

Frequently Asked Questions

SRCS Town Hall Meeting

February 1, 2018

The Santa Rosa City Schools, like all California schools, under Assembly Bill 1200 law is required to follow a budget reporting system with oversight by the Sonoma County Office of Education. The current budget report submitted to the County includes an unspecified required reduction in 2018-19 of \$6,237,878 in order to meet its financial obligations while maintaining the minimum required reserve for economic uncertainty of 3%. The County requires that our next budget report in March specify the solutions to reduce \$6,237,878.

In response to community feedback received last year and the district's desire to be transparent in the creation of the budget, a Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) was formed to identify possible budget solutions. On February 1, 2018 a Town Hall Meeting was held to review the committee's work on these possible solutions. During the Town Hall Meeting, input and feedback was received resulting in the creation of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document. The Budget Advisory Committee reviewed each question and answer of the FAQs and provided additional feedback and suggestions. Comments and additional solutions were also submitted to myquestions@srcs.k12.ca.us that were also addressed by the BAC.

1. The Governor's January budget includes closing the Local Control Funding Formula Gap. What does this mean for Santa Rosa City Schools?

- a. The Governor's Budget proposes to fund the Local Control Funding Formula from 97% implemented to 100% fully implemented. This would restore Santa Rosa City School to our FY07/08 (pre-Great Recession) funding level plus cost-of-living. Please note, full funding restored at FY07/08 levels does not restore buying power at 2018 prices.*

2. How do property tax fluctuations affect the district's budget?

- a. Santa Rosa City Schools will not see a loss of revenue from property tax fluctuations. For Santa Rosa City Schools, property tax is one source of revenue. When property taxes do not provide the minimum level of guaranteed funding per student, the state funds the remaining balance. This is referred to as "state aid revenue."*

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3. What does it mean when the district has a structural deficit and what causes it?

- a. A structural deficit occurs when the ongoing costs of the program provided for all students outpace the ongoing revenues that support that program. If the state does not provide new, unrestricted, ongoing revenue to cover this growth in expenditures, then Santa Rosa City Schools experiences a deficit. Another area, identified by the County Office of Education and by School Services of California impacting the Santa Rosa City Schools' structural deficit is current staffing ratios that are lower when compared to other districts in the county.*

4. How much one-time funding is the Governor proposing for 2018-19?

- a. The Governor proposes one-time funds at approximately \$295/Average Daily Attendance. This is projected to be approximately \$4.2M in one-time revenue to Santa Rosa City Schools in 2018-19 only.*

5. How can one-time funding be used?

- a. Generally, one-time funds are not recommended for multi-year or ongoing expenses and used only for one-time purchases. Using one-time funds for ongoing expenses would only prolong the structural deficit, not solve it.*

6. How was the Budget Advisory Committee formed?

- a. The budget committee was formed in response to community feedback received last year and the district's desire to be transparent in the creation of the yearly budget. The Board nominated community and local business members, principals nominated parents and students, directors nominated principals, and Santa Rosa Teachers Association and California School Employees Association nominated their representatives. Invitation letters were sent to the nominees to form the committee. The District Office administrators on the committee provide and receive information to help guide the process, but are not voting members.*

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7. How many meetings has the Budget Advisory Committee held? Where can I find the information for each of the meetings?

- a. *The Budget Advisory Committee has held six meetings. The next two meetings are scheduled for February 8 and March 6. The Budget Advisory Committee information can be found on the Santa Rosa City Schools' website:
<http://srcs.link/srcs-bac>*

8. How was the list created for the Possible Budget Solutions?

- a. *The process for creating the Possible Budget Solutions was agreed to by the BAC in accordance with the 2018-19 Budget Development Calendar. As a starting point, the Budget Advisory Committee agreed to begin the process with possible solutions created by district staff and departments. The Budget Advisory Committee deliberated over three iterations of the Possible Solutions before presentation at the Town Hall meeting. Now after the Town Hall meeting there are four iterations of the Possible Solutions. Discussion about solutions to add and remove was a part of the Budget Advisory Committee process.*

9. How was input and feedback gathered for the Possible Solutions from groups other than the Budget Advisory Committee?

- a. *In addition to the Budget Advisory Committee representatives and their constituent groups, input and feedback was received from Santa Rosa City Schools' Principals and the District Advisory Committee. Input and feedback was also gathered from the February 1, 2018 Budget Update Town Hall meeting. In addition, the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services has made and continues to make school site visits to present the Possible Solutions and gather input from faculty and staff. Four drafts of the Possible Solutions have been developed as a result of the input gathered from the various stakeholders. The iterations of these drafts can be viewed at <http://srcs.link/srcs-bac>. Input continues to be received via the myquestions@srcs.k12.ca.us email address.*
- b. *District Advisory Committee (DAC) are parent representatives from each school site. The three representatives include a parent from the Parent Teacher Organization and English Learner Advisory Committee, and an additional parent selected by the principal.*

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10. How did the Budget Advisory Committee determine what their recommendations would be to the Superintendent?

