

Our Path to First Choice No. 27

Everyone,

Here is Path Note No. 27.

Our Path Topic

This week is a follow up to last week's budget process topic.

As far as our employees, one complaint that arose from a Teacher Advisory meeting was the fact that something is requested in a budget, but never hear whether the item was cut, delayed or received until you figure out in August. Positions other than teachers may find the answers out before, but still often delayed until after the budget is approved.

Here's how the budget process goes at the local level. Administration provides the Board and/or Board Budget Committee with monthly reports/presentations that update the budget progress. It includes additional expenses and revenues. The problem with revenues is that most of them are guesses. We really don't always know what our real estate transfer revenue will be for the following year, because we have no crystal ball to tell us how many properties will be sold in the District next year. Nevertheless, we need to make an educated guess that is close to what the year was and what we think the economy might be impacting. The expenses for health care are a guess, too, but again we can look at our history and get an idea. We don't know how many kids with IEPs will enter the District next year, so that can impact our budget expenses. Typically, you want to leave a little wiggle room so not to under budget and use up your fund balances. That's like dipping into your reserves or rainy day funds.

Principals are given the go ahead to start with their end to create the building budget. You have classroom expenses, department expenses, and school expenses—academic or support. After budget requests are completed, the principal will look to possibly eliminating things that may be cut to keep the budget within an amount the Clayton Administration sets, and maybe even the Board. The budget is submitted to Clayton for review and then it goes to the Budget Committee. Sometimes boards like to provide a number or dollar figure for administration to stay within, and sometimes they will ask for a list of possible cuts, and sometimes they may go line item by line item. The latter method is not the best method. Organizationally, it is better to have a priority list and the Board directs the administration to stay within an amount by going through a process that includes various committees that may make recommendations for the priority list.

The biggest difficulties a district faces with budgeting are not knowing what the State budget will fund and taxing. The State budget is not on a hard deadline of June 30 as school budgets. By law, school budgets must be submitted to the State no later than June 30 each year. Our fiscal year is July 1 to June 30. The State is usually lingers long after the school budgets are submitted. It is not easy to determine a budget when you have no definite numbers or subsidies from the State when determining your budget. The other challenge is taxing. School boards have to try to maintain and improve schools on a very limited taxing ability; if they want to tax at all.

As WASD goes through the process this year, please know your school board and administrators do want everyone to have what is needed, but their hands are tied to a limit. Unfortunately, if school boards raise taxes too much, sometimes it could have an adverse effect at the voting polls the next time they run for office. In some states, the school board does not have taxing authority, so the board

focuses on education. Those states have commissioners that raise the taxes and assign a certain amount to the schools.

Hopefully this update gave you a little bit of an insight to how district budget. If there are still questions, maybe this can be another update in the future.

Review for You

- Do you remember why the year 2036 is so important to us that work for schools?

Events

- Reminder—March 30th, schools are closed for Good Friday.
- Shrek the Musical starts Friday, March 16th, and goes through Sunday the 18th.
- Kindergarten Registration starts the week of the 19th.

Piece of the Puzzle

- This week's Piece of the Puzzle is Cindy Wagaman, one of our team members at the middle school. Cindy was nominated because of her kindness at an event. She was very welcoming to everyone coming in to the building. About 5 minutes after people arrived, she approached an older gentleman and gave him a pretty nice chair to sit in. He didn't appear to ask for one, but it was needed. It was likely Mr. Taylor's chair. Another administrator told her that was nice of her and she said I could tell he needed something like that. It was just an act of kindness that should be shared. If you see Cindy, congratulate her for being WASD's Piece of the Puzzle! With Cindy's thoughtfulness, she has inspired this week's Final Thoughts.

Review Answers

- A child born today will likely graduate in 2036. With that in mind, we must plan how we will provide that child with the skills he/she will need to be successful in their life. This child could easily live into the 22nd Century.

Final Thoughts

- *A goal without a plan is just a wish*—Antoine de Saint-Exupery
- *In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.*—Dwight D. Eisenhower
- *By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail*—Benjamin Franklin
- *It takes a much energy to wish as it does to plan.*—Eleanor Roosevelt
- *Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans*—Peter F. Drucker
- *A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow*—George S. Patton
- *Always plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the arc*—Richard Cushing

Have a great rest of the week. Hang in there as we trek through winter. Take care!
Tod

