

Miller Creek School District| LCAP Budget Committee
Committee Questions & Answers

Big Picture	
Question	Answer
How do you convince our community that “setting aside” 17% will help our current students?	The 17% recommended reserve for economic uncertainty has been identified by the Board as a goal for the district. 17% represents approximately two months of payroll. Districts that have a higher reserve are better able to weather the storm. This means that fewer reductions and impacts to staff and students occur when the state has an economic downturn and revenues fall short and/or state money is deferred.
Are we obligated to cut 1.2 million in one year or over two?	The December First Interim budget assumed an adjustment of approximately \$600,000 for the 2024-25 school year, by Board direction. The Board also directed a reduction of \$600,000 for the 2025-26 school year to align with the Board's resolution. Ultimately, the Board will decide the pace of adjustments but are seeking recommendations from the LCAP/Budget Committee.
What other programs are up for adjustment?	The Board encourages the LCAP/Budget committee to consider anything that eliminates deficit spending.
How can we prevent cuts from impacting the LCAP state priority areas?	The Board's goals and the State's priorities guide the work of the District. The charge of the committee is to make recommendations that align with the priorities set locally and by the state. It is likely that the priority areas will be impacted with the hope that services can be delivered in a more efficient and effective way.
What are similar sized districts doing that we can learn from?	District's from across the state are engaging in processes to adjust their budgets. Districts that are funded differently and have higher reserves have other options available. When districts have higher reserves, they are able to move through years where there is a shift in revenue with less impact to staff and students.
Is there a way to stagger the reductions to minimize the impact of cuts?	The committee can make a recommendation to spread the adjustments over two years but it is ultimately the Board's decision. Based on the Board's direction, the minimum amount of adjustments for the 2024-25 school year is \$600,000.
Can we recommend that the District “trim” from several places instead of one or two major cuts?	Yes
What is absolutely essential?	The Board has established goals and priorities for the district. The state sets the priority areas that must be reflected in the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Local communities reflect priorities through the passage of local funding measures such as a parcel tax that funds specific services for the District.

Revenue Related	
Question	Answer
Are there any community partnerships we havent explored to try and help mitigate the impact of the cuts?	From the District perspective, no. However, we are open to feedback from the committee.
Should the District explore additional grants? Is the District engaged with a grant writer?	Grants are helpful to fund targeted services that are above the core programs. However, grants do not provide ongoing money and can require additional staff to manage the grant. Click here to view additional information about District grants. The MCSD has a contract with a grant writer who submits applications on behalf of the district.
Has the District considered investing in interest bearing accounts for revenue (e.g CD guaranteed)?	According to Education Code 41001,the governing board of every school district shall maintain all moneys received from any source into the county treasury. However, money maintained in other funds, such as a Special Reserve Fund, may be invested outside the County Treasurer.
Are there other revenues coming in that may be available to lessen the impact of cuts we need to make (e.g. music grant)?	The District receives federal, state, and local revenue. Please see the report on Revenue linked here . The District additionally receives revenue from Prop 28 for art and music.
Are bond measures always used to fund facilities?	Yes, local school bond measures generate funds for repair, construction or replacement of school facilities. No bond proceeds can be used for operating expenses.
Could parents offer to buy chromebooks if they are able?	Parents may purchase a chromebook if they are able and it meets the operating system requirements.

Family	
Question	Answer
What are the state's standards for school climate and parental involvement?	The state's priority of school climate refers primarily to suspension rates. Parental involvement refers to the District's efforts to seek parent input. For example, School Site Council, YouthTruth survey, Home and School Club, etc.

Classroom Related	
Question	Answer
How close are we to max class sizes? Contract language & grade averages	<p>Article 8 in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between MCSD and MCEA defines class size. It states that all reasonable attempts will be made to maintain individual class size within the median of the following ranges and individual class sizes shall not exceed the maximum of each range listed below:</p> <p>Transitional Kindergarten: 24 students Kindergarten: 24-29 students Grades 1, 2, & 3: 24-29 students Grades 4 & 5: 25-31 students Grades 6, 7, & 8 Core Academic Classes (ELA, Math, Science, History): 25-31 students Grades 6, 7, & 8 Other Classes: 10-35 students Grades 6, 7, & 8 Physical Education: 10-45 students Music Classes Grades 4-8: 10-50 student</p> <p>Elementary Averages TK- 22.3 K- 19.7 1- 23.1 2- 23.8 3- 22.2 4- 26.4 5- 24.7</p> <p>Sample Middle School Averages Math 6 -28.1 Math 7 -25.6 Math 8 -23.7 Algebra -30 ELA 6- 28.1 ELA 7 -25.7 ELA 8 -25.8 Elective Range- 20-42</p>
What are the costs of materials (books) each year that the district covers? Could it be reduced?	<p>The total cost of materials (books) for all classrooms and libraries is \$114,321. This number represents 0.4% of the budget.</p>

