Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

DBH-Budget Adoption Procedures

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures for formally adopting MESD's budget, making appropriations, and determining the property tax amount or rate in accordance with Oregon law. It ensures that public hearing input is considered and that required financial documentation is submitted appropriately.

What is your experience with this policy:

This is a procedural fiscal governance policy that establishes the Board's responsibility for adopting the budget and determining property tax amounts or rates. Its primary equity consideration is ensuring that public participation is meaningful and that budget decisions are informed by the needs of all students and communities served by MESD. Transparent communication and consideration of equity impacts can help support responsible and equitable fiscal decision-making.

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?

Overall, yes. The policy identifies the Board's responsibilities for adopting the budget, establishing appropriations, and determining property tax amounts or rates. However, some technical financial terminology and apparent editing errors should be clarified to improve readability and ensure the final policy is understandable.

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 positively supports students, staff, and community members by establishing a transparent and legally compliant budget adoption process. Public hearings provide opportunities for community input before final budget decisions are made.

Potential barriers include limited understanding of budget procedures, language differences, and difficulty attending public hearings. The policy helps reduce barriers related to financial transparency and public accountability.

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 identify or affect particular racial or ethnic groups. However, budget and tax decisions can have different impacts on communities depending on how financial resources are allocated.

Students and families from historically underserved communities may be disproportionately affected if budget decisions reduce programs or services they rely upon. Reviewing the equity impacts of proposed 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 directly involved in its development.

However, the required public hearings provide opportunities for community participation in the budget adoption process. Intentional outreach can help ensure that historically underserved communities have meaningful opportunities to provide input.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates commitments to fiscal responsibility, transparency, public accountability, and compliance with Oregon Local Budget Law. It reinforces the Board's responsibility to consider public hearing input and formally approve the budget, appropriations, and property tax levy.

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 structured financial oversight, transparency, and public accountability.

Barriers to equitable outcomes may include limited public understanding of budget processes, language and accessibility challenges, competing financial priorities, and unequal opportunities for community participation in budget hearings.

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 supports community participation through the Budget Committee and TSCC public hearing processes, which provide opportunities for public input before the Board adopts the budget.

Final decision-making authority remains with the Board. Power-sharing can be strengthened by making budget information accessible, encouraging diverse community participation, and clearly communicating how public input informs budget decisions.

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 the budget decisions made through the adoption process.

An unintended consequence could occur if budget modifications disproportionately affect programs serving students with greater educational or support needs. Limited public participation could also result in some community perspectives being underrepresented.

Plan

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

Potential negative impacts can be reduced by providing accessible budget information, encouraging broad community participation in public hearings, and considering equity when evaluating proposed budget modifications.

MESD can also review how budget decisions affect different student populations and programs to identify and address potential disparities.