



Clinton Township
Board of Education

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Clinton Township Board of Education

Overview of Budget Development

March 18, 2019

There is a tremendous amount of coordination, research and planning required to develop a fiscally responsible school budget. I would like to take moment to place some context around the process to create a school budget, and the checks and balances that exist to monitor both its development and execution.

School budgets, including Clinton Township School District's budget, are developed, approved and implemented with a significant number of on-going checks and balances. The annual school budget is not developed, presented and approved in a silo. A school district is held accountable to develop, approve and implement an annual budget, by district administrators, members of the board of education, the Executive County Superintendent, the New Jersey Department of Education and by auditors that specialize in education.

The 2019-2020 tentative budget hearing serves as the culmination of a very long and arduous process that the district's administration and board of education follow each year in order to develop, propose, and gain approval from many separate groups of stakeholders.

The process to develop the 2019-2020 budget began this past fall with the administration, staff and members of the board of education identifying and prioritizing specific needs in the classroom, the needs of our facilities and our operational needs.

Mr. Falkowski, our Business Administrator started working on the budget, with Mrs. Cone earlier this year. Other committees such as the district's Curriculum, Personnel, Negotiations and Facilities and Finance committees also met to talk about specific needs within their committee's area of responsibility. They provided feedback to those working on the details of the budget.

Mrs. Cone and Mr. Falkowski, took the input provided by members of each committee and members of our staff and developed a tentative budget. The facilities and finance committee reviewed the tentative budget and recommended that the superintendent and business administrator present it during the March 18, 2019 meeting.

Upon completion of the budget presentation, the members of the board of education directed questions regarding the tentative budget to Mrs. Cone and Mr. Falkowski. When the members of the board of education were finished asking questions, the board opened the meeting to hear the first public comment section on agenda items only, where members of the public could ask questions regarding the budget presentation.

Following the first public comment section, Mr. Maloy, Chairperson of the Facilities and Finance Committee read a motion regarding the 2019-2020 tentative budget. The board voted to accept the tentative budget. The tentative budget was required to be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent by Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

The New Jersey Department of Education will review this budget. They may ask questions, ask for clarification, and/or request that changes be made. All feedback will be provided to Mrs. Cone and Mr. Falkowski. If changes need to be made to the 2019-2020 tentative budget, or the board wishes to alter a component of this budget, it can occur between the time of the submission to the New Jersey Department of Education and the Annual Public Hearing on the Final Budget to be held on Monday, April 29, 2019.

During the annual public hearing, the proposed final budget will be presented. Once again, at that time, members of the board will be provided an opportunity to ask questions and make comments regarding the proposed budget. The public will also be invited to the microphone during that same meeting within the public comment section, to ask questions about the budget and share their thoughts. After questions are asked and answered by both the board and members of the public the board will vote to either adopt or reject the proposed budget.

In addition to voting on the proposed budget, members of the board of education will vote on a payment schedule to be provided to the Clinton Township Business Administrator. As many people are aware, the Township collects school tax money owed to the district, and then remits the school their money owed to them in 10 almost equal monthly payments.

If the budget passes on May 9, 2019, a user friendly budget will be posted on the District website prior to the State deadline of April 27, 2016. The checks and balances regarding a school budget do not stop after the budget is approved by the board of education. The State Department of Education reviews the district's budget. Then, the Executive County Superintendent conducts a mid-year review of the budget annually.

The District's budget is also reviewed by auditors that specialize in education on two occasions per year. The auditors provide an audit report which is also made available for review by the public.

These are the steps that take place each and every year with the district's school budget. This process ensures the proper oversight required to develop a budget that provides the highest education possible to the children of Clinton Township, while being responsible with taxpayers dollars.