



Colorado Springs School District 11
 Superintendent Michael Gaal
Division of Business Services
 Chief Resource Officer, Brandan Comfort
 Director of Financial Services Laura Hronik, MBA

DAC Budget Subcommittee

Web page: [District Accountability Committee \(DAC\)](#)

Chair Carl Schueler
 Vice Chair Vicky McLaughlin

Meeting Notes

May 13, 2025
 5:30 p.m.
 Hybrid

Members present: Carl Schueler, Vicky McLaughlin, Amanda Huber, Kenneth Pfeil, Marion Clawson, Jan Rennie, John Gustafson, Kevin Cook, Velvet Stepanek, Robert Grossman, Rachel Johnson, Mary Raymond, & Sheryl Saylor.

Members absent:, Bruce Cole, Colleen Pearl, Laura Hronik, Ryan Leets, & LuAnn Long.

Ex-officio members present: Brandan Comfort, Lauren Nelson, Amber Hickman & Danyalla Cade.

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| 1. Welcome & Introductions | Schueler |
| 2. Approval of Agenda & Meeting Notes | Schueler |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda approved with no changes. • 4/22/25 Meeting Notes approved with no changes. | |
| 3. PBDA | Dr. Comfort |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Comfort provided updates on preliminary budget development assumptions compensation packages. The Board appears to support the proposed budget, with minimal anticipated changes. Compensation includes a 10% overall increase, with an average of 6% being non-recurring bonuses. The School Finance Act was approved last week and there will be no additional changes regarding the PBDA. • Grant funding concerns exist, particularly for Title I and other educational programs. • Limited planned staffing reductions aim to address declining enrollment while reallocating resources to classrooms. • Subcommittee members followed up with several questions focused primarily on grants and staff changes. Dr. Comfort and Director Nelson clarified that a total of a few dozen positions are planned for elimination from the budget, with many of these currently unfilled and most administered centrally (one example: window glass repair position to be replaced by contracted services). • There was discussion of positions (particularly at schools) being protected this cycle because of both Board policy and Site Based Budgeting priorities. Carl Schueler expressed his personal observation that strategic attention of continuing staff rightsizing will be needed in part to sustain compensation increases in future years (particularly the non-recurring proportion of this year’s increases). | |
| 4. FY25/26 DAC Budget Subcommittee | Schueler/McLaughlin |

- Future meetings will likely be scheduled to be combined with all other committee meetings on one Thursday evening per month to streamline discussions, and more effectively use staff resources.
- The Board aims to streamline meetings and reduce volunteer demands for better participation.
- The current BOE meeting structure includes one regular meeting and two work sessions monthly, with possible further reductions next year.
- Discussions emphasize focusing on governance rather than operational details in Board meetings.
- The Board is seeking to improve accessibility for committee involvement and feedback from volunteers.
- Other districts have different committee structures, prompting consideration of alternative approaches for efficiency.
- Some subcommittee members expressed concern about the capacity available with the planned one evening per month time slot for all committee meetings.
- In addition to the customary charges, potential upcoming bond issues and community feedback are crucial topics for future subcommittee focus.
- Ms. Classen asked for a show of hands for those willing to serve on this subcommittee next year. Most indicated a willingness.
- For FY26 Rachel Johnson is the submission for the Chair and Carl Schueler is the submission for the Vice Chair.

5. Budget Priorities Update Schueler

- These BOE priorities were highlighted early in the meeting.
- Dr. Comfort reported that both BEST grant applications (Jenkins and Palmer) have made the initial cut list.

6. Student Based Budgeting Dr. Comfort

- Site-based budgeting discussions highlight the need for business-savvy members on committees for effective financial oversight. The task force will continue next year. Carl Schueler suggested the focus might shift somewhat from this subcommittee and task force to the SAC process at schools.

7. Questions/DAC Newsletter/Report to DAC Schueler/McLaughlin

- Vicky and Carl will coordinate on some content

8. Adjourn Schueler/McLaughlin

- This meeting was adjourned around 6:50pm.

A recording is available at <https://www.d11.org/administration/dac/home/dac-meeting-handouts-notes/recordings>