

Budget Review

DSIT - District School Improvement Team

Background - Colorado school districts must prepare annual operating and capital budgets and submit them to their governing Board of Education for approval. The dire condition of the state budget is forcing school districts across Colorado to cut budgets substantially. Adams 12 Five Star Schools had to cut \$25.5 million from its budget for 2011-2012. This is on top of the already \$38 million cut from the budget over the past five years. Our Superintendent, Chris Gdowski, has created a budget-cut process that includes a very broad spectrum of district constituents to assure the best possible outcome given the difficult circumstances we are in.

DSIT's Role - DSIT maintains a standing Budget Review Committee currently led by DSIT Past-President Priscilla Mancosky. The Budget Review Committee actively participates in the budget development process for the Adams 12 Five Star Schools district. Individual committee members review and periodically give feedback on the budget and then collectively author a report to the Superintendent and Board of Education of their findings.

Expectations for Volunteers - Volunteers are trained in the district budgeting process including a thorough review of the most recent year's budget. They then meet periodically to review progress on the following year's budget and provide feedback to the Superintendent and his staff. Two DSIT meetings each year are dedicated to providing an update on the budget to the general membership. These meetings are planned by the Budget Review Committee to be as interactive as possible, allowing a wider diversity of parents and community members to have a forum for input. The Budget Review Committee also collaborates with district faculty and staff to create, disseminate and review public surveys regarding the budget. Due to the sensitive nature of the budget cutting process, many budget development sessions are closed to all except the Superintendent and his immediate staff. Despite this unfortunate circumstance, the DSIT Budget Review Committee still has ample opportunity to assure that the prerogative of district parents and community members is well represented as the budget is developed. The Budget Review Committee meets periodically throughout the academic year. Volunteers are expected to:

- Devote 5-10 hours to learn the district budgeting process and become familiar with the most recent district budget
- Attend 5-7 meetings during the academic year (1-2 hours in length each)
- Devote 10-20 hours during the academic year to collaboration (both electronic and in person) with faculty, administrators, parents and community members on budget development matters.
- Attend monthly DSIT meetings to network with others regarding budget development
- Assist in preparation of the end-of-year Budget Review Committee report

How to Get Involved - If you have a 'knack for numbers' and a passion for helping assure that the Adams 12 Five Star Schools district spends its funds in a way that promotes excellence in education, the Budget Review Committee would be delighted to have you as a member. Sign up at any DSIT Meeting or contact Priscilla Mancosky at PrisMancosky@aol.com.