

# CSBA Sample Board Policy

## Business and Noninstructional Operations

BP 3100(a)

### BUDGET

The Governing Board recognizes its critical responsibility for adopting a sound budget for each fiscal year which is aligned with the district's vision, goals, priorities, local control and accountability plan (LCAP), and other comprehensive plans. The district budget shall guide decisions and actions throughout the year and shall serve as a tool for monitoring the fiscal health of the district.

*(cf. 0000 - Vision)*

*(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District)*

*(cf. 0400 - Comprehensive Plans)*

*(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)*

*(cf. 3300 - Expenditures and Purchases)*

*(cf. 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability)*

*(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)*

The district budget shall show a complete plan and itemized statement of all proposed expenditures and all estimated revenues for the following fiscal year, together with a comparison of revenues and expenditures for the current fiscal year. The budget shall also include the appropriations limit and the total annual appropriations subject to limitation as determined pursuant to Government Code 7900-7914. (Education Code 42122)

### Budget Development and Adoption Process

Note: AB 2585 (Ch. 309, Statutes of 2014) amended Education Code 42127 to eliminate the "dual budget" adoption process, whereby the Governing Board could elect to hold a second public hearing and adopt a September 8 budget that would formally replace its July 1 adopted budget. Thus, district budgets for 2015-16 and beyond must be developed in accordance with the "single budget" adoption process.

In order to provide guidance in the development of the budget, the Board shall annually establish budget priorities based on identified district needs and goals and on realistic projections of available funds.

The Superintendent or designee shall oversee the preparation of a proposed district budget for approval by the Board and shall involve appropriate staff in the development of budget projections.

Note: Education Code 42103 and 42127 require the district to hold a public hearing prior to adoption of the budget; see the accompanying administrative regulation for requirements pertaining to the public hearing. A public hearing on the district's local control and accountability plan (LCAP) must occur at the same meeting; see BP 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan.

The Board shall hold a public hearing on the proposed budget in accordance with Education Code 42103 and 42127.

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*(cf. 9320 - Meetings and Notices)*  
*(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)*  
*(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)*

The Board shall adopt the district budget on or before July 1 of each year. (Education Code 42127)

At a public meeting held on a date after the public hearing on the budget, the Board shall adopt the budget following its adoption of the LCAP or an annual update to the LCAP at the same meeting. The budget shall include the expenditures necessary to implement the LCAP or the annual update to the LCAP. (Education Code 42127)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 42126, the district budget must be in a format prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). The SPI has established a requirement that districts use the Standardized Account Code Structure (SACS). SACS ensures that districts meet state and federal reporting guidelines and comply with generally accepted accounting principles prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The California Department of Education's (CDE) California School Accounting Manual provides guidance regarding coding of revenues and expenditures.

At its discretion, the district may use a different format for communicating the budget to the Board, staff, and public but, according to the CDE, the budget that the Board formally adopts must be in the SACS format.

The budget that is formally adopted by the Board shall adhere to the state's Standardized Account Code Structure as prescribed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Education Code 42126, 42127)

The Superintendent or designee may supplement this format with additional information as necessary to effectively communicate the budget to the Board, staff, and public.

Note: Education Code 42127 requires the district to file the adopted budget with the County Superintendent of Schools as described below. If the district fails to submit a budget by July 1, the County Superintendent will, at district expense, develop a budget by September 15 and transmit that budget to the Board.

No later than five days after the Board adopts the district budget or by July 1, whichever occurs first, the Board shall file with the County Superintendent of Schools the adopted district budget and supporting data. The budget and supporting data shall be maintained and made available for public review. (Education Code 42127)

*(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)*

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 42127, as amended by SB 78 (Ch. 19, Statutes of 2015), on or before September 15, the County Superintendent must approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the district's adopted budget. Education Code 42127 requires that this determination be based on a consideration of whether the district's adopted budget complies with state standards and criteria, will allow the district to meet its current and future financial obligations, satisfies all conditions established by the County

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Superintendent in the case of a conditionally approved budget, will enable the district to satisfy its multiyear financial commitments, includes the expenditures necessary to implement the LCAP or the annual update to the LCAP, and, when applicable, complies with the requirements pertaining to ending fund balances that exceed the state minimum recommended reserve. Education Code 42127 also requires the County Superintendent to consider other studies, reports, evaluations, or audits that may indicate that the district is in fiscal distress; see the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team's Fiscal Oversight Guide and BP 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability.

