

JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU

10014 Crazy Horse Drive ♦ Juneau, Alaska 99801 ♦ 907-523-1770 ♦ Fax: 907-463-1720

BUDGET COMMITTEE

For FY 2015 Budget Recommendation

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Sally Saddler, President
Sean O'Brien, Vice President
Lisa Worl
Phyllis Carlson
Destiny Sargeant
Andi Story
Barbara Thurston

BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIR/CO-CHAIR:

Phyllis Carlson, Chair
Brian Holst, Co-Chair

COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Brian Holst
William E. Martin
Albert Rinehart

JSD BARGAINING UNITS:

Michael Heiman - JEA
Sue Mason - JESS

SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES:

Auke Bay Elementary School
Stephanie Buss

Gastineau Elementary School
Bruce Kato

Glacier Valley Elementary School
Vaughn Hammond

SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES:

Harborview Elementary School
Dionne Cadiente-Laiti

Mendenhall River Elementary School
Michelle Norman

Riverbend Elementary School
Tracy Gottschlich

Floyd Dryden Middle School
Jennifer Lindley

Dzantik'I Heeni Middle School
Stephanie Marnon

Juneau-Douglas High School
Mark Johnson

Thunder Mountain High School
Debbie Banazak

Yaakoosge Daakahidi High School and
Montessori Borealis Montessori Program
Stephanie Allison

Juneau Community Charter School
Maggie Ferguson

**To: Sally Saddler, President, Juneau School District Board of Education
Phyllis Carlson, Chair, Juneau School District Budget Committee
Members, Juneau Board of Education
Glenn Gelbrich, Superintendent, Juneau School District**
From: Community Members, Juneau School District
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2014
Re: JSD Budget Committee Recommendations

Introduction

This document is presented to the Juneau School District Board of Education and Administration on behalf of the members of the FY2015 JSD Budget Committee. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input during the budgeting process. Overall, the sentiment of the members of the community committee is that the resources to fund public education are not adequate to meet the diverse needs of the students in our community. We ask that the Juneau School Board continue to advocate to the State Legislature for a substantial increase to the Base Student Allocation or other means of increasing funding to public schools.

Overview

The Juneau School District (JSD) Board of Education (BoE) created a FY2015 Budget Committee to participate in the development of the school district budget. The Budget Committee was composed of 17 voting members, including a representative from each school site council, one teacher, one classified staff member and three at-large community members. Additionally, the members of the Board of Education served as non-voting members. The Budget Committee was co-chaired by a member of the BoE and a community member elected by the membership. The Budget Committee met seven times in the period of January 7 through February 25 to review the budget, hear public testimony, ask questions, identify issues, develop alternatives, discuss priorities and formulate recommendations. The Budget Committee was briefed on the JSD 2010-14 Strategic Plan as well as JSD FY2014 Board Budgeting Strategies, JSD BoE Dashboard Indicators of Success as well as the Equity Policy. At our second meeting, we were provided with a FY2015 Budget Proposal by the Administration (referred to as the "Administration Proposal"). At the fifth meeting, a revised draft Administration Proposal was provided to the Committee. We used the Administration Proposals as the basis for our budget deliberations.

The Budget Committee considered additions to the Administration Proposal as well as reductions or cuts. There were issues that the Budget Committee felt touched "policy" and would be more appropriately dealt with by the Board of Education themselves in future sessions. We have identified a few of these issues, though we did not make recommendations concerning actions to be taken. The Budget Committee believes that these Policy Issues warrant further attention by the BoE and Administration and request that these issues be addressed throughout this next year.

Recommendations of the Budget Committee

The Budget Committee recommends changes to the Administration Proposal revision presented on February 12, 2014. The Budget Committee assessed the Administration Proposal amongst its voting members in regards to "how well the budget delivers on the strategic plan" early in the

process. While no one felt that the budget was either “spot on” or that “major changes were needed”, the vast majority of members felt that some changes were needed.

