



Santa Barbara School Districts

Date: March 21, 2008
To: Dr. J. Brian Sarvis, Superintendent
From: Eric D. Smith, Deputy Superintendent
Subject: Report and Discussion of Possible Budget Advisory Committee

Conference Item *Time Required: 10 Min.*

Background

A Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) is an advisory committee to the superintendent. This means that the superintendent and the board retain responsibility for making decisions affecting the financial operation of the district, and that the budget advisory committee is just that—advisory. Its purpose is to review the district's budget, share the information with constituent groups and generate recommendations to the superintendent for review and possible recommendation to the board.

The composition of the BAC is determined by the superintendent. However, the chair of the committee is typically the chief business official of the district. The remainder of the membership should reflect a variety of opinions and perspectives and represent different stakeholder groups. Generally, the following groups are represented:

- Students
- Parents
- Board of education (no more than two members)
- District/school site administration
- Bargaining units
- Business community

Issue

The purpose of the BAC needs to be made clear. In many districts it is a standing committee and its purpose may include: providing input during the budget development process, making recommendations on budget priorities, and providing input on the effectiveness of budget documents and communications.

The advantage of having a BAC is that it allows for a greater amount of input from interested stakeholders and presents another opportunity for input into the budget development process. The disadvantages of a BAC are that due to the need to represent all stakeholders, the size of the committee may become unwieldy and difficult to manage. Another disadvantage is the additional impact that the BAC, and its hunger for financial information, has on business office

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staff, who must conduct research to respond to committee requests. Lastly, unless the BAC operates on the basis of majority vote rather than on consensus, the BAC may become gridlocked due to the conflicting perspectives of constituencies represented on the committee.

Attachment(s)?	Yes (if so, please attach)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Powerpoint</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Ovrhead</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Consultant</i>
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