Program Related																																																																						
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What is the cost of the elementary art program? PE program? K-2 music program?	The total cost of the elementary art program including personnel and supplies is \$163,000.																																																																					
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Can we adjust K-5 PE costs?	The committee may recommend an adjustment to the TK-5 PE program.
What electives at the middle school are seeing increased/decreased enrollment?	We are in the process of gathering student course requests at Miller Creek Middle School. Based on enrollment, we believe that it may be possible to reduce one section of elective classes. Each section is roughly \$25,000. This information will be available at the February 27th LCAP/Budget meeting.
Could the intervention services only be provided for unduplicated student's or how/who receives services at LVE?	<p>Currently Vallecito, Mary E. Silveria, and Miller Creek have a full time credentialed intervention teacher. Lucas Valley has a 60% intervention teacher. Vallecito and Mary E. Silveria have three classified staff to support the intervention program and Lucas Valley and Miller Creek have two classified staff.</p> <p>Our schools have the following number and percentage of students that are considered unduplicated: as of Oct 31st, 2023 Miller Creek: 154 (26%) Mary E. Silveira: 173 (40%) Lucas Valley: 34 (9%) Vallecito: 102 (25%)</p>
Can we see a breakdown of the lump costs (expenditures) for counseling and intervention programs to better determine how to make cuts if needed in these areas.	<p>Counseling & Wellness</p> <p>2023-24: Total Cost--> \$773,000 (MCSD \$693,000, BACR \$80,000) 2022-23: Total Cost--> \$743,000 (MCSD \$550,000, BACR \$193,000) 2021-21: Total Cost--> \$547,000 (MCSD \$400,000, BACR \$147,000)</p> <p>Bay Area Community Resources (BACR) is a contracted agency that supports our school counseling program by providing short-term, intensive 1:1 services to students.</p> <p>Intervention Program- \$781K 69%, Certificated Staff 26%, Classified Staff 5%, Materials & Supplies</p>
What would it look like to have a 6 period day at MCMS?	In grades 7 and 8 at Miller Creek Middle School, most students have the opportunity to enroll in two elective classes. The elective classes are funded by the Parcel Tax which expires in 2030. In grade 6, students have two periods of English Language Arts. A 6 period day would mean that students in grade 6 would have one period of English and students in grades 7 & 8 would enroll in one elective or academic support class.

