

Fairbanks North Star Borough Board of Education
Budget Committee Meeting
Administrative Center – October 11, 2023, from 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Administrative Center – Board Room
Meeting Notes

A. Call to Order

Tim Doran, School Board Member and FY24 Budget Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. Budget Committee meetings are recorded and will be available on the district's website.

B. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

Tim Doran, Board of Education Chairperson
Brandy Harty, Board of Education
Andy DeGraw, Chief Operations Officer
Allison Curry, FEA Secondary Representative
Edward Paxson, FEA Elementary Representative
Max Mullenberg, Student Representative
Robert Herrick, Parent Representative (arrived at 5:34pm)
Kimberly Aiken, Parent Representative
Axl Levan, At Large Community Member
Clay Anderson, Non-Represented Representative

Committee Members Absent:

Jeff Lesseig, FPA Elementary Representative
Robyn Taylor, FPA Secondary Representative
TBD, ESSA Representative
TBD, ESSA Representative

Staff Present:

Michele Nilson, Budget Specialist II

C. Agenda

1. Adoption of Agenda October 11, 2023

Tim asked if there were any objections to the agenda and seeing none, the agenda was approved.

D. Notes

2. Adoption of February 23, 2023 Notes

Tim asked if there were any objections to the notes and seeing none, they notes were approved.

E. Opening Remarks – Chairperson Tim Doran

Tim welcomed everyone and thanked them for their willingness to be a part of the Budget Committee. He gave a brief explanation of the Purpose of the Committee. He then reminded everyone that we must abide by the Open Meetings Act. Brandy Harty added to this with a few more guidelines regarding the Open Meetings Act. Tim then turned the meeting over to Andy DeGraw and his PowerPoint presentation.

F. Introduction to the Committee Process – Andy DeGraw, Chief Operations Officer

Andy reviewed Committee Best Practices, Linking Budget to the Strategic Plan and Budget 101- Revenues and Expenditures.

Comments & Questions during Andy's presentation:

Allison Curry requested an updated copy of the Strategic Plan to reflect the SY20-25. That was emailed to the committee on 10/12/2023.

Mr. Doran clarified local contribution amounts regarding minimums and maximums.

Robert Herrick had questions regarding federal school lunches and where that money was reflected. Mr. DeGraw explained that was a separate fund from the Operating Fund.

Kimberly Aiken asked for more information regarding Migrant Ed and the Free & Reduced School lunch program and how those two buckets of money were distributed. She was concerned about double dipping when a child qualified for both programs. Where does the money go? A more detailed explanation will be forthcoming according to Tim.

Mr. Doran asked Andy to clarify what other funds there are. Mr. DeGraw talked about Grants, School Lunches and Transportation.

Max had a general question about other funds and Mr. Doran explained that the number of students that fill out the appropriate forms help to increase those other funds.

Mr. DeGraw gave a high level overview of Restricted vs. Non-Restricted funds.

Axl Levan asked for clarification on Borough max contribution. Mr. Doran explained that even with that we would still be at a deficit.

Committee Discussion Ensued – Included Topics were: What is important to us? What questions do you have? What are your priorities, what information would you like to have at the next meetings?

Edward Paxson asked why the legislature didn't override the governor veto. Tim explained his thoughts and Brandy added additional information to that.

Robert Herrick asked about restrictions to trying to get corporate sponsorships. Is there opportunity to lease space in any schools that might have space available? Mr. DeGraw explained that building rentals was a portion of local revenue and gave a brief explanation of rates. He added that we welcome any ideas to generate funds for the district. Mr. Herrick also asked about Charter School funding and Homeschool funding and how those students might generate more money for the district.

Kimberley Aiken feels that there is a missed opportunity for fundraising in our district. Tim explained that fundraising is left up to the individual schools, booster clubs, student activities and parent groups. Brandy explained that some of the parent groups diminished during COVID and are slowly rebuilding, but stronger in some schools than others.

Priorities:

Curry – gave advice to the rest of the committee to inform themselves about the budget. Her priority is Workplace Excellence and would like to see more work done on the staff allocation model.

Herrick – He would like to see fewer but more robust elective choices in our schools. He would like to save elementary schools but consolidate some of the secondary schools. Protect the ELP Programs.

Aiken – She would like to see services for students are available in all schools (i.e. ANE Tutoring). She would also like to see better allocation of student activity money. She would also like to see more Life skills options for students in high schools.

Levan – Maintain extra-curricular/enrichment for students.

Anderson – Keep facility rental fees low in order to support outside community activities for students.

Paxson – Respect for staff, lower healthcare costs. He would also like to see more Life Skills classes taught.

Info requested for next meetings:

Better understanding of benefits, this topic is very broad.

Organizational Chart for the district.

Enrollment history by grade level (15 years).

Staffing by grade level by school with enrollment on a one page view.

Tradeoffs with different types of schools (i.e. K-8 vs Middle Schools).

Department Presentations (5 minutes each) impact & challenges faced, what they would like to build on, what cuts do they agree with or are opposed to within their programs.

Ability of committee to come up with advocacy points and how do we do help advocate for more funding.

Closing Remarks: Mr. Doran noted that the November meeting is actually scheduled for Nov. 15th rather than the 8th. He thanked everyone for their time this evening.

Additional Discussion Topics:

Audio of the Budget Review Committee meetings can be heard on the following site:

<https://www.k12northstar.org/Page/7360>

Mr. Doran adjourned the meeting at 7:30pm with no objections.

Notes respectfully submitted by Michele Nilson