year. This assumes families leaving the development stay in Ashland, so their children continue in ASD, while new incoming families bring additional children–effectively growing the total enrollment.

- **Student Progression and Overlap:** Children remain in the K-12 system until they graduate. A child who enrolls in kindergarten from this housing could be in the district for 13 years (K through 12). Therefore, as new waves of families come in, earlier cohorts of students are still in school, creating overlapping enrollment boosts. Over time, some of the initial students will graduate or (less likely) leave the district if their family moves away. We accounted for students aging out by assuming a standard progression (advancing one grade per year and graduating on time).

- **Peak Enrollment Effect:** Because of overlapping cohorts, the total additional enrollment due to the project will peak several years after opening. In our model, the peak occurs around year seven, when the second wave of new students has arrived but most of the first wave have not yet graduated. At that peak, we project roughly 175 additional K-12 students in the district attributable to the project (across all grades). For context, that is about 7% of ASD's current K-12 enrollment (assuming ~2,500 total district enrollment for 2024-25).

- **Long-Term Steady State:** After about 13–15 years, the system reaches an equilibrium where new incoming students each year roughly equal the number of students graduating and exiting. In the long run, the development is expected to support about 150 additional students in ASD on an ongoing basis. This would be the approximate steady-state concurrent enrollment attributable to the 92 units, once the initial bulge passes.

- **Grade Level Breakdown Over Time:** The mix of grade levels impacted will evolve over time. Initially, elementary grades see the most growth (as many young families move in). As those children age, they advance to middle and high school. By the time the system stabilizes, the distribution of the additional ~150 students skews somewhat toward the upper grades (because every cohort eventually goes through middle and high, and we continually add new young cohorts). Roughly, the steady-state breakdown of the ~150 added students might be on the order of ~40 elementary, ~40–45 middle school, and ~65–70 high school students at any given time.

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The table below illustrates the projected enrollment impact of net new students to ASD by school level at three points in time: *initial occupancy, peak*, and *long-term:*

Scenario	Elementary (K–5)	Middle (6–8)	High (9–12)	*Total K-12*
Initial (year 1): after move-in	~65 students	~22	~22	~109
Peak (≈ year 7): first wave + overlapping new waves	~40	~65	~70	~175
Steady-state (years 15+)	~40	~42	~70	~152

Note: These numbers are approximate and based on modeling assumptions. Year seven peak reflects the initial cohort moving into higher grades while a second cohort fills in the lower grades. By Year 15, earlier cohorts have graduated and the system stabilizes with continuous inflow equaling outflow.

This analysis suggests that elementary schools will feel the impact first, but over the decades the high school will see the largest cumulative enrollment from the housing (as all those cohorts eventually become high schoolers if they stay through graduation). The middle school will also have a significant steady influx. The district can use this information for long-term capacity planning, e.g. ensuring class size accommodation at the high school ~10 years down the line.

Importantly, these students are coming from families benefiting from stable, affordable housing. Research consistently shows that stable housing improves educational outcomes: students in stable homes have lower rates of chronic absenteeism, higher test scores, and are less likely to have to repeat grades than those facing frequent moves or homelessness. Ashland's project, by providing affordable homes, will likely yield not just more students, but students who are better positioned to thrive academically due to a more secure living environment. For example, Tacoma Public Schools has recognized that a lack of stable housing directly harms student learning; Tacoma partnered with the housing authority to prioritize housing for homeless student families. This underscores how housing and enrollment are linked to performance.

- Without the project, enrollment bottoms out at ~2100 by 2033 and grows modestly.
- With the project, ASD mitigates enrollment decline in the short term (<5 years) and mid-term (5-10 years).
- In the long term, by 2075 the district could have ~530 more students than without the housing project. This translates to an additional staff FTE of ~21 certified teachers at current personnel ratios, plus related classified, administrative, and temporary positions.

