

SD 42 POLICY: 4203

BUDGET PLANNING AND REPORTING

Philosophy

The Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes its responsibility for the effective use of public funds in providing the best possible education to the students in the communities it serves. The Board of Education has a duty to govern the district in a fiscally responsible manner, while carrying out the strategies required to achieve its goals.

The annual operating budget is a financial plan reflecting the implementation and maintenance of the Board’s educational and operational objectives. The financial allocations included in the budget should be consistent with the strategic directions identified in the Board’s Strategic Plan.

In accordance with Section 156(12) of the School Act, the Board must not incur a deficit of any kind unless the Board has approval of the Minister of Education and Child Care or meets criteria prescribed by order of the Minister of Education and Child Care.

Under Section 156(1) of School Act, the Board is required to maintain budgetary control over expenditures, develop an annual budget and submit it to the Ministry of Education and Child Care in a prescribed form at the time required by the Minister of Education and Child Care.

A budget reflects the best estimate of planned revenues and expenses as of a point in time. Salary and benefit increases, inflation and other estimated changes must be budgeted. In addition, the budget must include all recurring and one-time revenues and expenditures for the full fiscal year.

Authority

The Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools and the Secretary Treasurer to develop and implement all procedures required for the development and monitoring of budgets.

Responsibilities for Managing the Budget

The Superintendent of Schools and the Secretary Treasurer are delegated responsibility for the overall management of the educational and operational programs that are supported by the annual budgets. The Secretary Treasurer is specifically responsible for the financial management of the budget, and all financial reports.

Guiding Principles

Budget Development

Annual budgets shall be developed based on instructions received from the Ministry of Education and Child Care. At the beginning of each budget development cycle, the Secretary Treasurer in collaboration with the Superintendent of Schools shall prepare and present to the Board for approval a budget development plan or i.e. budget process.

In the development of the annual budget, the following must be observed:

- The budget for any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board's policies and strategic priorities.
- Annual recurring expenditures must not be funded from non-recurring revenues.
- Revenues and expenditures must be projected in a manner that avoids fiscal jeopardy.
- Revenues from ancillary programs and activities must, at a minimum, cover all direct and indirect operating costs.
- The Board shall not proceed with major building projects unless funding for the full capital and operating costs has been identified.

Budget Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

The Superintendent of Schools and the Secretary Treasurer are responsible for the communication and the implementation of the Board approved budget.

The budget is a "living" document. To this end the Board, through policy, intends to provide appropriate flexibility in budget management to enable management to maximize the use of fiscal resources while exercising effective budget control.

The Secretary Treasurer or designate is authorized to approve budget transfers within the Board approved budget in order to facilitate meeting contractual obligations, statutory requirements, approved staffing complement, or approved educational/operational objectives.

Permanent budget transfers that are not formula driven and result in increased or decreased staffing levels must be approved by the Board. In addition, budget transfer requests that would materially alter the Board approved fiscal plan must be approved by the Board.

Under the approval of the Secretary Treasurer, expenditure estimates may be exceeded where directly related revenue sources fully provide for the increased expenditure.

Unless otherwise instructed by the Board, quarterly financial reports shall be presented to the Board providing a macro status of the performance against budget. These reports will also include an analysis of budget variances and identification of same with an explanation of any variances in excess of 10% of the budget amount.

APPROVED: May 2023