How much money could be saved if we ran a TK program at the minimum state level?	The instructional minute requirement for Transitional Kindergarten is 36,000 minutes annually or 3 hours and 20 minutes daily. If the district adjusted its program to meet the minimum requirement, there would be an approximate cost savings of \$200,000.
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Budget Related																																					
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What's in our LCAP that isn't funded by the state?	<p>Only 62% of LCAP actions are funded through the LCFF.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="479 598 1411 1081"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="479 598 682 682">LCAP FUNDING</th> <th data-bbox="682 598 844 682">Goal 1</th> <th data-bbox="844 598 1006 682">Goal 2</th> <th data-bbox="1006 598 1153 682">Goal 3</th> <th data-bbox="1153 598 1315 682">Grand Total</th> <th data-bbox="1315 598 1411 682"></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="479 682 682 798">1-STATE AID, LCFF UNRESTRICTED</td> <td data-bbox="682 682 844 798">\$15,526,187</td> <td data-bbox="844 682 1006 798">\$103,990</td> <td data-bbox="1006 682 1153 798">\$263,730</td> <td data-bbox="1153 682 1315 798">\$15,893,907</td> <td data-bbox="1315 682 1411 798">62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="479 798 682 871">2-FEDERAL GRANTS</td> <td data-bbox="682 798 844 871">\$381,179</td> <td data-bbox="844 798 1006 871">\$120,786</td> <td data-bbox="1006 798 1153 871">\$65,790</td> <td data-bbox="1153 798 1315 871">\$567,755</td> <td data-bbox="1315 798 1411 871">2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="479 871 682 945">3-STATE GRANTS</td> <td data-bbox="682 871 844 945">\$3,721,492</td> <td data-bbox="844 871 1006 945">\$809,535</td> <td data-bbox="1006 871 1153 945">\$275,354</td> <td data-bbox="1153 871 1315 945">\$4,806,381</td> <td data-bbox="1315 871 1411 945">19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="479 945 682 1029">4-RESTRICTED LOCAL</td> <td data-bbox="682 945 844 1029">\$3,464,133</td> <td data-bbox="844 945 1006 1029">\$99,145</td> <td data-bbox="1006 945 1153 1029">\$863,799</td> <td data-bbox="1153 945 1315 1029">\$4,427,077</td> <td data-bbox="1315 945 1411 1029">17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="479 1029 682 1081">Grand Total</td> <td data-bbox="682 1029 844 1081">\$23,092,991</td> <td data-bbox="844 1029 1006 1081">\$1,133,456</td> <td data-bbox="1006 1029 1153 1081">\$1,468,673</td> <td data-bbox="1153 1029 1315 1081">\$25,695,120</td> <td data-bbox="1315 1029 1411 1081"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	LCAP FUNDING	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Grand Total		1-STATE AID, LCFF UNRESTRICTED	\$15,526,187	\$103,990	\$263,730	\$15,893,907	62%	2-FEDERAL GRANTS	\$381,179	\$120,786	\$65,790	\$567,755	2%	3-STATE GRANTS	\$3,721,492	\$809,535	\$275,354	\$4,806,381	19%	4-RESTRICTED LOCAL	\$3,464,133	\$99,145	\$863,799	\$4,427,077	17%	Grand Total	\$23,092,991	\$1,133,456	\$1,468,673	\$25,695,120	
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Where is lotto money?	<p>There are 2 types of Lottery Money:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unrestricted (Resource 1100) \$177 per ADA = about \$320,000 this year - Restricted for Instructional Material ONLY (Resource 6300) \$72 per ADA = about \$130,000 this year 																																				
How are site budgets established?	<p>Schools receive \$134 per enrolled student for what we call "site budget".</p> <p>In addition, they receive \$12 per student for the library.</p> <p>Total approx \$350,000, which represents 1.05% of our total budget.</p> <p><u>By School</u> Lucas Valley: 60K Mary E. Silveria: 70K Vallecito: 68K Miller Creek: 150K</p> <p>Site budgets are typically spent on materials and supplies, software to support learning, professional development, and library supplies.</p>																																				

Full list of everything in our carved budget that the state doesn't pay for fully or where Miller Creek goes above and beyond. Local revenue dollar amount and what it funds	1-CERTIFICATED SALARIES	\$2,364,854
	2-CLASSIFIED SALARIES	\$571,299
	3-CERT EMPLOYEES BENEFITS	\$421,468
	3-CLASS EMPLOYEES BENEFITS	\$183,673
		\$3,541,294
	4-BOOKS & SUPPLIES	\$180,500
	5-SERVICES & OTHER OPEX	\$230,201
		\$410,701
	Total	\$3,951,995

Property	
Question	Answer
Is there any room to increase \$ from lease agreements?	The District revenue for 2023-24 from our lease agreements is \$1,904,000. An increase of one percent of this would be \$190,000 in additional revenue.
Are we charging enough for our facilities?	The District is currently engaged with an Appraising services firm to analyze fair market rate for the Old Lucas Valley Campus (Marin Waldorf) and Santa Margarita campuses for the next lease renewal.
How do our facilities use fees compared to other local district's fees?	There is no annual increase to the MCSD facility use fees and they have not been adjusted since 2016. Currently, there is no document that compares fees across the county. An analysis of fees and subsequent adjustment could be a recommendation from the committee.
When will the property leases be renewed?	Lease terms as described in the Revenue Generation Report: 6/30/2024: Most of Santa Margarita tenants 6/30/2025: Marin Waldorf and Miss Nicky 6/30/2027: MCOE, Recreation Reimagine and City of San Rafael 6/30/2028: Mark Day
When was the last time we raised rent on our properties?	Each lease agreement includes an annual increase based on the CPI-U. Min 3% Max 6% for most of our tenants except Min 2% Max 6% for Mark Day
What are limits for facility use fees?	Link to policy

Who negotiates lease revenue?	The Board ultimately approves lease agreements with support from staff and, at times, legal counsel.
What is the market rate for the lease sites?	The District is currently engaged with an Appraising services firm to analyze fair market rate for the Old Lucas Valley Campus (Marin Waldorf) and Santa Margarita campuses for the next lease renewal.