SB 78 amended Education Code 42127 to require the Board to review and respond to the County Superintendent's recommendations by October 8. The County Superintendent must then either approve or disapprove the revised budget by November 8.

If the County Superintendent disapproves or conditionally approves the district's budget, the Board shall review and respond to his/her recommendations at a public meeting on or before **October 8**. The response shall include any revisions to the adopted budget and any other proposed actions to be taken as a result of those recommendations. (Education Code 42127)

**Budget Advisory Committee**

Note: The following **optional** section is for use by districts that choose to establish a budget advisory committee to provide input during the budget development process. The committee may be appointed by the Superintendent or designee (Option 1), by the Board (Option 2), or may be a Board subcommittee composed exclusively of Board members (Option 3). Committees established by Board action are subject to the Brown Act; see BP/AR 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees. Districts should delete or modify the following options as appropriate. See the accompanying administrative regulation for optional language regarding the committee's composition and duties.

This committee is different from the budget review committee that is required in the event that the County Superintendent disapproves the district's budget; see the accompanying administrative regulation.

**OPTION 1:** The Superintendent or designee may appoint a budget advisory committee composed of staff, Board representatives, and/or members of the community.

**OPTION 2:** The Board may appoint a budget advisory committee composed of staff, Board representatives, and/or members of the community.

**OPTION 3:** The Board may establish a budget subcommittee composed exclusively of Board members.

Note: The following paragraph is for use by districts that selected either Option 1, 2, or 3 above.

The committee shall submit recommendations during the budget development process and its duties shall be assigned each year based on district needs. All recommendations of the committee shall be advisory only and shall not be binding on the Board.

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

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*(cf. 2230 - Representative and Deliberative Groups)*

*(cf. 3350 - Travel Expenses)*

*(cf. 9130 - Board Committees)*

*(cf. 9140 - Board Representatives)*

**Budget Criteria and Standards**

Note: Education Code 33129 requires the district to develop its budget and manage its expenditures in accordance with criteria and standards adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to Education Code 33127-33128. These criteria and standards, along with certain other required supplemental information, are specified in 5 CCR 15440-15451, which, as amended by Register 2013, No. 49, reflect the requirements of the local control funding formula (LCFF) applicable to district budgets starting in 2014-15.

While 5 CCR 15450 establishes a minimum local reserve balance for economic uncertainties based on the district's average daily attendance (ADA), Education Code 42127.01, as added by SB 858 (Ch. 32, Statutes of 2014), limits the amount of the reserve if certain conditions are met. In a fiscal year immediately after a fiscal year in which the state makes a deposit of any amount into the state Public School System Stabilization Account created by Proposition 2 in November 2014, the reserve balance is limited to two times the minimum recommended reserve for districts with an ADA of 400,000 or less, or three times the minimum recommended reserve for districts with an ADA over 400,000. The County Superintendent may grant an exemption of this requirement for up to two consecutive fiscal years within a three-year period to any district that provides documentation of extraordinary fiscal circumstances (e.g., multiyear infrastructure or technology projects) that substantiate the need for a reserve in excess of the limit specified in Education Code 42127.01.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a district budget in accordance with state criteria and standards specified in 5 CCR 15440-15450 as they relate to projections of average daily attendance (ADA), enrollment, ratio of ADA to enrollment, local control funding formula revenue, salaries and benefits, other revenues and expenditures, facilities maintenance, deficit spending, unrestricted general fund balance, and reserves. In addition, he/she shall provide the supplemental information specified in 5 CCR 15451 which addresses the methodology and budget assumptions used, contingent liabilities, use of one-time revenues for ongoing expenditures, use of ongoing revenues for one-time expenditures, contingent revenues, contributions, long-term commitments, unfunded liabilities, status of collective bargaining agreements, the LCAP, and LCAP expenditures. (Education Code 33128, 33128.3, 33129, 42127.01; 5 CCR 15440-15451)

