

Budget Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 23, 2019 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Administrative Center – Board Room

Agenda

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

*Erin Morotti, Board Committee Chair
Andy DeGraw, Chief Operations Officer
Tara DeVaughn, FEA Secondary Representative
Coby Haas, FEA Elementary Representative
Lynn Weckesser, FPA Elementary Representative
Bruce Bell, FPA Secondary Representative
Charles Rollins, ESSA Elementary Representative*

*Melissa Walker, ESSA Secondary Representative
Joe Hannah, Exempt Representative
Mark Herrmann, Community Representative
Casy Price, Community Representative
Michael O'Brien, Community Representative
Danielle Malenius, Student Representative*

Recruiting for 3 Parent Representatives & 1 Community Representative

C. Adoption of the Agenda

D. Approve Meeting Notes

E. Opening remarks - Erin Morotti

F. Department Overview:

Human Resources Department by Executive Director Claire Morton

Information and Technology Department by Chief Information Technology Officer James Gentry

G. Committee Discussion:

- Review of the DRAFT Memo *Budget Committee Report* to be presented on December 3rd, 2019 to the Board of Education
- What Is Important To Us? (Continued)

Upcoming Meetings:

- Sept 25, 2019
- Oct 2, 2019
- Oct 16, 2019
- October 23, 2019
- November TBD
- December 3, 2019 (*Presentation to the Board at December 3 Regular School Board Meeting*)
- March TBD
- April TBD



[Budget Committee Webpage](#)



[2019-20 Approved Budget](#)



[Policy 236.1: School Board Committees to Advise Administration and the School Board](#)

Budget Committee Meeting

Administrative Center - Board Room
520 Fifth Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska
Wednesday, October 16, 2019 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Administrative Center – Board Room
Meeting Notes

A. Preliminaries

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Erin Morotti, School Board Member and FY 20-21 Budget Committee Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Budget Committee meetings are recorded and will be available on the district's website.

Committee Members Present:

*Erin Morotti, Board Committee Chair
Andy DeGraw, Chief Operations Officer
Tara DeVaughn, FEA Secondary Representative
Coby Haas, FEA Elementary Representative
Lynn Weckesser, FPA Elementary Representative
Mark Herrmann, Community Representative*

*Melissa Walker, ESSA Secondary Representative
Charles Rollins, ESSA Elementary Representative
Casy Price, Community Representative
Michael O'Brien, Community Representative
Joe Hannah, Exempt Representative*

Committee Members Absent:

*Bruce Bell, FPA Secondary Representative
Danielle Malenius, Student Representative*

Staff Present:

Heather Heineken, Director of Business Services & Risk Management Liaison
Sandra Weaver, Budget Specialist

B. Agenda

1. Adoption of Agenda

Charles Rollins made a motion to adopt the agenda. Casy Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

2. Adoption of Notes

Michael O'Brien made a motion to adopt the agenda. Coby Haas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

C. New Business

Opening remarks – Board Member and Budget Committee Chair Erin Morotti

Department's Overview:

- **Facility Maintenance Department (FMD) by Executive Director Mark Nilson**
 - Notes provided from Mark Nilson
- **Special Education Department by Executive Director Derek Coryell**
 - PowerPoint provided from Kate Hall and Derek Coryell

Chief Operations Officer Andy DeGraw reviewed the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District's Strategic Plan, and Committee Chair Erin Morotti reviewed the recent changes to the Strategic Plan

Exercise to Rank the importance of items on the Strategic Plan, Ranked in importance:

- **Support Services 20 pts**
- **Equity Inclusion 15 pts**
- **Effective Teaching 12 pts**
- **Work force excellence 12 pts**
 - **Social and emotional**
 - **Professional development**
 - **Tech support**
 - **Safe school buildings**

Committee Discussion ensued.

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

<http://www.k12northstar.org/boe/meeting-notes>

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 PM

Notes respectfully submitted by Sandra Weaver

The Budget Committee met four/five times between the months of September and October/November and discussed the overall financial position of the district. The group held in-depth conversations about the district's revenue sources and expenditures. As a part of reviewing the expenditure side of the budget, the committee received several in-depth reports from directors of various departments within the district. A consistent theme that was heard and discussed was the departments' objective to maintain services to students and staff in the face of rising costs and declining or static revenues. The final meeting with approval for input occurred on Wednesday XXX, 2019.

The Budget Committee recognizes the difficult economic environment in which the district operates. The committee identified the following areas as key to the district's ability to follow through on the Strategic Plan. Members feel these areas should be preserved to the extent possible in the event of required cuts, and should be high priorities to be added as opportunities for new investment present themselves in the future:

1. **Equity/Inclusion and Support Services:** Students face an ever increasing amount of external and internal social pressures and obstacles that inhibit and sometimes even prevent academic achievement in the classroom. The district also has an extremely diverse student population which can present challenges to learning if/when students feel marginalized and/or unsafe at school. In order to address these obstacles, as resources are available, the district should invest in additional staff or programs that promote equity and inclusion within their school communities and in the district as a whole. The committee also encourages the district to continue its focus on hiring additional staff to address the social and emotional needs of students. The committee felt strongly that a continued focus on these areas will have far reaching benefits in addressing barriers to student learning, improving academic achievement, and will benefit both students and staff in providing a more equitable, safe and supportive learning environment.
2. **Effective Teaching/Workforce Excellence:** A plan should be developed to implement a more systematized and consistent approach to technology integration across the district. As resources become available, a key component of the plan should be the hiring of additional instructional coaches to support certified staff in making technology devices and their utilization a more effective tool in the classroom. Members of the committee noted that levels of effective use of technology can vary from school to school depending on various factors. The implementation of such a plan would maximize the district's investment in expanding technology and enhance its benefits in support of personalized learning.
3. **Workforce Excellence:** Recognizing that many factors contribute to an excellent workforce, the committee suggests a holistic approach to attracting and retaining quality employees. In order to maintain manageable workloads, the district should establish a staffing allocation model which will provide a consistent baseline of resource allocations for schools and departments. This will help avoid "employee burnout", which often occurs in the event of understaffing. In the event of overstaffing, resources may be redirected to other areas of need in the specific building or department.

In addition, the district should continue its advocacy for a more competitive state retirement plan. This objective could be included in the formal report from the Legislative Committee and incorporated into any resulting advocacy and/or lobbying efforts of state lawmakers by the district. Changes made to the TRS and PERS plans have put the district at a competitive disadvantage, as it attempts to recruit and retain a high quality staff. Recruiting efforts would benefit greatly from a return to a Defined Benefit plan with benefit and contribution levels that are both affordable and sustainable for the long-term.

Lastly, anticipating that the size of the recruitment pool will not increase in the very near future, the district should expand on its current recruiting methods. New tools that should be considered include signing bonuses, incentive programs, updated benefit packages, etc. The committee suggests that the HR department investigate research done regarding what different generational age classes look for in a prospective employer, as well as what common traits are found in organizations who consistently score high in employee satisfaction surveys.