

Q&As – BAC

Members of the Budget Advisory Committee, following the inaugural BAC meeting Thursday, October 16, submitted the following questions; members are encouraged to submit any questions about the budgetary process and the replies will continually add to the library of information shared by the BAC.

1. “I wonder when working together if it isn't productive to evaluate all parts at once, even the LCAP/LCFF parts. I know these are considered "designated" but it seemed there were some grey areas. Also the fact that when you're budgeting something items can have a dual purpose. Working closely with LCAP/LCFF for future budgets would it give the BAC a better picture and understanding and thus, ability to give more effective thoughts and input?”

ESD: *We agree with the above. LCFF budget development must align with the LCAP and we commit to ensuring that is the case.*

2. “Is there a way to see spending detailed by school or to track things like energy inefficient schools or schools with high maintenance costs (so you could evaluate if it would be more cost effective to put in a permanent fix than constant maintenance)?”

ESD: *We are working closely with PG&E to monitor the energy usage per student by schools. We do use the report to determine energy saving projects. Even with a “permanent fix “ regular maintenance still needs to be in-place to avoid future costly replacements. If the BAC would like some in-depth study of energy/utility costs, we can agendaize that.*

3. “When we purchase items like curriculum materials, if they are not from funding under the LCAP is there a measurement in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the purchase and reflect if such a purchase should be made in the future or an alternative method tried? Would the BAC contemplate the funding of such materials in the future?” (Note: we had multiple questions on this topic which we hope can be cumulatively addressed below)

ESD: *The Instruction Department oversees the purchase of instructional materials. For district-wide instructional materials bound by Williams Act compliance, our practice is to convene a group of teachers to identify appropriate materials and pilot those materials before a purchase decision is made. School sites have the flexibility to utilize site funds (school improvement, PTA, etc.) to purchase supplemental materials to provide additional identified student/teacher support.*

*With regard to this year's purchase of **Investigations** materials...Because comprehensive Common Core math curricular materials were not available for the start of the 2014-2015 school year, the Instruction Department felt that it was important to provide teachers with some type of Common Core aligned*

supplemental materials. It was determined that **Investigations** could support the efforts of teachers to provide a rich common core experience for all students.

Textbooks and instructional materials are generally paid for with Lottery funds. The BAC will monitor the development and implementation of the budget and make appropriate policy-level recommendations for the Superintendent's consideration. For example, the BAC may recommend that a larger portion of the overall budget be allocated to technology or instructional materials, but the group will not make recommendations at a granular level.

4. "What is the rationale for the current protocol for taking title of and insuring assets financed by parent organizations? It is my understanding that if assets (in this case, technology assets) are funded by a parent organization, the district places the purchase order and the parent organization "donates" the money to pay the PO to the District. Is this description accurate? If the District then owns the asset (not the school or the parent organization), why does the District require the school or parent organization to pay an insurance deductible if the item is stolen? Why wouldn't responsibility for the deductible lie with the asset owner, who can control the amount of the deductible by adjusting insurance coverage?"

ESD: *Items donated by any organization become the District's property, and are covered under the District's property & liability insurance. The District is a member of South Bay Area Schools Insurance Authority (SBASIA) for property and liability insurance coverage. SBASIA is a self-insured authority that includes 12 other districts in Santa Clara County. The deductible amount is set by the SBASIA.*

The issue of technology replacement due to loss, theft, or damage has proven to be complex. District practice has been to hold sites accountable for loss, theft, or damage with the reasoning that they are the ones who have control over the security of the device. This responsibility, however, places an unexpected financial burden on the sites and when they have taken every precaution to secure the devices according to District Standard, it feels unfair.

*The District has recently set aside funds to establish a **Technology Replacement Fund**. This fund is used to replace lost/stolen/damaged devices at all sites/departments. Provided sites have taken proper precaution to secure the devices, the District will either replace or share the cost of replacement.*

5. "How much money is in the District budget for safety and security? How is that money spent? I see relatively small budget line items for "Safety Prog", "Vandalism" and "Security", but am not sure what these accounts cover. It is

becoming apparent that schools are a target for technology thieves. It is my understanding that the District has very little in the way of theft-deterrent equipment. But if every deductible is \$10,000, it doesn't take long for the ROI on security equipment to become compelling. Of course, there is no ROI argument if the parent organization picks up the cost for every deductible, but that disconnect is addressed above."

ESD: Safety Program (9836) covers employee and student safety (some fencing/ergonomic furniture/step ladders, etc.). **Vandalism** covers repairs of broken glass and damage to playground equipment, etc. **Security** covers costs associated with security patrols. **Safe Schools** covers the YWCA Child Abuse Prevention Program.

6. "Which expense line items in the 2014-15 budget make up the Site Allocations?"

ESD: A portion of the following program numbers are provided directly to school sites: 1170, 1175, 1250, 1590, 9451, 9485.

7. "How are the General Site Budget numbers by school derived?"

ESD: Funds are allocated to school sites based on enrollment. Program 1590, Supplemental – School is allocated according to each school's unduplicated student count (free and reduced lunch students, English learners, foster students)

8. How are the numbers in the remaining columns derived?

ESD: Future years' budget amounts are based on past program history and adjusted by special needs. An example of this would be election costs, which do not occur every year. In the case of categorical programs and the Supplemental Budget (1590, 1591, 1593, 1594, 1595, and 1596) the budgeted expenditures equal the budgeted revenue as it is assumed that all monies will be spent in the year they are allocated.