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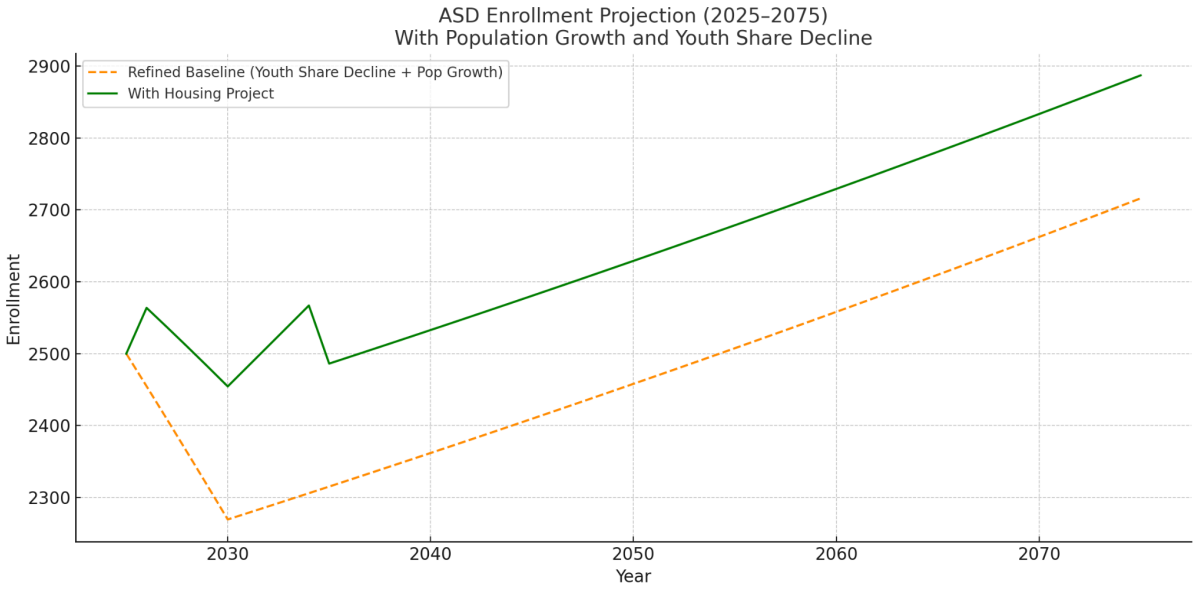

General Fund Revenue Impact

Each additional student brings additional state and local funding to the district's General Fund. We assume $12,000 per student in 2025 dollars as the revenue contribution (this represents the funding that follows the student). We also account for inflation in future years, assuming a modest 2% annual inflation on school funding.

Per-Student Revenue Growth: Starting from $12,000 in 2025, the nominal revenue per student would grow each year with inflation. For example:

- Year 1 per student ≈ $12,000 (in 2025 dollars; if the project opens in 2026, that would be about $12,240 nominal at 2% inflation).
- Year 10 per student ≈ $12,000 × $(1.02)^{9}$ ≈ $14,000 (approximate, in year 2034 dollars).
- Year 60 per student ≈ $12,000 × $(1.02)^{59}$ ≈ $39,000 (in year 2085 dollars).

Annual Revenue Projection: The general fund revenue contributed by the students in this housing project (not counting compensation for land disposition of lease/sale) can be calculated as:

Revenue year = (additional students in year) × per-student funding in that year

Using our enrollment projections and 2% inflation, we find:

- **Initial year** (2026-27): ~109 new students × $12,000 **≈ $1.3 million** added revenue for the district in the first full year of occupancy.
- **Peak year** (~year seven, 2023-34): ~175 students × ~$13,500 per student (inflation-adjusted) **≈ $2.36 million** for that year's funding, timed near when the last of the students gained through Open Enrollment graduates.

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- **Long-term annual:** ~152 students (steady state) × ~$39,000 per student (in 2085) ≈ **$5.9 million** per year by the end of the 60-year horizon in nominal dollars. This reflects both the larger dollar amount per student in the future and the continued enrollment contribution.

We can also look at the cumulative revenue over the 60-year period. Summing year-by-year (and growing funding with inflation each year), the housing development would generate on the order of $210 million (nominal) in General Fund revenue for ASD over 60 years. For context, in present value terms this would be much lower when discounted, but nominally over decades it's a substantial influx. Even in the first 10 years, the project could bring in roughly $15–20 million total new funding, considering the gradual enrollment build-up.

All these funds support the district's educational programs, staff, and services for all students. The project helps stabilize and increase the district's enrollment, which translates into financial resources that benefit the educational system.

Early Childhood Education Co-location Benefits

The proposal includes an early childhood education component on-site, which is a forward-thinking strategy. The plan is to have two classrooms at the housing development:

- One infant/toddler classroom for ages 6 weeks to 3 years (capacity ~24 children).
- One preschool classroom for ages 3–5 (Pre-K, capacity ~20 children).

This provides 44 early learning slots for the community, operated in partnership with the school district.

Implications for Enrollment: Co-locating early childhood education with housing can boost K-12 enrollment in the long run by creating a "feeder" effect. Families living in or near the development will have convenient access to quality child care and preschool. Those children, after attending preschool on-site, are very likely to continue on to enroll in kindergarten within ASD. In other words, the district is engaging these families from birth to school age, increasing the chances that they stay with ASD for K-12. It effectively expands the district's reach to even younger children and builds loyalty/connection with families early.

Academic Benefits: Numerous studies show that high-quality early childhood education improves school readiness and later academic performance. For example, participants in programs like Head Start have higher school readiness, are more likely to complete high school, and show better educational attainment overall. By providing early education on-site, especially for low-income families who might otherwise struggle to find affordable childcare, the project sets up these children for success in elementary school. They will enter kindergarten better prepared in terms of literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills. This can translate into higher achievement and lower needs for remediation or special education services down the line.

