Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

DBJ-Budget Implementation

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for implementing and managing MESD's adopted budget. It authorizes the Superintendent and designated staff to make expenditures within the approved budget and requires communication with the Board regarding significant financial changes.

What is your experience with this policy:

This is a straightforward fiscal management policy that establishes clear accountability for implementing the Board-approved budget. Its primary equity consideration is ensuring that financial decisions and necessary budget adjustments do not unintentionally create or increase disparities among students and programs. Consistent oversight and consideration of equity impacts can help support responsible and equitable resource management.

Superintendent Dr. Paul Coakley

Board of Directors Renee Anderson • Jessica Arzate • Kristin Cornuelle • Katrina Doughty • Dr. Samuel Henry • Denyse Peterson • Helen Ying

What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families? What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students and their families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Is this policy:

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

This policy will be available in the Board's online handbook. The policy will also be posted on the district website for easy access.

Clear and easy to understand?

Yes. The policy is brief and clearly outlines the responsibilities of the Board, Superintendent, and designated staff in managing the adopted budget. It establishes expectations for financial oversight and communication regarding significant changes in revenues or expenditures.

People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

The policy does not directly affect any particular racial or ethnic group. However, budget decisions may have different impacts on students and families depending on the programs and services affected.

Students from historically underserved communities could be disproportionately impacted if budget adjustments reduce services they rely on. Reviewing the equity implications of significant budget changes can help identify potential disparities.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

The policy does not directly affect any particular racial or ethnic group. However, budget decisions may have different impacts on students and families depending on the programs and services affected.

Students from historically underserved communities could be disproportionately impacted if budget adjustments reduce services they rely on. Reviewing the equity implications of significant budget changes can help identify potential disparities.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

The policy does not indicate whether students, families, staff, or community members were involved in its development.

Although the policy focuses on fiscal administration, opportunities for stakeholder input during broader budget planning and review processes can help ensure that financial decisions reflect the needs of the communities MESD serves.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates commitments to fiscal responsibility, accountability, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public resources. It emphasizes adherence to the Board-approved budget and timely communication regarding financial changes that may require Board action.

Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The policy creates an environment of financial accountability, responsible decision-making, and Board oversight.

Barriers to more equitable outcomes may include limited financial resources, unexpected revenue reductions, competing program needs, and insufficient consideration of how budget adjustments affect different student populations.

Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy establishes shared fiscal responsibility between the Board, which adopts and may adjust the budget, and the Superintendent and designated staff, who implement it.

The policy does not establish a direct role for students, families, or community members in budget decisions. Community participation through broader budget development and public engagement processes can strengthen transparency and shared decision-making.

Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy itself does not directly improve or worsen existing disparities. Its equity impact depends on how the adopted budget is implemented and how financial adjustments affect programs and services.

An unintended consequence could occur if budget reductions or reallocations disproportionately affect programs serving students with greater educational or support needs.

Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Potential negative impacts can be reduced by considering equity when evaluating significant budget adjustments, reviewing how proposed changes affect students and programs, and maintaining transparent communication with the Board.

MESD can also use student and program data to identify potential disparities and prioritize maintaining essential services for students with the greatest needs.