Note: The following paragraph is for use by districts that receive supplemental and concentration funding within the LCFF based on the number and concentration of "unduplicated students" (i.e., students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, English learners, and foster youth) pursuant to Education Code 42238.02 and 42238.03. 5 CCR 15494-15496, as amended by Register 2015, No. 2, address the method of determining the percentage by which services for unduplicated students must be increased or improved above services provided to all students in the fiscal year.

The district budget shall provide for increasing or improving services for unduplicated students at least in proportion to the increase in funds apportioned on the basis of the number

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and concentration of unduplicated students. *Unduplicated students* are students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, English learners, and/or foster youth. (Education Code 42238.07; 5 CCR 15496)

(cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals)

(cf. 6173.1 - Education for Foster Youth)

(cf. 6174 - Education for English Language Learners)

The Board may establish other budget assumptions or parameters which may take into consideration the stability of funding sources, legal requirements and constraints on the use of funds, anticipated increases and/or decreases in the cost of services and supplies, program requirements, and any other factors necessary to ensure that the budget is a realistic plan for district revenues and expenditures.

(cf. 2210 - Administrative Discretion Regarding Board Policy)

(cf. 3110 - Transfer of Funds)

**Fund Balance**

Note: The following **optional** section should be revised to reflect district practice. Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 54 addresses the way fund balances (i.e., the gross differences between assets and liabilities reflected on the balance sheet) in governmental funds are reported in external financial reports. Fund balances must be classified as nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and unassigned in accordance with GASB 54 definitions; also see AR 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability. Pursuant to GASB 54, the Board has sole authority to specify purposes of funds classified as "committed" and also must express, or delegate the authority to express, intended purposes of resources that result in the "assigned" fund balance. The Board may modify the following section to reflect its fund balance policy or may adopt a formal resolution containing the required components.

The district shall classify fund balances in compliance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 54, as follows:

1. *Nonspendable fund balance* includes amounts that are not expected to be converted to cash, such as resources that are not in a spendable form (e.g., inventories and prepaids) or that are legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.
2. *Restricted fund balance* includes amounts constrained to specific purposes by their providers or by law.

Note: For purposes of the committed fund balance, GASB 54 requires that the Board commit funds no later than the end of the reporting period. In New Requirements for Reporting Fund Balance in Governmental Funds, the CDE clarifies that for districts the end of the reporting period is June 30.

3. *Committed fund balance* includes amounts constrained to specific purposes by the Board.

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For this purpose, all commitments of funds shall be approved by a majority vote of the Board. The constraints shall be imposed no later than the end of the reporting period (June 30), although the actual amounts may be determined subsequent to that date but prior to the issuance of the financial statements.

4. *Assigned fund balance* includes amounts which are intended for a specific purpose but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed.

The Board delegates authority to assign funds to the assigned fund balance to the Superintendent and authorizes the assignment of such funds to be made any time prior to the issuance of the financial statements. The Superintendent may further delegate the authority to assign funds at his/her discretion.

5. *Unassigned fund balance* includes amounts that are available for any purpose.

When multiple types of funds are available for an expenditure, the district shall first utilize funds from the restricted fund balance as appropriate, then from the committed fund balance, then from the assigned fund balance, and lastly from the unassigned fund balance.

