Cambrian School District

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)

"Exploring Infinite Possibilities for Learning"

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CSD Budget Advisory Committee

Introduction

This handbook is intended to provide clear guidance on the purpose, structure, roles, and operating procedures of the Cambrian School District Budget Advisory Committee (BAC).

The BAC is designed to strengthen transparency, increase understanding of the district's financial decisions, and build trust among staff, families, and the broader community.

Vision and Intent

The Cambrian School District is committed to:

- Transparency in fiscal decision-making
- Alignment of resources to student needs and district priorities
- Meaningful stakeholder engagement
- Building trust through open communication

The BAC is a key strategy to achieve these commitments.

Purpose of the Budget Advisory Committee

The BAC provides recommendations to the Superintendent during the district's annual budget development process.

The BAC supports:

- Alignment of the district budget with the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)
- Alignment with district vision, goals, and priorities
- Long-term fiscal sustainability
- Clear and transparent communication of budget decisions

The BAC serves in an advisory capacity only. All final decisions remain with the Governing Board.

Guiding Principles

The work of the BAC is grounded in the following principles:

- **Transparency** - All budget information, assumptions, and constraints will be clearly communicated.
- **Trust** - Open dialogue and honest discussion of trade-offs will build credibility and trust.
- **Equity** - Budget decisions will consider the needs of all students, particularly unduplicated students.
- **Alignment** - Resources will align to the LCAP and district priorities.
- **Collaboration** - Diverse perspectives will be valued and included in discussions.

Governance and Authority

- The BAC operates under the direction of the Chief Business Officer (CBO).
- The BAC provides recommendations to the Superintendent.
- The BAC does not have decision-making authority.

- The Governing Board retains full authority for budget adoption.

Membership Composition

Membership may include representatives of the following groups, consistent with AR 3100:

- Governing Board members, provided that less than a majority of the Board serves.
- District and school site administrators.
- Certificated and classified staff.
- Cambrian Education Foundation Representative.
- Parents and/or guardians.
- Business and/or other community members.
- Students, where participation is feasible and supported.

The district will seek balanced perspectives across schools and stakeholder groups. Members may have more than one affiliation; the district will identify the seat or primary representation under which each member serves.

Roles and Responsibilities

A. Advisory Responsibilities

Members will:

- Provide input and recommendations to the Superintendent
- Ask questions and seek clarification
- Represent stakeholder perspectives

B. Budget Development Support

Members may:

- Recommend budget priorities aligned to district goals
- Analyze budget assumptions and projections
- Review multi-year financial outlooks

C. Strategic and Analytical Role

Members may:

- Suggest cost reduction strategies
- Identify opportunities for efficiency
- Review program effectiveness in relation to funding

D. Communication and Transparency

Members will:

- Review clarity of budget presentations and materials
- Provide feedback on how to improve communication to the community
- Serve as ambassadors to support understanding of the budget process

Meeting Structure

The BAC will meet two (2) to three (3) times per year, aligned with key milestones in the district's budget development process to ensure timely input and meaningful engagement.

Fall Meeting – Budget Overview and Assumptions

- Overview of the district's current financial status
- Review of enrollment projections, revenue assumptions, and expenditure trends
- Identification of district priorities aligned to the LCAP and strategic goals
- Introduction of the annual BAC charge and areas of focus

***Winter Meeting – Draft Budget Review**

- Review of the proposed/draft budget
- Analysis of key adjustments and changes from prior year
- Discussion of fiscal constraints, trade-offs, and options
- Opportunity for members to provide input and recommendations to inform budget development

Spring Meeting – Final Budget and LCAP Alignment

- Review of the proposed final budget prior to Board adoption
- Alignment of budget with LCAP goals and priorities
- Review of major investments and reductions
- Summary of BAC input and key themes

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed based on district priorities or fiscal conditions. Meetings may include:

- Presentations from the Chief Business Official (CBO)
- Data review and explanation of assumptions
- Small group discussions
- Whole group feedback and recommendations

Member Expectations

Members are expected to:

- Attend meetings regularly
- Review materials in advance
- Engage in respectful and constructive dialogue
- Maintain focus on students and district priorities
- Ask questions to build understanding

Transparency and Public Access

To support transparency, the district will:

- Post meeting agendas and materials
- Provide summaries of meetings
- Make budget documents available for public review
- Conduct required public hearings as part of the budget adoption process

The BAC complements, but does not replace, public participation opportunities.

Relationship to the Budget Process

The BAC is one component of a broader budget development process that includes:

- Staff input
- Leadership team analysis
- Public hearings
- Board review and adoption

The BAC's recommendations are considered by the Superintendent in developing the proposed budget.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The district is committed to improving:

- Clarity of budget communication
- Stakeholder engagement
- Alignment of resources to student outcomes

Feedback from the BAC will play a critical role in strengthening these efforts over time.

Summary

The Budget Advisory Committee reflects the district's commitment to openness, collaboration, and responsible stewardship of public resources.

Through this work, Cambrian School District aims to build understanding, strengthen trust, and ensure that financial decisions best support students and the community.

Resources/References

- CSD Board Policy 3100 Budget
- CSD Board Regulation 3100 Budget