
ACCOUNTS/ BUDGET PREPARATION

The annual budget is the financial plan for the effectuation of the educational plan for the district; its preparation is, therefore, one of the most important functions performed by the Board of Education. The budget shall be designed to carry out that plan in a thorough and efficient manner, to maintain school district facilities, and to honor continuing obligations of the district.

A proposed budget requires the critical analysis of every member of the Board during its preparation. The administration shall work with the Board to ensure Board members have a thorough understanding of the budget appropriations, budget revenue, the proposed educational program and the budget's impact to the local tax levy. The Board shall also provide for community input during the budget development process. Once the budget is adopted by the Board and approved by the County Superintendent, the Board members shall inform the community on the details of the budget.

The Board shall prepare and maintain a budget in which budgeted anticipated revenues and fund balances equal budgeted appropriations. Only those expenses reasonably required to provide a thorough and efficient educational program shall be approved for the budget. Surplus/fund balance remaining from the prior year's budget may be applied against taxes to be raised locally. The amount of surplus/fund balance appropriated into the budget will be in accordance with New Jersey Department of Education regulations.

The Board will submit its proposed budget to the County Superintendent, in the authorized budget format, as required by law. As a minimum, the budget shall be prepared on a fund basis and shall conform to the outline as contained in Appendix A of the Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts (Handbook 2R2) for New Jersey Public Schools. The Board may approve an expanded coding structure to provide additional information and allow more efficient management of district resources. Unreserved fund balance/surplus remaining from the previous school year may be appropriated when developing the next year's budget to reduce the amount of local taxes required to support the budget. Unreserved fund balance/surplus may also be appropriated during the school year for unforeseen and/or emergency expenditures.

In order to allow adequate time for the preparation and review of the proposed budget, the Board directs the Superintendent and School Business Administrator/Board Secretary to present to the Board all available information associated with the budget no later than required by the Department of Education. The budget should evolve primarily from the needs of the individual schools as expressed by the Building Principals and the district educational program as expressed by the central administrative staff and be compatible with approved district plans.

The budget shall be prepared in accordance with the annual budget statement and supporting documentation as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. The budget revenue and appropriations shall be itemized as required in the budget statement and shall be readily understandable, in which shall be shown:

1. The total expenditure for each item for the preceding school year, the amount appropriated for the current school year adjusted for transfers as of the date specified by the New Jersey Department of Education of the current school year, and the amount estimated to be necessary to be appropriated for the ensuing school year, indicated separately for each item as determined by the Commissioner.
2. The amount of the surplus account available at the beginning of the preceding school year, at the beginning of the current school year and the amount anticipated to be available for the ensuing school year.
3. The amount of revenue available for budget purposes for the preceding school year, the

amount available for the current school year as of the date specified by the New Jersey Department of Education of the current school year and the amount anticipated to be available for the ensuing school year in the categories designated by the New Jersey Department of Education and such other categories as determined by the Board.

- 4. Transfers between current expense and capital outlay for the preceding school year, the current school year as of the date specified by the New Jersey Department of Education of that year and transfers anticipated for the ensuing school year.

All budgetary and accounting systems used in the school district must be in accordance with double entry bookkeeping and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as required in N.J.A.C. 6:20-2A.1.

Date:
First Adoption: June 13, 2001
Review Date: January 18, 2009
Revision and Adoption: February 26, 2009
Review Date: December 29, 2010
Revision and Adoption: January 27, 2011

Legal References:

N.J.S.A. 18A:4-14	Uniform system of bookkeeping for school districts
N.J.S.A. 18A:17-8	Secretary; collection of tuition and auditing of accounts
N.J.S.A. 18A:17-35	Records of receipts and payments
N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8	Contents of budget; program budget system
N.J.S.A. 18A:34-2	Care and keeping of textbooks and accounting
N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.1 et seq.	Double Entry Bookkeeping and GAAP Accounting in Local School Districts
N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-8.1 et seq.	Annual Budget Development, Review and Approval

Handbook 2R2 – Financial Accounting for Local and State School Systems

Possible

Cross References:

3100	Budget planning, preparation and adoption
3326	Payment for goods and services
3450	Money in school buildings
3451	Petty cash funds
3453	School activity funds
3570	District records and reports
3571	Financial reports
3571.4	Audit