

Fiscal Policies

1. General Fund Ending Fund Balance

The Corvallis School District 509J School Board works to ensure that the district delivers the best educational program available within the constraint of well-managed resources. To offer such a program the Board recognizes the importance of a budget that delivers sustainable levels of instruction, staffing, number of instructional days and maintenance of facilities.

The State of Oregon has a volatile tax structure which results in unstable levels of school funding. This instability can cause a significant variance in the level of programs school districts are able to financially support. Until such time that the state creates a stable funding system that will see Oregon schools through recessionary periods, the Board directs the superintendent to propose a budget that will allow for sustainability over a five-year period.

The Board recognizes its responsibility to establish an ending fund balance in an amount sufficient to:

- a. Allow the district to deliver a sustainable level of programs through anticipated recessionary periods;
- b. Protect the district from unnecessary borrowing in order to meet cash-flow needs;
- c. Provide prudent reserves to meet unexpected emergencies and protect against catastrophic events;
- d. Meet the uncertainties of state and federal funding; and
- e. Help ensure a district credit rating that would qualify the district for lower interest costs and greater marketability of bonds that may be necessary in the construction and renovation of school facilities.

Consequently, the Board directs the superintendent to include in the annual proposed budget designations to ensure an ending fund balance as follows:

- a. Appropriated Contingency Reserve of two and a half percent (2.5%) of the General Fund total resources net of the beginning fund balance;
- b. Appropriated Rainy Day Reserve of five percent (5.0%) of the General Fund total resources net of beginning fund balance;
- c. Unappropriated Ending Fund Balance of five percent (5.0%) of the General Fund total resources net of the beginning fund balance; and
- d. Targeted Reserves Ending Fund Balance as may be allocated and designated for specified purposes such as a reserve to offset future PERS employer contribution rate increases, a reserve to offset a 50/50 biennial State School Fund allocation, or a reserve for equipment replacements.

2. Use and Replenishment of Reserves

- a. Appropriated Contingency Reserve may be used for unanticipated expenditures or for emergencies.
- b. Appropriated Rainy Day Reserve funds may be used to address adverse economic conditions which negatively affect the district's revenues and ability to meet the needs of students
- c. Unappropriated Ending Fund Balance is unavailable for expenditures as not appropriated.
- d. Targeted Reserves Ending Fund Balance may be used for specified purposes as designated.

In the event the Board authorizes use of reserves, the superintendent shall propose a plan to restore budget sustainability and replenish reserves within three years of use. At least fifty percent (50%) of unanticipated revenues, exclusive of State School Fund grant or other non-General Fund revenue, shall be dedicated to replenish reserves to target levels.

3. Notice of Shortfall

Should the projected ending fund balance for the current and ensuing fiscal year fall below target levels, the superintendent will notify the Board and propose a corrective plan of action to prevent or limit any further erosion of the fund balance, including measures to increase balances to target levels if possible. The plan will be submitted to the Board for consideration and action.

4. Definition of a Balanced Budget

The budget should be structurally balanced, where recurring revenues equal or exceed recurring expenditures. The annual proposed budget presentation will identify how recurring revenues are aligned with or not aligned with recurring expenditures.

5. One-Time Nonrecurring Revenues

One-time resources should be used for one-time expenditures that will not create a continuing obligation for the district or an unsustainable level of expenditures and should not be expended before revenues are received.

6. Financial Reports

The Board will receive regular financial reports that include estimates of expenditures for the district's various funds in comparison to budget appropriations, actual receipts in comparison to budget estimates and provide an update on the district's overall financial condition. Reports will keep the Board informed of significant changes impacting the district's overall financial condition due to changes such as state funding, demographics or other key factors. Supplementary reports will be furnished as needed or upon request by the Board or superintendent.

7. Revenue Forecasting

All revenue forecasts shall be based on conservative assumptions, though reflective of the latest, best information available. Revenue estimates shall be made through an objective, analytical process. The district will not include revenue in budget preparation that cannot be verified with documentation of its source and amount. Key assumptions will be presented in the budget document.

8. Year End Budget Surplus

To encourage responsible expenditure of budgets, fifty percent (50%) of unused budget appropriations for the General Fund will be made available to schools or departments in the following year, or an alternative rate as recommended by the superintendent in the proposed budget document and as adopted by the Board. The Board believes that the current budget allocations should benefit primarily current year students.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 332.107](#)