The Budget Committee identified a series of potential additions and reductions to the \$90 million budget. These were prioritized through voting on each of the items. Voting members were given the option of voting “yes”, “no” or “neutral”. A “yes” vote had a weight of +1, a “neutral” vote had a weight of 0, and a “no” vote had a weight of -1. In our final meeting, votes were taken on proposals made by members of the Budget Committee. During this final meeting, all 17 voting members participated in the meeting. Just two items enjoyed complete agreement (+17): Raising Intermediate PTR by 1 instead of 3 (+\$100,000) and Postpone Secondary Math Curriculum (-\$400,000). For all other items, the relative score of each proposed addition or reduction was used to indicate relative levels of agreement. While a score of +1 or better demonstrated a positive endorsement, a low score also demonstrated that several community members were opposed to a particular item, or that the agreement was relatively weak. 9 votes in favor of an item represent a simple majority of support. This was considered the minimum threshold by the committee to be considered a “recommendation” (Eliminate Avid Program was at this minimum threshold). The specific recommendations for additions and cuts being put forward by the Budget Committee are ranked by relative agreement (a full listing of the items prioritized during the last meeting is attached).

After the results of the prioritization votes were tallied, the Budget Committee was asked to vote again on whether they felt that the recommendations of the Budget Committee produced a budget that better delivers on the strategic plan of the JSD than the Administration Proposal. While three members felt that the Administration Proposal was better, thirteen felt that the Budget Committee recommendations were preferable. One member abstained from this vote.

As can be seen from the recommended additions and cuts to the budget, the community committee has largely prioritized teacher engagement in the classroom over other items.

Recommended Additions

The Budget Committee recommends several additions to the Administration Proposal.

Tier One Additions: These suggested additions reflect a simple majority of nine affirmative votes of the 17 voting members, or greater.

1. Increase Intermediate PTR by only 1 instead of by 3 +\$100,000

Vote: 17 Pro, 0 Opposed, 0 Neutral (+17)

Justification: This was only one of two items that enjoyed full support by the committee. Keeping class size manageable is a high priority of the community members. The committee felt that increasing class size would negatively impact a teacher’s ability to meet the needs of each child and would result in a reduction of student achievement.

2. Increase Primary PTR by only 1 instead of by 3 +\$305,000

Vote: 16 Pro, 0 Opposed, 1 Neutral (+16)

Justification: See #1 above.

3. *Increase Middle School PTR by only 1 instead of by 3* +\$305,000

Vote: 16 Pro, 0 Opposed, 1 Neutral (+16)

Justification: See #1 above.

4. *Increase High School PTR by only 1 instead of by 3* +\$203,000

Vote: 16 Pro, 0 Opposed, 1 Neutral (+16)

Justification: See #1 above.

5. *Increase Primary PTR by 0 instead of by 1* +\$305,000

Vote: 12 Pro, 2 Opposed, 3 Neutral (+10)

Justification: The committee felt that PTR at the primary level (K-2) was especially sensitive to long-term success of students in the school district.

6. *Pay for Music Curriculum* +\$50,000

Vote: 10 Pro, 0 Opposed, 7 Neutral (+10)

Justification: The district is currently partnering with the Kennedy Center's Any Given Child program supporting arts education. The purchase of music curriculum would signify support of this initiative. In addition, the music curriculum refresh is several years past the 6-year refresh cycle.

7. *Add back 10 Nurses, and eliminate health aides* +\$162,000

Vote: 10 Pro, 0 Opposed, 7 Neutral (+10)

Justification: Returning to 1.0 FTE nurses at each school supports student achievement by providing medically trained personnel as part of the building team supporting students and classroom teachers. School nurses have the training necessary to recognize when a student's problems are medically related and know to whom they should be referred. School nurses support classroom teachers by being available to provide first-response medical assistance, rather than a classroom teacher who is untrained and whose primary responsibility is teaching. All of the duties performed by the school nurse support the district's goal of student achievement and serving each one, every one. The change in the nursing delivery program for the FY 2013-14 school year introduced 5 nurses and 5 health aides. To the budget committee's knowledge, no formal assessment has been conducted or is being conducted to determine the effectiveness of this approach. Based on anecdotal information, there are still concerns with regard to the ability of health aides to provide necessary medical support to students.

8. *Add Back Elementary Special Education Teachers* +\$557,000

Vote: 10 Pro, 0 Opposed, 7 Neutral (+10)

Justification: Early intervention is critical for student success. The committee felt that increasing the caseload for elementary special education teachers would be detrimental for elementary students and lead to a larger gap in meeting core requirements.