Note: Although not required by GASB 54, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that public agencies adopt a minimum fund balance policy that establishes an appropriate level of unrestricted fund balance that will be maintained in the general fund. The GFOA's Best Practice: Appropriate Level of Unrestricted Fund Balance in the General Fund describes a variety of factors that should be considered when developing a minimum fund balance policy, such as the predictability of its revenue and volatility of its expenditures, perceived exposure to significant one-time outlays, potential drain upon the general fund from other funds as well as the availability of resources in other funds, liquidity of resources, and portion of unrestricted fund balance already committed or assigned for a specific purpose.

Pursuant to Education Code 42127.01, as added by SB 858 (Ch. 32, Statutes of 2014), in any fiscal year following a transfer of funds by the state into the Public School System Stabilization Account, the district cannot have a combined assigned and unassigned ending fund balance that exceeds the amount specified in Education Code 42127.01. In order to prevent Board policy from being outdated in the event that these provisions become effective, the following paragraph expresses Board intent to maintain a sufficient unassigned fund balance, but does not include a specific amount or percentage.

The Board intends to maintain a minimum assigned and unassigned fund balance in an amount the Board deems sufficient to maintain fiscal solvency and stability and to protect the district against unforeseen circumstances.

Note: The GFOA recommends that the minimum fund policy address both the circumstances under which the unrestricted fund balance can be spent down and the procedure for replenishing deficiencies. The district may revise the following **optional** paragraph to specify the rate at which the district will attempt to recover the fund balance (e.g., the Board shall develop a plan to recover the fund balance at a rate of at least one percent each year).

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If the assigned and unassigned fund balance falls below the level set by the Board due to an emergency situation, unexpected expenditures, or revenue shortfalls, the Board shall develop a plan to recover the fund balance which may include dedicating new unrestricted revenues, reducing expenditures, and/or increasing revenues or pursuing other funding sources.

**Long-Term Financial Obligations**

The district's current-year budget and multiyear projections shall include adequate provisions for addressing the district's long-term financial obligations, including, but not limited to, long-term obligations resulting from collective bargaining agreements, financing of facilities projects, unfunded or future liability for retiree benefits, and accrued workers' compensation claims.

*(cf. 4141/4241 - Collective Bargaining Agreement)*

*(cf. 4154/4254/4354 - Health and Welfare Benefits)*

*(cf. 7210 - Facilities Financing)*

*(cf. 9250 - Remuneration, Reimbursement and Other Benefits)*

Note: The following two **optional** paragraphs are for use by districts that provide "other postemployment benefits" (OPEBs) (i.e., medical, dental, vision, hearing, life insurance, long-term care, long-term disability, and other nonpension benefits to retired employees or Board members) and should be revised to reflect district practice; see BP/AR 4154/4254/4354 - Health and Welfare Benefits and BB 9250 - Remuneration, Reimbursement and Other Benefits. CSBA recommends that districts adopt a specific funding strategy for addressing their OPEB obligations. The district may pay the premiums as they fall due ("pay-as-you-go"), but in such a case the district would then accrue a deficit with respect to future retirees which can be expected to grow as a result of an increasing retiree population and increases in benefit costs. Therefore, it is recommended that the district prefund the debt to the extent possible using a method and level to be determined by the Board. For example, the district may contribute a set amount or percentage of the actuarially determined "annual required contributions" to an irrevocable trust or designated fund each year.

Regardless of the funding strategy used by the district, GASB Statement 45 requires the district to report the annual expense of OPEBs and, to the extent that the OPEBs are not prefunded, to report them as a liability on the district's financial statements; see AR 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability.

CSBA's GASB 45 Solutions program provides access to qualified actuaries and consultants and a GASB 45-compliant trust to prefund future obligations. See CSBA's web site for further information.

The Board shall approve a plan for meeting the district's long-term obligations to fund nonpension, other postemployment benefits (OPEBs). This plan shall include a specific funding strategy and the method that will be used to finance the district's annual fiscal obligations for such benefits in a manner that continually reduces the deficit to the district to the extent possible. The Board reserves the authority to review and amend the funding strategy as necessary to ensure that it continues to serve the best interests of the district and maintains flexibility to adjust for changing budgetary considerations.