- a. *The Budget Advisory Committee has worked through four iterations of the Possible Solutions with the most recent version dated February 8, 2018. These most recent Possible Solutions were determined by the committee through a survey where each member independently marked “yes” or “no” for each item on the list. Eleven of the thirteen appointed members voted. The two District office administrators on the committee did not vote. After the Town Hall meeting, additional suggestions were provided and the Budget Advisory Committee met on February 8, 2018, to consider them.*

11. The needed reduction for 2018-19 is approximately \$6.2M, why would we reduce more than that for next year?

- a. *School Districts are required to have County Office of Education approved multi-year projections. The multi-year budget deficit is over \$12.7M. Any reductions made in 2018-19 would decrease the remaining deficit for 2019-2020. This would reduce the amount of budget reductions needed for the 2019-20 school year.*

12. Why doesn't the district sell the Lewis property to alleviate the structural deficit?

- a. *The sale of the Lewis property would be a one-time revenue and would not offset the budget structural deficit. Currently, the District has no plans to sell any real property to maintain flexibility for long term planning and future growth.*

13. How does shifting the funding for positions from base to supplemental and concentration funds help the structural deficit?

- a. *The positions identified provide services for our underserved students. Moving these positions to supplemental and concentration funds relieves this expense from base dollars. By shifting the dollars, we are improving the services for those underserved students. The majority of staff funding is from base dollars.*

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14. How is the district able to use federal funds for the transfer of expenses now and why wasn't it done before?

- a. The district is able to transfer expenses to federal funds when the services provided are permissible by these funds. It is proposed, as a possible budget solution, to re-prioritize the federal fund expenditures and transfer these qualified expenses. It is being done now with the requirement to solve the budget deficit.*
- b. Re-prioritize means choices will be made to restructure or eliminate current expenditures.*

15. Can student to counselor ratios be lowered by utilizing Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) funding?

- a. Yes, base funded counseling ratios could be lowered by moving qualified services and personnel to supplemental and concentration funds.*

16. What is the difference between student to teacher ratio and class size?

- a. Student to Teacher Ratio - Student to teacher ratio is the total number of students divided by Full Time Equivalent teaching positions.*
- b. Class Size - Class size calculations take into account that some grade levels have class size reduction (i.e., K-3) and site level priorities and course offerings by school (i.e., Secondary Schools).*

17. Is the increase of student to teacher ratio by one student an ongoing budget solution or just for one year?

- a. The increase of student to teacher ratio by one student is an ongoing budget solution.*

18. Are Teachers On Special Assignment, Special Education, prep teachers included in the student to teacher ratio calculation?

- a. Special education and elementary prep period teachers were included in the student to teacher ratio scenario shared with the Budget Advisory Committee, Teachers On Special Assignment were not.*

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19. Will attrition through retirement be able to absorb all the reductions of staff if ratios are increased by one (1) student?

- a. *Retirements are expected to offset some of the reductions. It depends on the teaching credentials held by the retirees and the ongoing need for a particular course. (e.g., if a high school math teacher retires, that position would need to be filled by a teacher credentialed to teach math)*

20. By increasing student/teacher ratio by one (1) does that mean every class is increasing by 1 student?

- a. *Some classes will not be impacted by the increased ratio while others may. With elementary, middle and high schools each having their own priorities, class sizes will vary by site. Class limits in our collective bargaining agreement will be honored.*

21. How are position costs calculated when including them in the Possible Budget Solutions?

- a. *When looking at specific positions, the actual salary plus all other costs (see below) were used for the 2018-19 Possible Solutions. Moving forward, when looking at positions for consideration, the average salary will be used to determine the total cost of the positions.*
- b. *Other costs = pension, medicare, unemployment insurance, workers comp, health & welfare plan, and stipends.*

22. What are some of the possible budget solutions you will be looking into for 2019-20?

- a. *The District will continue looking into all possible budget solutions for 2019-20, including the feasibility of programs, services, and all possible revenues.*

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23. How will the change in bus routes proposed in the budget solutions affect the students and their ride length and arrival or departure time from school?