9. *Increase Intermediate PTR by 0 instead of by 1* +\$305,000

Vote: 10 Pro, 2 Opposed, 5 Neutral (+8)

Justification: A similar rationale was discussed related to intermediate PTR as for primary PTR. There is a recognition that special consideration be paid to elementary level PTR.

10. *Restore 1.0 Custodian*

+ \$66,523

Vote: 10 Pro, 2 Opposed, 5 Neutral (+8)

Justification: Custodian positions have been cut severely over the past few budget cycles. The custodians are already struggling with how to perform their expected job duties with fewer workers. It is questionable whether school custodians can meet school custodial needs and the expectations of the school community without additional support.

11. *Increase Middle School Activities*

+ \$30,000

Vote: 9 Pro, 2 Opposed, 6 Neutral (+9)

Justification: There is evidence that middle school-aged students that have too much "free time" on their hands, especially after school without adult supervision, tend to engage in more high-risk activities. Also, kids engaged with school activities tend to be more positive about school.

Tier Two Additions: These suggested additions have fewer than nine affirmative votes of the 17 voting members, but enjoy a net positive vote when you consider the neutral votes cast.

1. *Increase number of nurses in District to 8 from 5*

+ \$97,000

Vote: 8 Pro, 2 Opposed, 7 Neutral (+6)

Justification: While there is a recommendation above to fully restore having a nurse in each building, members of the committee wanted to emphasize their desire to increase the relative number of nurses. Currently, there are five nurses and five nurse's aides attending ten sites. This proposal would increase the number of nurses to 8 out of 10. Though there was some discussion about prioritizing the assignment of nurses to the elementary and middle schools, in the end the committee felt it better to leave the deployment to the discretion of the administration based on student needs.

2. *Add Back High School Special Education Teachers*

+ \$203,000

Vote: 7 Pro, 1 Opposed, 9 Neutral (+6)

Justification: With an understanding of the diversity of needs being met, the committee felt that as resources were available, better meeting the needs of special education students remains a high priority.

3. *Add-Back High School Activities*

+ \$140,000

Vote: 5 Pro, 3 Opposed, 9 Neutral (+2)

Justification: This issue was raised within the context of equity. Members of the committee feel that while all activities of the school are open to all students potentially, there are often significant financial commitments involved as well. There are concerns that as the resources supporting activities diminish, lower income students/families will participate less.

4. *Reserve 1.8 FTE for enrollment bulges*

+ \$184,466

Vote: 5 Pro, 4 Opposed, 8 Neutral (+1)

Justification: In FY13 there were schools that needed additional teacher allocations based on the PTR at the beginning of the school year, however, it was impossible to add teachers until the official student count. By reserving 1.8 FTE, the district will be in a better position to put teachers in place close to the beginning of the school year, resulting in less disruption to classrooms and schools such as when a teacher is added mid-semester. This type of disruption and transition is difficult for students and does not support their individual achievement, for some students a change in teachers mid-year will be a significant barrier to achievement.

Recommended Cuts:

The Budget Committee recommends five cuts to the Administration Proposal, for a reduction in cost of \$1,935,000. All five of these cuts were supported by a simple majority (nine) or better affirmative votes from the committee. The evaluation of these items recommended for cuts was prefaced by a discussion by the committee about the need to identify resources that could be used to offset the considerable number of high priority additions, especially related to mitigating the PTR increases identified.

1. *Postpone secondary math curriculum* -\$400,000

Vote: 17 Pro, 0 Opposed, 0 Neutral (+17)

Justification: The Budget Committee supports the recommendation made by the Secondary Math Curriculum Committee to postpone the purchase of secondary math curriculum material until next year to allow for more review of proposed material and adoption of material consistent with new standards.

2. *Reduce IT refresh cycle* -\$250,000

Vote: 15 Pro, 2 Opposed, 0 Neutral (+13)

Justification: The Administration proposed an increase to the current refresh cycle by \$250,000. There was significant support from the committee to delay this increase given the current economic climate.

