
Role of the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee

The Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) develops recommendations for the Superintendent on aligning district budget resources with district priorities. The Superintendent will use these recommendations to develop a proposed budget for the Board of Education's consideration. The Board of Education will make final budget decisions.

Recommendation Process

1. Establish agreements about how to work together and the scope of work while reviewing budget background information.
2. Clearly define the recommendation to be made.
3. Review and clarify expenditure priorities.
4. Identify possible budget reductions and research them.
5. Rank expenditures by applying the priority criteria to each possible reduction. Develop a description of budget reduction impacts.
6. Discuss and recommend options for aligning revenues with expenditures based on the ranking.

Proposed Norms

Meetings begin and end on time (5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.). The third meeting may be longer.

Concerns and ideas are openly expressed in meetings.

Questions are used to clarify and develop ideas.

Members show respect by listening to and acknowledging each other's ideas.

“Thumbs-voting” will be used to solicit input.

The action plan is followed unless the Budget Advisory Committee chooses to make changes.

Budget Advisory Committee members are expected to attend regularly. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, the member will inform the Business Department.

In the event that a member misses a meeting where a decision is made, it is assumed that the member agrees with the group's work unless the group chooses to discuss the decision further at the next meeting.

Information will be checked for accuracy and completeness before it is presented.

The facilitator will prepare a summary following each meeting.

Highly technical questions may be addressed individually. A summary of the meaning of the question would then be shared with the BAC either verbally or through the meeting summary.

Givens

Some of the givens are based on existing State budget practices and regulations. If the State practices and regulations were to change then the District may change the givens accordingly.

1. The budget must reflect the District's priorities.
2. The Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee will focus on the general fund and unrestricted funds. (Restricted funds can only be used for designated purposes and/or programs.
3. The Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee will not address contractual and/or union related issues.
4. The District will follow established accounting procedures and state timelines.
5. The adopted budget will align the projected revenues and expenditures.
6. The budget must have a set aside for restricted maintenance, deferred maintenance, and a reserve fund that is in line with State regulations and Board of Education requirements.
7. While Budget Advisory Committee members were selected to represent constituency groups, members will represent their own views on how to use resources to best serve district students. Members are asked to communicate any questions or concerns from their constituency group and assist the group in interpreting the meeting summaries as needed.

Budget Priorities

The District Cabinet proposed and Board of Education agreed that the following budget priorities would be used when evaluating BAC recommendations.

- Puts students first by providing direct educational/support services to students.
- Directly supports District goals
- Directly impacts safety and/or the quality of the working and learning environment.
- Directly impacts student achievement.
- Continuous funding maintains the integrity of programs that work and directly serve students.
- Provides continuity for necessary core district support functions.
- If eliminated or reduced would create a negative long-term impact for a short-term gain.

Proposed Meeting Plan and Schedule

This plan assumes that there will be a BAC meeting weekly thru February 17th to provide recommendations on the preliminary budget for 2010/2011 as well as to address current year budget reductions if necessary. BAC members are invited to attend the Board Study Session where the preliminary budget will be reviewed. If additional time is needed for discussion, then meetings will be added. Meetings will be held on Wednesday evenings from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., in Room #75 at the District Office.

January 6, 2010

- Welcome and introductions
- Review norms and the role, scope and action plan.
- Presentation on school finance that addresses key budget timelines, the difference between restricted and unrestricted funds, fund sources, overview of expenditures by category and explanation of contributions.
- Define what to address through a recommendation.
- Review the specific process that will be used to rank expenditures against budget priorities.
- Discuss current expenditure reduction need.
- Give input on budget priorities.
- Overview of the next meeting.

January 13, 2010

- Review Governor's proposed budget for 2010/2011
- Clarify and provide more detail on school district finance if necessary.
- Brainstorm possible budget reductions to cost out.
- Identify additional information to collect for the Budget Advisory Committee's work and the means to collect this information.
- Overview of the next meeting.

January 20, 2010

- Closely review the governor's proposed budget against district revenue for the current year.
- Closely review the governor's proposed budget against expected revenues and expenditures for the following year.
- Review additional data collected between meetings.
- Discuss and clarify all expenditures that will be considered in the ranking process.
- Clarify definitions for each priority.
- Small groups apply individual priorities to all expenditures.
- Enter ratings from small groups into a spreadsheet and sort expenditures to create a ranking
- Provide any additional comments before information is forwarded to the Superintendent for use in developing the initial budget.
- Overview of the next meeting.

January 27 – thru February 17, 2010

- Continue to review the governor's proposed budget against district revenue for the current year.
- Continue to review the governor's proposed budget against expected revenues and expenditures for the following year.
- Continue to review additional data collected between meetings.
- Continue to prioritize expenditures.