- a. These budget solutions are using the existing West County Transportation Agency policies that are 1 hour and 15 minutes for a maximum ride time. Arrival and departure time changes for students will be determined when the routes for 17/18 are determined by West County Transportation.*

24. Are you taking into consideration the extra cost for supervision when students arrive at school early or depart late?

- a. Yes, we are taking into consideration the extra cost for supervision when students arrive at school early or depart late. Please see item 5 in the Possible Budget Solutions document.*

25. What is the average class size and what is the calculation School Services uses?

- a. The data provided by School Services of California was based on 16/17 school year data available from the Department of Education. SRCS averaged 18.47 in grades K-3, 25.30 in grades 4-6, 23.63 in grades 7-8 and 18.51 in grades 9-12. Due to the complexity of secondary classes, School Services took into account classes that may include more than one course in a period and other variables that exist in secondary schedules.*

26. Who is School Services of California? Are they a consultant?

- a. School Services of California is a financial, management and advocacy consulting resource for public educational agencies in California. We, like most CA school districts, use them as a source of expertise in these areas.*

27. Why are prep periods used when calculating class size, student to teacher ratio?

- a. Schools Services of California did not use prep periods when calculating class size or student to teacher ratio.*

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28. How much have we reduced consultant contracts for Professional Development over the last years?

- a. A number of consultants were hired between 2013 and 2016 to assist the district with the transition to restorative practices, the Common Core Standards, Local Control Funding Formula/Local Control Accountability Plan implementation, and to revamp our English Learner program. This intensive capacity building period was planned to be a time-limited investment. In 2017/18, the district reduced contracts with professional development providers by 35%. An additional 35% is proposed for 2018/2019.*

29. What other expenses make up the total amount spent in the 5000 object code?

- a. Expenses in the total 5000 Contracts and Services object codes include special education is 36%, student busing makes up 14%, utility costs account for 10% (gas, electric, water, sewer, recycling/garbage & telephone), and property and liability insurance is 3% of the total. This alone totals 63% and equates to \$28M dollars of these.*
- b. Additional information about Contracts and Services budget can be found on the Budget Advisory Committee webpage: <http://srcs.link/srcs-bac>*

30. How does the Budget Advisory Committee get feedback from a broader group?

- a. Members of the committee are asked to get feedback from the group they represent and bring the information back to the committee. The Budget Advisory Committee also received feedback from the District Advisory Committee, principals, site visits by Assistant Supt. Bell, and the 2/1/2018 Town Hall Meeting.*

31. Was there a budget error that caused the district to have this structural deficit?

- a. No funds were lost or misappropriated and a budget error did not cause the structural deficit. As you may be aware, in 2015/16 there was a budgeting mistake - a human error that did not affect the bottom line. The expense for substitute teachers and overtime was under budgeted.*

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32. When will the process for the Budget Advisory Committee begin for reductions for 2019-20?

- a. For 2019/20 possible budget reductions, the Budget Advisory Committee will reconvene in the Fall after unaudited actuals are presented to the board for approval.*

33. Is the district office administration ratio considered any different than other districts?

- a. Using School Services of California 2016/17 data, Santa Rosa City Schools was ranked 9th out of 19 districts in the county. Santa Rosa City Schools had 28.30 district administrators. Santa Rosa City Schools is the largest district in Sonoma County.*
- b. Information about District Office Administration ratios can be found on BAC webpage: <http://srcs.link/srcs-bac>*

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34. What additional district office administrators have been hired in the last 5 years?

Additions:

Program Specialist Special Education (2017) Vacant

Two Elementary Directors (2014)

Elementary Coordinator (2015)

Secondary Coordinator (2015)

State and Federal Coordinator (2016)

Eliminated:

Director of Special Education (2015)

Director of State and Federal Programs (2015)

Compliance Coordinator (2016)

Elementary Coordinator (2017)

Secondary Coordinator (2017)

State and Federal Coordinator -proposed to be eliminated for 2018-2019

Director of Curriculum and Instruction 30% reduction (2015)

Additions through Grant/Bond Funds (these positions will end when grant/bond ends)

Coordinator Student and Family Engagement (Grant Funded) (2017)

Director of Facilities (Bond Funded) (2015)

Director of Technology (95% Bond Funded) (2015)

PIO [.75 Full Time Employee] (Bond and Supplemental Funded) (2016)

35. What are the percentages of reduction for administration, certificated and classified for 17/18 and proposed for 18/19?

	FTE Budgeted FY16/17	FTE Reduction 17/18	FTE Reduction Proposed 18/19	17/18-18/19 Percent Reduction
Certificated	938.10	12.20	34.5	4.9%
Classified	574.20	4.74	7	2%
District Administration	28.3	2	1	10.6%