

03-10-26 BOE Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:05.

Members present: Galen Cawley, Emily Rosenthal, Jessica Wilen, Seth Klaskin

Administration: Dr. Craig Cooke, Finance Director Stacy Nobitz, Communications Director Zoe Roos

Agenda and Discussion

The committee discussed a projected FY 2025-26 shortfall of \$440,000 against possible savings of \$360,000, leaving a projected \$80,000 shortfall that will be addressed as the fiscal year winds down. The shortfall is due to higher costs in Special Education placements, repairs, maintenance, and snow removal. Stacy Nobitz shared a worksheet listing funds to cover the deficit, including savings from HR, Neck River utilities, and a soft freeze on purchases. The shortfall will be addressed through line-item transfers presented to the Board at the April 7 2026 meeting.

Details on Projected Deficits:

- The repairs and maintenance account had a zero balance as of March 5.
- The snow budget, originally around \$65,000, now faces a significant deficit.
- The projected total deficit is approximately \$440,000, broken down as:
 - \$245,000 for special education
 - \$50,000 for repairs and maintenance
 - \$145,000 for snow removal

Cost-Saving Measures and Positive Balances

- A “soft freeze” on spending has been implemented across all departments.
- Purchase orders require senior management approval, with exceptions for essential needs such as curriculum or hiring substitutes.
- Orders for furniture and books for next year are on hold.
- Utilities are projected to save \$50,000, partly from turning off power at Daniel Hand last summer.
- Anticipated savings from the soft freeze are about \$40,000.
- Total current savings are estimated at \$360,000.

Additional Discussion

Special Education

- Several students currently in outplacements, including 12th graders, will not be included in next year’s count.
- A special education reserve account exists with a balance of \$350,000.
- The approach is to cover costs within the main budget first before using the reserve.

- Using the reserve is a last resort, as the full amount might only cover two new students.

Baseball Field Renovation

- Discussion focused on the costs and benefits of installing an artificial turf field.
- Converting the field to turf would allow multiple sports to use it, potentially reducing the need for additional fields.
- The project is classified as a Capital Improvement Project (CIP), but excess year-end funds were allocated to it.
- Those end-of-year CIP funds would be reallocated to cover the FY budget shortfall only if the project were to be re-designed or voted down in referendum.