

## **2025-26 Blaine County School District Board of Trustees' Budget Guiding Principles**

1. Student achievement

Primary consideration for budget decisions is how they support student achievement.

2. Balanced budget

Maintain a balanced budget that includes 3 months of operating reserves. A “balanced budget” is defined as matching annual projected general fund revenues with annual projected general fund expenditures. Run levies as necessary to meet District needs.

3. Good financial stewardship

Demonstrate good financial stewardship to the community. Evaluate all funding requests against long-term implications for the district’s financial stability.

4. Limited Hiring

No increase in district FTEs. Eliminate positions when class sizes drop per Policy 629 - Class Size. Board approval required to create new positions or to fill any positions that open up through attrition or termination if it results in an increase in FTEs. Approval will be based on Budget Guiding Principles. Where possible, use natural attrition to help guide headcount toward state staffing allocations.

5. Equitable distribution of resources

Distribute resources (including money; time; staff; facilities; materials; instructional hardware and software; and academic, behavior and other supports) in ways to ensure that all students achieve high academic standards.

6. Prioritize staffing based on student needs and strategic goals

Make flexible staffing decisions strategically based on data around student needs and strategic district goals. Provide transparency around those decisions.

7. Provide equitable opportunities

Provide diverse opportunities and programs that address the various needs of students to ensure all have what they need to flourish in school. Remove barriers that obstruct student engagement in school-based learning activities, enrichment opportunities, and extracurriculars.

8. High quality staff

Recruit, retain, support and inspire high-performing staff. Ensure compensation parity across all staffing categories. Prioritize funding for professional and responsible training opportunities to build staff capacity and maintain equity among all staffing categories.

9. Professional development

Provide additional and researched-based support for the professional growth of staff to ensure the most current levels of staff professionalism in order to ensure that all students are presented with the challenges and the support necessary to reach the high standards of excellence.

10. Technology

Maintain and advance the technology used by the district and provided to students and staff as necessary for all students to reach high standards of excellence.