Furthermore, placing child care and Pre-K at a convenient location (within the housing community, and effectively within the school district's ecosystem) has practical benefits:

- **Easier Transitions:** Children will get used to a structured learning environment and transition more smoothly into formal schooling. There is evidence that having child care or pre-K co-located with schools or in familiar community settings eases the transition into kindergarten. The children already know some teachers and routines, and they may even be on or near a school campus, reducing first-day-of-school anxiety.

- **Parent Engagement:** It's more convenient for parents to have child care at the same location as housing (or school). They are more likely to form relationships with educators early on. This can increase parent involvement in the district and their commitment to keeping their kids in ASD schools. British Columbia recently began co-locating before-and-after school care at elementary schools, finding it very popular with parents for its convenience and consistency.

- **Workforce Support:** On-site early learning also allows parents (including ASD staff living there) to work or attend school knowing their young children are in good hands nearby. This stability supports family economic growth, which in turn can reflect in students' performance. Affordable child care plus housing reduces stress on families, and less stressed parents and stable routines at home usually mean kids who are more ready to learn.

The early childhood classrooms will serve ~44 young children at any time, and over years will prepare hundreds of children for entry into Ashland's elementary schools. These children, having had high-quality early education, are expected to perform better academically (higher test scores, better literacy, etc.) and require fewer interventions later. Co-locating these services with housing is a "community win-win" strategy: it improves outcomes for children and is immensely helpful for working parents. It also strengthens the pipeline of future ASD students, as many of those preschoolers will enroll in kindergarten locally and sustain enrollment.

Broader Educational Benefits of Stable Housing

Beyond the raw numbers of enrollment and revenue, it's important to recognize the qualitative benefits this housing project can provide to student success:

- **Improved Attendance and Performance:** Children in the development will have stable housing in a convenient location close to schools, which should reduce barriers to attendance. Housing stability is strongly linked to better school attendance and continuity. When families no longer worry about frequent moves or evictions, children can stay in the same school and focus on learning. Studies have shown that students who avoid the disruptions of moving and/or homelessness have higher test scores and are less likely to repeat a grade. By providing affordable units, the project

helps prevent the kind of involuntary mobility (e.g. forced moves due to rent spikes or evictions) that often undermines children's education.

- **Neighborhood and Community**: The site's proximity to multiple schools means these children can be more involved in school activities (ease of transport for sports, after-school programs, parent-teacher meetings, etc.). The development effectively creates a community of families engaged with the schools, potentially boosting volunteerism and PTA involvement. Over 60 years, this could foster a tight-knit school community.

- **Teacher/Staff Stability:** With some units occupied by ASD teachers or staff, the project contributes to teacher retention. Teachers living in the community they serve can form stronger bonds with students and parents. As noted, districts building workforce housing have seen significantly improved retention of staff. Consistent, experienced teachers are a key factor in student achievement. Housing that helps keep quality teachers in the district benefits student learning outcomes indirectly as well.

- **Long-Term Enrollment Stability:** ASD has faced enrollment declines as housing costs have pushed families out over decades. This project is an enrollment stabilization strategy: it ensures that over the next decades, there is a steady influx of young families to offset demographic shifts. The roughly 150 additional students in steady state represent a significant cohort; without the project, the district might otherwise have lost those students (and the associated funding). By actively linking housing policy with school enrollment, ASD is proactively supporting its future enrollment health. In policy literature, housing is increasingly seen as a platform for improving education outcomes, and Ashland's initiative embodies this approach.

CONCLUSION

Over a 60-year horizon, the *Ashland Attainable Housing Project* is projected to add on the order of 150 additional K-12 students to ASD on an ongoing basis, after an initial peak of ~175 students around year seven. This translates into a substantial financial boost (about $210 million in cumulative general fund revenue in nominal dollars over 60 years) and, more importantly, an investment in human capital: children who will benefit from stable housing and early education and likely achieve at higher levels as a result.

The project's design–mixing affordability, prioritizing school families and staff, and co-locating early childhood education–aligns closely with research-backed best practices. Stable, affordable housing improves student outcomes by reducing disruptive moves, and high-quality early education boosts later academic success. Co-locating child care with housing and schools makes life easier for parents and helps children transition smoothly into kindergarten. Additionally, providing housing for district employees can improve teacher retention, indirectly benefiting students.

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The *Ashland Attainable Housing Project* is not just a housing initiative–it is a comprehensive community investment that will grow and support Ashland's student population for generations. By our calculations, it will pay dividends in both increased enrollment and funding for the district, and in better educational outcomes for the children served. This holistic approach–integrating housing, early learning, and K-12 education–positions Ashland as a forward-looking district leveraging innovation to sustain and enrich its schools.

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