3. *Postpone new Elementary Language Arts Curriculum Material* - \$500,000

Vote: 11 Pro, 4 Opposed, 2 Neutral (+7)

Justification: The Budget Committee recommends postponing purchase of new Elementary Language Arts curriculum material for one year for a number of reasons, including the following:

- One more year is necessary to allow the curriculum committee and classroom teachers to review the proposed material and develop a thorough implementation plan.
- Low support by classroom teachers for any of the current programs being evaluated could result in too low district-wide implementation and fidelity to impact student achievement.
- The high cost of the material would result in an increase to the PTR. Based on public testimony by numerous parents and teachers, it is felt that increased PTR would negatively impact student achievement compared to the potential benefits of adopting district-wide curriculum material.
- There was concern that the curriculum material currently being reviewed targets a limited range of abilities and may not serve students reading at a high or low level.

The budget committee did discuss and generally supports the use of capital funds, if they become available, to purchase curriculum material recommended by the curriculum committee.

4. *Reduce Instructional Coaches from 6 to 2* -\$400,000

Vote: 11 Pro, 5 Opposed, 1 Neutral (+6)

Justification: Several members of the committee felt that some of these coaches, recognized for their teaching talent, would better serve students by being in the classroom. A proposal to completely eliminate instructional coaches received 0 affirmative votes and 10 negative votes. It is the intent of the committee to keep instructional coaches but to spread the resource over multiple schools.

5. *Eliminate AVID Program* -\$385,000

Vote: 9 Pro, 6 Opposed, 2 Neutral (+3)

Justification: While there was acknowledgement that this program is beneficial for the 300+ students enrolled, the cost per student is high. Nearly all of the Dzik'it'i Heeni Middle School teachers have had the AVID training and currently use the program in their classrooms. It was suggested in the committee that the main objectives of the program could be pursued under a different name as a district-wide effort.

Relative Ranking of each Addition/Cut to the budget based on the net rank of each item.

The below chart reflects simply the affirmative votes for an item less the votes against each item, ignoring the neutral votes. The below charts demonstrates the overall resource implications, in order of priority, of how financial resources could be allocated. With a modest increase in funding from the State of Alaska, it is clear that most of the desires of the budget committee could be realized and some cuts could, potentially, be avoided.

Rank	Description	Cuts	Additions	Net Increase (Decrease) on Budget
17	Postpone secondary math curriculum	\$400,000	\$0	(\$400,000)
17	Intermediate PTR by 1 instead of 3	\$0	\$100,000	(\$300,000)
16	Primary PTR by 1 instead of 3	\$0	\$305,000	\$5,000
16	Middle PTR by 1 instead of 3	\$0	\$305,000	\$310,000
16	High School PTR by 1 instead of 3	\$0	\$203,000	\$513,000
13	Reduce IT refresh cycle	\$250,000		\$263,000
10	Primary PTR by 0 instead of 1	\$0	\$305,000	\$568,000
10	Pay for music curriculum	\$0	\$50,000	\$618,000
10	10 nurses, no health aides*	\$0	\$162,000	\$780,000
9	Restore Elementary Special Education	\$0	\$557,000	\$1,337,000

	Teachers			
8	Intermediate PTR by 0 instead of 1	\$0	\$305,000	\$1,642,000
8	Restore 1.0 Custodian	\$0	\$66,523	\$1,708,523
7	Postpone new ELA curriculum	\$500,000		\$1,208,523
7	Increase Middle school activities	\$0	\$30,000	\$1,238,523
6	Reduce instructional coaches (6 to 2)	\$400,000		\$838,523
6	8 Nurses & 2 health aides (\$97,000)*	\$0	\$0	\$838,523
6	Restore High School Special Education Teachers	\$0	\$203,000	\$1,041,523
3	Eliminate AVID program	\$385,000		\$656,523
2	High School activities	\$0	\$140,000	\$796,523
1	Restore 1.8 bulge positions	\$0	\$184,466	\$980,989

Policy Issues:

Through the course of our discussions regarding the FY2015 Budget, we identified several issues that we believe warrant further consideration by the JSD BoE:

1. Use of Instructional Coaches: Acknowledging that the needs of each school are quite different, the committee discussed allowing each site determine the best use of the instructional coach position. Would that increase buy-in and/or result in a more efficient allocation of resources?
2. Biomass as an alternative to heating: The Ketchikan and Haines School Districts are finding/projecting savings by heating some of their facilities with woody biomass. JSD should consider alternatives to heating with oil.
3. School/Program consolidation: During the budget committee cycle, the committee evaluates line item additions and subtractions to the previous year's budget. The committee discussed the need to look at larger, programmatic changes that would have a greater impact on budget but would need to be addressed by the board over a longer evaluation time. It is our recommendation that the board begins evaluating areas of potential saving including but not limited to school or program consolidation.
4. Testing: Testing has a role within the education system. Have we found the right balance between teaching and assessing?
5. Curriculum refresh cycles: Just like technology refresh cycles, the school board should consider a multi-year plan to ensure that curriculum is appropriate, chosen with input from staff and the community, and that investments are made in such a way that the costs for refreshing curriculum remain reasonable.