Can Do!	
Question	Answer
Do we adjust our expectations of annual CanDo funds coming in? Benefactor and gracious	(Response Provided by Can Do!) It's hard to determine the funding question at the moment while in the middle of a campaign. We'll have a better idea in a week or so when it ends. At the moment, we are at 76% of reaching our Family Giving Campaign goal of \$700,000. Compared to last year's YTD, we are behind in FGC gross income by almost \$7,000. We do have several events coming up, including our inaugural pancake breakfast, which we are very excited about. We have not reached our goal in the past 2 years. We were hopeful last year and raised our suggested donation amount as it had not been raised in 6 years when normally it was raised every 3 or so years. The need for programs and services increased last year as well that we funded so we stepped up our financial commitment to the district in hopes that we would be able to reach our goal. Unfortunately, we have had to pull from our reserves for the past couple of years. This school year we had to make the difficult decision to cut several MOU funding areas (ie, supplies for programs) as well as reduce our administration expenses, to reduce the risk of pulling from our reserves again which would have put us in continued deficit spending. Can Do! would like to remain nimble in our expectations and adjust to the needs of the district while remaining financially stable.
How can we improve CanDo outreach?	(Response Provided by Can Do!!) We have been discussing the various ways to improve / increase our outreach. We just made yard signs placed throughout the community, sent a letter from our board presidents, and plan on sending a letter from the School Board, which is to go out Feb. 8. Other things are being discussed and in the works as well such as trying to get school ambassadors again at each site, partnering more with the HSCs and being present at their events, including handing out small flyers for increased exposure. We have also discussed the idea of doing an open forum for the community to come and learn more about Can Do! and ask questions. This would be in partnership with the HSCs. We have been somewhat limited by the sole use of Parent Square. We can no longer use MailChimp or direct email, plus no longer having a part in the principals' weekly newsletters have all affected our outreach potential. We are always welcome to ideas on how to better connect with the community.

<p>When was the last year CanDo held a gala?</p>	<p>(Response Provided by Can Do!) The last gala was in the 2014-2015 school year. The idea to do one again has been brought up in some past meetings. The volunteer efforts needed, which has been a challenge getting, as well as it not being as equitable due to the cost factor, the board has continually decided against it. For example, we planned a fabulous community event this past October that we had to cancel due to low ticket sales. We put out a survey and the majority responded they were not going to attend due to the cost, which was \$35 per adult and \$10 per child. This cost was way below what a ticket to a gala would be. The good news is that we have been able to shift to a successful online auction which has raised approximately \$30,000+ gross for the past several years. We have increased how many events we hold that have been more inclusive for the community.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Transportation</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Question</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Answer</p>
<p>Are there any savings possible in the area of transportation?</p>	<p>Possibly. Any solution associated with the transportation program would require a full analysis and study. The committee could recommend such a study. The analysis would include both an economic study and impact to students and families.</p>
<p>Can money be saved in the area of special education transportation?</p>	<p>Click here to review the Committee Resource: Transportation Report.</p>
<p>Is busing at the middle school sustainable?</p>	<p>Possibly. Any solution associated with the transportation program would require a full analysis and study. The committee could recommend such a study. The analysis would include both an economic study and impact to students and families.</p> <p>Click here to review the Committee Resource: Transportation Report.</p>
<p>What is the total transportation costs?</p>	<p>The current year projected costs are about \$560,000, including \$335,000 for Special Education.</p>
<p>Can we use vans like St. Vincent's used to transport our SPED students to save costs and open up possibilities of drivers?</p>	<p>Possibly, we could explore a change in the District transportation model. This would require a program cost analysis that explores factors such as staffing constraints, vehicle sourcing, projected maintenance, etc.</p>

Special Ed	
Question	Answer
What percent of the special education expenses reflects services provided by the district, the county office, or non public schools?	About 10% of the total special education expenditures are related to NPS and 20% are related to services provided by MCOE, with the remaining related to district expenses.
Would it be cost beneficial to provide a larger continuum of services within the district so that fewer referrals are made to programs at non public schools?	Possibly. An analysis would need to look at the number of students that require a particular level of service, the facilities available to provide those services, and staffing requirements.
Special Ed - what are legal requirements?	Once a student becomes eligible for special education services, a team of professionals plus the student's parent or guardian agree on the services needed to access education. Those services listed in the student's plan become legal requirements for the District.

Other	
Question	Answer
What can be sourced within the schools to drive savings?	The committee could make recommendations to improve effectiveness and/or efficiency of a specific program or operation.
How much is spent on legal costs?	On average over the last 3 years, we spent \$210,000 in legal fees. This year, we budgeted \$177,000, which represent 0.5% of our total expenditures.