

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE (SBRC)

WHO IS THE SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE (SBRC)

Membership

Director, Department of Education (serves as chair) – Judy Jeffrey
Director, Department of Management (serves as secretary) – Cynthia Eisenhauer
Three public members, appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate, for three-year staggering terms – Connie Cook, Wayne Drexler, Clark Yeager

Assistance

Liaison required by Code within the Department of Education.
Su McCurdy, Administrative Consultant, Liaison to the SBRC.

Advisors

Lee Tack, Department of Education
Lisa Oakley, Department of Management

WHAT CAN THEY DO?

Responsibilities and Authority

- Only authority is that granted to the SBRC by Code.
- Authority to approve, deny or modify requests.
- Cannot grant modified allowable growth or use of the unexpended fund balance where the use of the general fund is not permitted by Code (such as purchase of portable buildings).
- Cannot grant modified allowable growth where the use of property tax is disallowed by Code (such as the prorated reduction to the state aid portion of the Instructional Support Program).
- Decisions are final and there is no appeal process.
- May direct the Department of Management to withhold state aid if any district fails to appear or provide information as requested.

Code Requires that Decisions Be Based on:

- Consideration of the intent of the legislature:
 - to equalize educational opportunity.
 - to provide good education to all Iowa children.
 - to provide property tax relief.
 - to decrease the percentage of school costs paid by property tax.
 - to provide reasonable control of school costs.
- Consideration of the amount of funds available.

Most Commonly Denied Requests

- Items that represent a misuse of general fund money (purchase or installation of portable buildings, leases or lease-purchases not authorized to the general fund by Code, facility repair, remodeling or renovation...).
- Multi-year requests for the same issue.
- Requests for the same issue granted in a previous year.
- Requests related to programs that are not new or unusual programs.

- Requests for issues common to all school districts.
- Requests for situations that were predictable and for which the district took little action to avoid.
- Requests for an issue that the Code provides another funding mechanism in lieu of that funding (such as Returning Dropout/Dropout Prevention programs).
- Requests for a year prior to the fiscal year in which the expenditure is anticipated.
- Requests for permanent allowable growth.

Purpose for Which Districts Appeared Before the SBRC

- Any unusual increase or decrease in enrollment.
- Unusual natural disaster.
- Unusual initial staffing problems.
- The closing of a nonpublic school, wholly or in part.
- Substantial reduction in miscellaneous income due to circumstances beyond the control of the district.
- Unusual necessity for additional funds to permit continuance of a course or program which provides substantial benefit to pupils.
- Unusual need for a new course or program which will provide substantial benefit to pupils, if the district establishes the need and the amount of necessary increased cost.
- Unusual need for additional funds for special education or compensatory education programs.
- Year-round or substantially year-round attendance programs that apply toward graduation requirements, including but not limited to trimester or four-quarter programs. Enrollment in such programs shall be adjusted to reflect equivalency to normal school year attendance.
- Unusual need to continue providing a program or other special assistance to limited English proficient pupils after the expiration of the three-year period specified in section 280.4(4).
- Circumstances caused by unusual demographic characteristics.
- Any unique problems of school districts.
- Environmental hazards removal, management or abatement.
- The committee may authorize a district to spend a reasonable and specified amount from its unexpended cash balance for furnishing, equipping, and contributing to the construction of a new building or structure for which the voters of the district have approved a bond issue as provided by law or the tax levy provided in section 298.2.
- The committee may authorize a district to spend a reasonable and specified amount from its unexpended cash balance for costs associated with the demolition of an unused school building, or the conversion of an unused school building for community use, in a school district involved in a dissolution or reorganization under Chapter 275, if the costs are incurred within three years of the dissolution or reorganization.
- Change in Accounting Procedures.
- Excess Costs of Programs for Limited English Proficient Students.

The district is requesting modified allowable growth for the 2003-2004 school year in the amount of \$209,314 for costs associated with providing a program to limited English proficient students in excess of weighting generated. The district is represented by Rob Iron, Superintendent.

SUMMARY

Over twenty languages are represented in the district's student population. The district has seven staff members providing ESL instruction at ESL centers located in seven of the district's twenty-two schools. The weighted dollars for this program generate about 40 percent of the program costs.

The district serves very few students in ESL for more than three years. Only students with literacy and learning problems in their first language require ESL beyond the three years according to the district. Less than five percent of the students fall into this category. Providing services to these students is essential if they are going to receive an appropriate education.

Projected total cost of the ESL program for the current year is \$374,804 with funding generated through weighting of \$165,490, leaving a balance of \$209,314 for the program.

REFERENCE

The Committee has jurisdiction in this matter in Iowa Code section 280.4(4).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to approve modified allowable growth for the 2003-2004 school year in the amount of \$209,314 for costs associated with providing a program to limited English proficient students in excess of weighting generated.

Recommendation _____ Denied _____ Modified _____ Tabled _____

Moved by: Connie Cook _____ Wayne Drexler _____ Clark Yeager _____
Cynthia Eisenhauer _____ Judy Jeffrey _____

Seconded by: Connie Cook _____ Wayne Drexler _____ Clark Yeager _____
Cynthia Eisenhauer _____ Judy Jeffrey _____

Unanimous _____ OR

Roll Call: Connie Cook _____ Wayne Drexler _____ Clark Yeager _____
Aye Nay Aye Nay Aye Nay

Cynthia Eisenhauer _____ Judy Jeffrey _____
Aye Nay Aye Nay

STATE OF IOWA
SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE
(Cite as 10 SBRC Dec. 04-006)

In the matter of

**Sample Community
School District**

DECISION

[SBRC Doc. #04-006]

The above-entitled matter was heard on September 8, 2003, before the School Budget Review Committee consisting of the following: Director Judy Jeffrey, Department of Education, Chair; Director Cynthia Eisenhauser, Department of Management, secretary; and committee members Connie Cook, Wayne Drexler, and Clark Yeager. The school district was represented by Rob Iron, Superintendent.

The hearing was held pursuant to committee rules found at 289 Iowa Administrative Code. Authority and jurisdiction for this hearing are found at Iowa Code section 257.31 (2003).

The district is requesting modified allowable growth for the 2003-2004 school year in the amount of \$209,314 for costs associated with providing a program to limited English proficient students in excess of weighting generated.

The committee finds that it has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter of the hearing before it.

I. FINDINGS

Over twenty languages are represented in the district's student population. The district has seven staff members providing ESL instruction at ESL centers located in seven of the district's twenty-two schools. The weighted dollars for this program generate about 40 percent of the program costs.

The district serves very few students in ESL for more than three years. Only students with literacy and learning problems in their first language require ESL beyond the three years according to the district. Less than five percent of the students fall into this category. Providing services to these students is essential if they are going to receive an appropriate education.

Projected total cost of the ESL program for the current year is \$374,804 with funding generated through weighting of \$165,490, leaving a balance of \$209,314 for the program.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The Committee has jurisdiction in this matter in Iowa Code section 280.4(4).

III. DECISION

The decision of the Committee in this matter is to approve modified allowable growth for the 2003-2004 school year in the amount of \$209,314 for costs associated with providing a program to limited English proficient students in excess of weighting generated.

Judy Jeffrey, Chair