

Minutes

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Presiding Officer Jeff Pelger called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and a roll check confirmed that a quorum was present. Ms. Milligan joined the meeting at 6:37 PM.

The following members were present:

Russell Hatch
Rebecca Dyson
Jordan Rooklyn
Dan Ruby
Deltra Ferguson

Kristin Milligan (via Zoom, then in-person)
Dave Dotterer
Serena Robinson
Jeff Pelger
Ann Gaffney (via Zoom)

Absent: none

District Administrators present:

Superintendent Joseph Hattrick
Director of Business Services Sherry Ely

2. Discuss Committee Questions

Director of Business Services Sherry Ely responded to questions submitted by Budget Committee members following the first meeting. Discussion focused primarily on the district's projected ending fund balances, staffing levels, associated payroll costs, and maintaining a status quo budget while continuing financial stabilization efforts.

Committee members asked several questions regarding the projected ending fund balances for 2025–26 and 2026–27, including concerns about the projected decline in reserves in 2026–27 despite recent financial improvement. Director Ely explained that the district is intentionally using a conservative budgeting approach to ensure adequate cash flow and avoid overcommitting expenditures. She stated that increasing the projected ending fund balance would require additional expenditure reductions of more than \$1.2 million, likely resulting in significant staffing reductions. Director Ely noted that while the district projects a lower ending fund balance in 2026–27, actual ending balances may ultimately come in higher as financial monitoring and forecasting continue to improve. Discussion also highlighted the district's progress in improving its ending fund balance over the past two years while continuing to recover from prior financial challenges.

Questions were also raised regarding projected staffing increases despite declining enrollment. Director Ely explained that the increases primarily reflect educational assistant and maintenance positions rather than classroom teaching staff. She noted that the district continues to closely monitor classroom student-to-staff ratios while addressing longstanding understaffing in maintenance and operational support roles.

In response to questions regarding associated payroll costs, Director Ely explained that comparisons with other agencies are difficult due to differences in employee composition, benefit structures, retirement obligations, and negotiated compensation agreements. She stated that ASD's higher associated payroll costs are largely driven by healthcare expenses, including the transition from a self-insured insurance model to OEBC, as well as PERS obligations and increased 403(b) matching contributions.

Director Ely also provided a YAAL funding breakdown by school at the request of a committee member.

Further discussion focused on maintaining a status quo budget for 2026–27 while balancing fiscal responsibility with providing adequate staffing and operational support for schools. Committee members and staff also discussed unfunded mandates and the need for continued advocacy for increased state education funding.

Additional discussion occurred regarding the district's transition to OEBB insurance coverage. Staff explained that the district must maintain a reserve fund through September 30, 2026, to cover remaining claims associated with the current self-insured insurance plan.

It was reiterated throughout the discussion that the proposed budget is intended to stabilize district operations while the district continues its broader transformation and long-term financial sustainability efforts.

3. **Receive Public Comment** – None

4. **Approval of Proposed Budget**

Presiding Officer Pelger called for a motion to approve the proposed 2026-2027 budget.

❖ **Motion:** Mr. Dotterer moved to approve the 2026-2027 Budget as expressed in Resolution No. 2025-26 B-4 Approving the 2026-2027 Budget. Ms. Robinson seconded the motion. Roll call confirmed that the motion carried by unanimous vote of the budget committee.

In Favor: Milligan, Rooklyn, Pelger, Ruby, Gaffney, Hatch, Robinson, Ferguson, Dotterer, Dyson

Opposed: None

Result: The motion carried by unanimous vote of the 10 members.

5. **Preview Next Steps**

Once the budget committee has approved the budget, its work is finished. The district will then publish a summary of the budget (Form ED1) in the local newspaper, announcing the Budget Hearing on June 11 2026, at 6:30 PM. A resolution to approve the budget and allocate appropriations will be presented to the school board for adoption during the regular session board meeting on June 11, 2026.

6. **Adjourn**

Mr. Dotterer moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 pm, and Ms. Rooklyn seconded. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Submitted by:
Holly Rosser, Board Secretary

Date for board Approval: June 11, 2026