



BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING of the Board of Education

Thursday, April 30, 2026 6:30 PM

Oakdale Middle School Room 230
815 S. Oakdale Ave.
Medford, OR 97501

Budget Committee members present: Ilex Brandenberger, Lilia Caballero, Christy Clark, Kendell Ferguson, Erik Johnsen, Brooke Lazzari, Lupe Murillo, Amanda Olson, Sunny Spicer, Casey Stine, Michael Williams, and Angela Zbikowski
Member absent: Sandra LaNier McHenry

A video recording of the Board meeting can be found on the district website at [this link](#). The slide presentation can be viewed by clicking on Extras listed next to the meeting at [this link](#).

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Roll Call

Budget Committee Chair for the 2025-26 Budget Lupe Murillo called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM, led the pledge of allegiance, and confirmed a quorum through roll call.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Murillo led a round of introductions.

3. Election of Budget Committee Chair

Murillo opened the floor for nomination of Budget Committee Chair for the 2026-27 Budget.

**Kendell Ferguson nominated Amanda Olson for Budget Committee Chair.
Voice Vote: ALL AYES**

Amanda Olson was elected as Budget Committee Chair unanimously.

4. Election of Budget Committee Vice Chair

Newly elected Budget Committee Chair Olson opened the floor for nomination of Budget Committee Vice Chair for the 2026-27 Budget.

**Erik Johnsen nominated Ilex Brandenberger for Budget Committee Vice Chair.
Voice Vote: ALL AYES**

Ilex Brandenberger was elected as Budget Committee Vice Chair unanimously.

5. Superintendent's Budget Message

Superintendent Jeanne Grazioli welcomed and thanked committee members for their service, and recognized the business services team for preparing the proposed budget. She outlined district priorities—strengthening relationships, optimizing curriculum and instruction, expanding student opportunities, supporting safe and inclusive schools, and maintaining financial stability—along with key initiatives supporting those goals. She also shared strategic planning outcomes, including a new district vision and identified three main areas of focus; building trust and relationships, closing achievement gaps, and ensuring long-term financial sustainability. She concluded by directing the committee to her message in the proposed budget for an overview of the financial outlook, challenges, and the growing needs of students with disabilities.

6. FY2026-2027 Proposed Budget & Presentation

Assistant Superintendent of Operations Brad Earl opened the proposed budget presentation by outlining the challenging financial landscape at the local, state, and national levels. He reflected on past funding downturns following the 2008 financial crisis, subsequent investments such as Measure 98, and more recent shifts driven by the pandemic and declining birth rates. He noted that the district is entering another period of constrained resources requiring difficult decisions, and expressed appreciation for the finance team and principals for their collaborative work beginning in November.

Finance Controller John Petach presented an overview of the proposed budget, beginning with key themes of declining enrollment, increasing financial pressures, and the need to plan for a smaller, more sustainable district. He provided background on Oregon's public school funding model, including the State School Fund, current service level, and broader state and federal budget pressures.

The presentation outlined statewide and national trends impacting K–12 education, including demographic shifts, declining birth rates, rising pension and healthcare costs, and examples of budget reductions and school closures in other districts. Additional context was shared regarding Oregon-specific challenges such as funding limitations, special education cost pressures, and legislative and policy considerations.

The meeting was recessed for 10 minutes.

District-specific information included enrollment trends and long-term projections, shifts in student demographics, and the financial and operational impact of declining enrollment. Key cost drivers were reviewed, including special education growth, staffing, and PERS obligations.

The presentation concluded with an overview of the district's budget assumptions, staffing adjustments, and a summary of revenues, expenditures, and projected deficit spending for the 2026–27 budget.

Budget Committee members asked questions regarding staffing reductions and grant funding. Clarification was provided that staff reductions are primarily achieved through attrition, retirements, and vacant positions, and that the district has been successful in securing seismic upgrade grants due to its proactive application efforts.

7. Budget Committee Next Steps

Earl reviewed the layout of the budget book, noting that sections are color-coded by fund, include narratives on each page, and are supported by a glossary of terms in the appendix.

Budget Committee members asked about the availability of the one-page ED-1 synthesis form and requested additional information on the transfer of the Jackson Detention Education Program to Southern Oregon ESD. Staff indicated the draft ED-1 form would be shared and explained that the program transfer, including associated grants and staffing, is expected to be cost-neutral and better aligned as a regional service.

Earl outlined the next steps, emphasizing the importance of gathering community input. He noted that an opportunity for citizen comment will be provided at the next meeting. Budget committee members were encouraged to contact staff directly with any questions and to submit questions via email by May 8; responses will be compiled and shared with the full committee.

Earl also reiterated that, while financial conditions remain challenging, he is encouraged by the district's relative stability when compared to the local university and other districts across the state.

8. Announcements

Chair Olson announced the next Budget Committee meeting on May 14 at 6:00 PM.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the Budget Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.