6. Equity of Special Programs: When the district talks of 'Each One, Every One' there should be no barriers to access. This should be true of any class or initiative funded with public dollars.

Annex One: Prioritization of Proposed Changes to the 2015 Budget (Full List of Additions/Cuts/Revenue Considered at Last Meeting)

Priorization of Proposed Changes to the 2014/15 Budget

JSD Budget Committee 2014/03/04

Budget Increases (Additions)			Budget Decreases (Cuts)		
Description	Amount of Increase	Cumulative Additions	Description	Amount of Decrease	Cumulative Cuts
1 Intermediate PTR by 1 instead of 3 Vote: 17 Pro 0 Opposed 0 Neutral +17	\$100,000	\$100,000	1 Postpone secondary math curriculum Vote: 17 Pro 0 Opposed 0 Neutral +17	\$400,000	\$400,000
2 Primary PTR by 1 instead of 3 Vote: 16 Pro 0 Opposed 1 Neutral +16	\$305,000	\$405,000	2 Reduce IT refresh cycle Vote: 15 Pro 2 Opposed 0 Neutral +13	\$250,000	\$650,000
3 Middle PTR by 1 instead of 3 Vote: 16 Pro 0 Opposed 1 Neutral +16	\$305,000	\$710,000	3 Postpone new ELA curriculum Vote: 11 Pro 4 Opposed 2 Neutral +7	\$500,000	\$1,150,000
4 High School PTR by 1 instead of 3 Vote: 16 Pro 0 Opposed 1 Neutral +16	\$203,000	\$913,000	4 Reduce instructional coaches (6 to 2) Vote: 11 Pro 5 Opposed 1 Neutral +6	\$400,000	\$1,550,000
5 Primary PTR by 0 instead of 1 Vote: 12 Pro 2 Opposed 3 Neutral +10	\$305,000	\$1,218,000	5 Eliminate AVID program Vote: 9 Pro 6 Opposed 2 Neutral +3	\$385,000	\$1,935,000
6 Pay for music curriculum Vote: 10 Pro 0 Opposed 7 Neutral +10	\$50,000	\$1,268,000	6 Reduce prof development travel Vote: 4 Pro 4 Opposed 9 Neutral 0	\$30,000	\$1,965,000
7 10 nurses, no health aides Vote: 10 Pro 0 Opposed 7 Neutral +10	\$162,000	\$1,430,000	7 Eliminate MAP testing Vote: 7 Pro 7 Opposed 3 Neutral 0	\$53,000	\$2,018,000
8 Elementary spec ed teachers Vote: 10 Pro 1 Opposed 6 Neutral +9	\$557,000	\$1,987,000	8 Reduce office assistants Vote: 2 Pro 5 Opposed 10 Neutral -3	\$86,000	\$2,104,000
9 Intermediate PTR by 0 instead of 1 Vote: 10 Pro 2 Opposed 5 Neutral +8	\$305,000	\$2,292,000	9 Eliminate instructional coaches (2 to 0) Vote: 0 Pro 10 Opposed 7 Neutral -10	\$200,000	\$2,304,000
10 Restore 1.0 Custodian Vote: 10 Pro 2 Opposed 5 Neutral +8	\$66,523	\$2,358,523			
11 Increase Middle school activities Vote: 9 Pro 2 Opposed 6 Neutral +7	\$30,000	\$2,388,523			
12 HS spec ed teachers Vote: 7 Pro 1 Opposed 9 Neutral +6	\$203,000	\$2,591,523			
13 8 Nurses & 2 health aides Vote: 8 Pro 2 Opposed 7 Neutral +6	\$97,000	\$2,688,523			
14 High School activities Vote: 5 Pro 3 Opposed 9 Neutral +2	\$140,000	\$2,828,523			
15 Restore 1.8 bulge positions	\$184,466	\$3,012,989			