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When the Superintendent or designee presents a report to the Board on the estimated accrued but unfunded cost of OPEBs, the Board shall disclose, as a separate agenda item at the same meeting, whether or not it will reserve a sufficient amount of money in its budget to fund the present value of the benefits of existing retirees and/or the future cost of employees who are eligible for benefits in the current fiscal year. (Education Code 42140)

Note: The following **optional** paragraph is for use by districts that are self-insured for workers' compensation claims, either individually or as part of a joint powers agency. See AR 3460 - Financial Reports and Accountability for provisions related to reporting the estimated accrued but unfunded cost of workers' compensation claims based on an actuarial report.

When the Superintendent or designee presents a report to the Board on the estimated accrued but unfunded cost of workers' compensation claims, the Board shall disclose, as a separate agenda item at the same meeting, whether or not it will reserve in the budget sufficient amounts to fund the present value of accrued but unfunded workers' compensation claims or if it is otherwise decreasing the amount in its workers' compensation reserve fund. The Board shall annually certify to the County Superintendent the amount, if any, that it has decided to reserve in the budget for these costs. The Board shall submit to the County Superintendent any budget revisions that may be necessary to account for this budget reserve. (Education Code 42141)

**Budget Amendments**

Note: The following section is **optional** and should be revised to reflect district practice.

No later than 45 days after the Governor signs the annual Budget Act, the Superintendent or designee shall make available for public review any revisions in budgeted revenues and expenditures which occur as a result of the funding made available by that Budget Act. (Education Code 42127)

Whenever revenues and expenditures change significantly throughout the year, the Superintendent or designee shall recommend budget amendments to ensure accurate projections of the district's net ending balance. When final figures for the prior-year budget are available, this information shall be used as soon as possible to update the current-year budget's beginning balance and projected revenues and expenditures.

In addition, budget amendments shall be submitted for Board approval as necessary when collective bargaining agreements are accepted, district income declines, increased revenues or unanticipated savings are made available to the district, program proposals are significantly different from those approved during budget adoption, interfund transfers are needed to meet actual program expenditures, and/or other significant changes occur that impact budget projections.

**BUDGET (continued)**

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

1240 Duties of county superintendent of schools  
33127-33131 Standards and criteria for local budgets and expenditures  
42103 Public hearing on proposed budget; requirements for content of proposed budget  
42122-42129 Budget requirements  
42130-42134 Financial certifications  
42140-42141 Disclosure of fiscal obligations  
42238-42251 Apportionments to districts, especially:  
42238.01-42238.07 Local control funding formula  
42602 Use of unbudgeted funds  
42610 Appropriation of excess funds and limitation thereon  
45253 Annual budget of personnel commission  
45254 First year budget of personnel commission  
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan

GOVERNMENT CODE

7900-7914 Appropriations limit

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

15060 Standardized account code structure  
15440-15451 Criteria and standards for school district budgets  
15494-15496 Local control funding formula, expenditures

*Management Resources:*

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

California School Accounting Manual

New Requirements for Reporting Fund Balance in Governmental Funds, January 7, 2011

FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM PUBLICATIONS

Fiscal Oversight Guide for AB 1200, AB 2756 and Subsequent Related Legislation, September 2006

GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

Best Practice: Appropriate Level of Unrestricted Fund Balance in the General Fund, 2009

GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS BOARD STATEMENTS

Statement 54, Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions, March 2009

Statement 45, Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Post-employment Benefits Other Than Pensions, June 2004

Statement 34, Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis - For State and Local Governments, June 1999

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

Association of California School Administrators: <http://www.acsa.org>

California Department of Education, Finance and Grants: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg>

California Department of Finance: <http://www.dof.ca.gov>

Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team: <http://www.fcmat.org>

Government Finance Officers Association: <http://www.gfoa.org>

Governmental Accounting Standards Board: <http://www.gasb.org>

School Services of California, Inc.: <http://www.sscal.com>

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