

Budget Advisory Committee
Meeting 1 -- 6 p.m. January 13, 2009
District Office

Committee Members in Attendance: Keturah Austin, Dr. Crystal Hummel, Janice Eldridge, Brett White, Brett Randolph, Roger Elliott, Terry Huelskamp, Mark Templin, Marvin Hladik, Tracey Repp, Cicely Dare, Tom Ostrander, Craig Gray, Rob Dickson, Scott Wilson, Dale Graham, Dr. Andy Koenigs, Sherame Kneisel, Ann Katt, Bruce Sanderson, Mark Evans, Jim Freeman, Melinda Fritze

Committee Members Absent: Julie Clopton, Mary Ann Maupin, Celia Ralston

Other Attendees: Mark Tallman (KASB) and 5 audience members

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Jim Freeman called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and noted the importance of this committee's work to the district.
- b. Committee Members – Mr. Freeman had committee members introduce themselves.
- c. Budget Steering Committee – Mr. Freeman noted his role as facilitator, emphasized their role to represent others in the district, and noted that the meetings are open to the public. There are visitors at this meeting, and there will likely be visitors at most meetings. While only committee members may participate in the meeting, anyone is welcome to attend.
- d. Mr. Freeman introduced Mark Evans, Superintendent of Schools.

2. Background

- a. National – Mr. Evans discussed the national and state level of budget issues. A document from the “Center on Budget and Policy Priorities” titled “Most States are Cutting Education” was handed out. Mr. Evans noted recent layoffs and that everyone is seeing the pain of the economy somewhere. Mr. Evans also discussed how the economy is affecting education in other states. Another document was handed out from the “Center on Budget and Policy Priorities” titled “State Budget Troubles Worsen.” Though it will be tough everywhere, we actually have it better than some districts, he noted, because we are expecting some growth. Many districts aren't. Mr. Evans also thanked committee members for serving, and reminded them that as difficult as we may have it, we have to keep our heads up because we have young people depending on us – many of whom are dealing with the economic downturn at home with family budget cuts and even parents who may have lost their job. Mr. Evans turned the meeting back over to Mr. Freeman.
- b. State-KASB Assistant Executive Director for Advocacy Mark Tallman – Mr. Freeman introduced Mark Tallman from the Kansas Association of

School Boards. The state is facing an unprecedented fiscal crisis, Mr. Tallman said. He went through a PowerPoint show with committee members and also handed out a copy of the PowerPoint, titled “Kansas Budget Crisis: Impact on Public Education.” The real problem faced, Tallman said, is that state revenues have flattened while state spending continues to increase. The Governor has said they will freeze education funding. “The State Budget Crisis” handout was distributed. Mr. Tallman noted that increased spending on education over the last decade has made a difference in academic outcomes in our state. Despite studies that have shown money spent on education does not equal increased achievement, in Kansas that has been proven wrong. Increased spending on education has in fact resulted in higher student achievement in Kansas. Mr. Tallman also discussed the impact of potential school district budget reductions. He said the governor has frozen education for this year and next year. He emphasized we need to talk to our schools and our community about what’s at risk academically -- getting our students to where they need to be to compete – and deeper cuts would result in unemployed educators as well. Mr. Tallman took questions from committee members on the timeline of potential cuts, about potential changes to capital outlay funds, the possibility of another lawsuit, and more. Mr. Tallman said every district should be aware of the potential severity of cuts and be preparing a potential plan.

The committee took a 10 minute break.

When the committee returned, Mr. Freeman talked about the Budget Steering Committee, which has five members, and its purpose. He encouraged committee members to email him at any time if they have questions or concerns. It must be an open and communicative process, he noted. All of the information is open to the public.

3. Committee Charge

- a. Mr. Freeman shared the committee charge: create a prioritized list of budgetary items for recommendation to the Board of Education to assist with the development of the 2009-2010 budget. He also noted that the ultimate decisions rest with the board, and that the board may need to take actions prior to the completion of the process because they’re time sensitive. In addition, the Interest Based Bargaining process may override some items. There are items on the proposed list, he said, that are increases we need to plan for, such as utilities.

4. Meeting Norms

- a. Keturah Austin led the group through meeting norms. The committee met in small groups to develop these norms. They are:
 - i. Begin and end on time.
 - ii. Make decisions that are in the best interest of students and learning.
 - iii. Disagreement is healthy to discussion – focus on the issues.
 - iv. Consider the district as a whole – don’t be territorial.
 - v. Have a positive attitude.
 - vi. Communicate with the community.

- vii. Know what we need to accomplish at each meeting – be prepared.
- viii. Encourage creative thinking – explore all options.
- b. Mrs. Austin then led the group in developing guidelines for consideration. The committee met in small groups to develop these guidelines for consideration. They are:
 - i. Minimize the impact on student achievement.
 - ii. Minimize the impact on student opportunities.
 - iii. Share the pain – balance the cuts. Everything is on the table.
 - iv. Try to maintain prior commitments to the community.
 - v. Minimize the impact on all employees.
 - vi. Minimize the impact on the community.
 - vii. Consider the short term and long term affects.

The committee took a five minute break.

5. District Background and History – Mr. Freeman introduced Mr. Evans.

- a. **District Goals** – Mr. Evans reviewed the Strategic Plan document and the Board of Education District Annual Goals/Targets document in giving the district overview. (Both of these documents are available in the notebook.) He noted the importance of communication and the critical role of this committee, as well as the challenge that is involved.
 - i. Student Achievement
 - ii. High Quality Instruction
 - iii. Secondary Schools
 - iv. Safety and Security
 - v. Fiscal Management
 - vi. Effective Use of Technology
- b. **Growth** – Mr. Freeman discussed increases in expenditures/achievement/enrollment and staff. He asked that everyone come prepared at the next meeting to discuss programs we’ve added in the last few years. Mr. Freeman also outlined what each of the budget group breakouts includes and the two budget areas we can’t consider and why -- capital budgets and transfers. Mr. Evans reminded the group that the spreadsheets and information that Mr. Freeman is reviewing is available for further review in the notebooks that they will receive shortly.
 - i. Enrollment
 - ii. Staff
 - iii. Programs
 - iv. Achievement
- c. **Spending**
 - i. Educational program
 - ii. Professional support program
 - iii. Leadership program
 - iv. Operations program
 - v. Equipment/technology/new facilities

6. Identification process for items to prioritize

- 7. **Notebooks** -- Committee notebooks were handed out – Mr. Freeman reviewed these with the group. Mr. Freeman then reviewed the “Items for Consideration

List” with the group. He developed this potential list by going through the budget line item by line item, discussing budget issues with other area school business managers, talking with the Kansas Association of School Boards and reviewing it with the Superintendent’s Advisory Team. He noted that many of the items cross over and affect many areas. He assigned homework to committee members – they need to review and understand the notebook and how it’s organized. If they have questions, they should email Mr. Freeman. If it’s a question that’s pertinent to the whole group, he’ll email the answer to everyone. At the next meeting, we’ll cover the background work we didn’t get to this time, and start looking at specific programs for consideration.

- 8. Next meeting date and time** – Mr. Freeman said the original thought for the committee was to meet approximately every three weeks. The 6 to 9 p.m. time frame seems to work well for everyone, as does Tuesday, as long as there isn’t a home basketball game. Feb. 3 will be the next meeting, then Feb. 24, March 10, March 31 and April 21. Mr. Freeman will email the dates out to the committee. He encouraged the committee to communicate with others. He adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.