

The Council recognizes its responsibility to the citizens of the South Slave region for the effective use of public funds in providing the best possible education to its children. An efficient and timely budget process is critical for proper staffing and school effectiveness.

The Council is also committed to an equitable and decentralized approach to budgeting and staffing. Because of resource limitations, there is sometimes a temptation to operate so that resource distribution concerns overshadow the development and maintenance of quality educational programs. The Council recognizes the need to make sure education remains central and that fiscal matters are ancillary and contribute to the educational programs.

Although final enrolment statistics and funding formula are not usually available from the Department of Education, Culture & Employment until March or April prior to the start of the new school year, the budget process and related decision making must occur much earlier. The Council will approve the upcoming school year budget at the January/February regular meeting based on a conservative best estimate so that school staffing plans can be formulated and staffing can begin shortly thereafter.

The budget, once approved by Council, is considered a statement in financial terms of the operational plans for the school division.

## **REGULATIONS**

- 1) The first meeting of the Finance Committee will be scheduled near the November/December regular meeting of the Council each year.
- 2) The Finance Committee will meet with the Superintendent to discuss/evaluate:
  - i) Council priorities/goals previously agreed upon
  - ii) school and community priorities (as per most recent *Community School Education Plan* [CEPs] submissions) in light of Council priorities/goals
  - iii) how the school principals, District Education Authorities (DEAs), and Council staff budget requests fit with Council goals/priorities
  - iv) ensuing year allocations the Council might receive from the Department of Education, Culture & Employment based on current school year September 30 student enrollment statistics and preliminary formula funding information provided by the Department
  - v) the Departmental formula funding line items that should be maintained centrally and those that should be turned over to DEAs/schools
  - vi) projected expenditures that exceed formula funding line items and how allocations might be redistributed to account for those additional costs
- 3) The determination of spending priorities will be done in consultation:
  - i) Council members will consult with their respective DEAs and school principals. DEAs can either pass these recommendations and requests on to the Finance Committee in writing, or Council members can share them verbally.
  - ii) The Superintendent will also consult with regional office staff and school principals to solicit recommendations. School principals are expected to consult their staffs in

- the determination of any recommendations to their respective DEAs and the Superintendent.
- 4) Budget request submissions may be prepared by school principals, DEAs, and Council staff and submitted to the Superintendent prior to January 10.
  - 5) The Superintendent and Comptroller will screen the pre-budget submissions and draft a preliminary budget proposal, including redistribution amounts and resulting DEA allocations, for presentation to the Finance Committee for consideration prior to the January/February regular Council meeting.
  - 6) The Finance Committee submits a regional budget, with determination of DEA allocations for the next fiscal year, for Council approval at the regular January/February Council meeting.
  - 7) Once the SSDEC budget has been approved, the Comptroller will distribute the final community and school Costing Reports, showing breakdown of allocations by formula funding line item with adjustments, to DEAs and school principals.
  - 8) Principals will develop a draft Staffing Plan, within approved allocations, for Comptroller and Superintendent, and then DEA Chairperson signatures of approval. Principals have flexibility, subject to approvals, to shift funding between formula funding line items to best meet the needs of the students served by the school.
  - 9) Staffing competitions can begin as per the Superintendent approved Staffing Plan.
  - 10) The principal, in consultation with teachers, will prepare a school budget for the next school year for submission to the local DEA and the Superintendent on or before June 15.
  - 11) The DEA will prepare a final budget for all DEA allocations, including the respective schools budgets, for submission to the Superintendent on or before June 15. DEAs are to ensure they budget for and spend the full aboriginal culture and language and inclusive schooling allocations for those intended purposes.
  - 12) DEA contribution agreements will be sent to DEAs for Chairperson signature and return prior to June 15.
  - 13) Upon receipt of the signed contribution agreement, DEA contributions will be apportioned in twelve equal monthly payments. DEAs can at any time request an advance against their current year's contribution agreement should they find their financial situation warrants it.
  - 14) The approved Council budget is submitted to the Department on or before June 30th.

Reference:	<i>Education Act</i> , s. 128, s. 129 Financial Administration Act & Finance and Administration Manual: Annual Budget, section No. 2-008
Amended:	February 1999 October 2002 September 2007 October 2011
Notes:	Replaces former policy <i>DBH- Budget Adoption Procedures</i>