



FOREST GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET COMMITTEE  
1728 Main Street; Forest Grove, OR 97116

February 24, 2026

**CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Kristy Kottkey called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone; she then led the pledge of allegiance. The following were in attendance:

**Budget Committee**

Kristy Kottkey  
Kate Grandusky  
Alma Lozano  
Megan Baer - absent  
Susan Field  
Nicholas Hafez  
Melinda Fischer  
Peter Truax  
David Andersen - absent  
Jordan Miller  
Brisa Franco - joined at 5:33 p.m.  
Maya Andrade, Student Representative

**Staff**

Suzanne West, Superintendent  
Arturo Lomeli, Assistant Superintendent  
Ilean Clute, Director of Finance  
Kim Shearer, Director of Student Service  
Arturo Lomeli, Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Enrique Pinon, Technology Manager  
David Warner, Director of Communications  
Bethany Magnuson, Executive Assistant

**PRELIMINARIES**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Board Chair Kottkey asked for introductions of the committee.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Committee member Grandusky moved to approve the agenda as presented, committee member Lozano seconded and the agenda was approved.

**Elect Budget Committee Chair**

Board Chair Kottkey opened the nominations for Budget Committee Chair for the 2026-27 budget process.

Committee member Grandusky nominated Nicholas Hafez as Budget Committee Chair, Director Truax seconded. Board Chair Kottkey called for a vote and committee member Nicholas Hafez was elected Budget Committee Chair for the 2026-2027 budget process with a vote of 9-0.

**Elect Budget Committee Vice-Chair**

Budget Committee Chair Hafez opened the nominations for Budget Committee Vice Chair for the 2026-27 budget process.

Budget committee member Lozano nominated Melinda Fischer to serve as Budget Committee Vice Chair, committee member Grandusky seconded. Budget Committee Chair Hafez called for a vote and Melinda Fischer was elected Budget Committee Vice Chair for the 2026-27 budget process with a vote of 9-0.



## **Budget 101**

Presented by Ilean Clute, Director of Finance and Operations

The Director of Finance provided a comprehensive overview of the district's budget development process, emphasizing that this meeting serves as a foundational session for both new and returning committee members.

Key points included:

- The budget process spans several months and is designed to be iterative and transparent.
- Early meetings (February and April 14) focus on building understanding of:
  - Budget structure
  - Revenue sources (state school fund, local taxes, grants)
  - Expenditure categories
  - Legal requirements
- The proposed budget will be formally presented on May 14, at which point it becomes a public document.
- Subsequent meetings (May 21 and May 28) will allow for detailed review, discussion, and potential revisions before adoption.

### Budget Timeline and Key Milestones

The committee reviewed the full budget calendar:

- February 25: Budget 101 (informational)
- April 14: Continued budget overview and assumptions
- May 14: Presentation of the Proposed Budget & Budget Message
- May 21 & May 28: Budget Committee deliberation sessions
- June 9: Public hearing and board adoption

Committee members were encouraged to engage throughout the process and seek clarification as needed.

### Purpose and Role of the Budget Committee

The Director of Finance reviewed statutory responsibilities under Oregon Local Budget Law:

- Promote transparency and accountability
- Provide community oversight and input
- Ensure alignment with district priorities and legal requirements

Responsibilities include:

- Reviewing the proposed budget
- Receiving public comment
- Approving the budget and tax levies
- Establishing appropriation levels

### Committee Structure and Voting Requirements

- Membership:
  - 5 School Board members
  - 5 appointed community members
- Quorum: 6 members
- Voting Requirement: Minimum of 6 affirmative votes required for approval

### Budget Development Context

The Director of Finance provided context for the 2026–2027 budget:

- The district is planning within a financially constrained environment
- Efforts are focused on aligning expenditures with projected revenues while minimizing impact to students and staff
- Current projections are based on preliminary assumptions, including:
  - State funding estimates
  - Enrollment projections
  - Legislative considerations

The budget will continue to be refined throughout the process.

#### Discussion Topics

The committee engaged in discussion around several key topics:

- **Budget Transparency and Accessibility**  
Members discussed the importance of making the budget understandable to the community, including how information will be presented once public.
- **Revenue Stability and State Funding**  
Questions were raised about the reliability of state funding projections and how changes at the state level could impact the district’s budget.
- **Enrollment Trends and Impact on Funding**  
Discussion included how enrollment projections influence revenue and staffing decisions, and the importance of accurate forecasting.
- **Staffing and Program Prioritization**  
Committee members expressed interest in understanding how staffing levels and program offerings are evaluated during budget reductions or adjustments.
- **Opportunities for Community Input**  
The committee discussed strategies to encourage public engagement during the budget process and ensure community voices are heard.

#### Questions and Responses

Committee members asked clarifying questions during the presentation:

When does the budget become public?

- May 14, upon presentation of the proposed budget and budget message.

Can the Budget Committee make changes?

- Yes, during the May work sessions prior to adoption.

What level of detail will be provided?

- Detailed revenue, expenditure, staffing, and program information, along with a narrative explanation.

How is public input incorporated?

- Through scheduled public comment opportunities and ongoing committee discussion.

What happens if assumptions change after adoption?

- Adjustments can be made through budget resolutions or supplemental budgets.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned 7:17 p.m.