

Balancing Act Comments

Submitted through 3/2/24.

Revenue

Your Suggestion

1. Ideas for KPB Government to Enact:
 - 1) Extend the borough sales tax for food year-round.
 - 2) Charge those properties held by "snow birds" at double or triple the mill rate of those who live year-round in the Borough.
 - 3) Lobby the state legislature to enact a "child-size" dividend that would have children birth to 18yrs receive a reduced PFD with the difference going in an educational endowment fund used to augment the BSA.
 - 4) Lobby the state legislature to enact a 3-5 year waiting period for new residents to receive a dividend with this waiting period PFD \$\$ going into an educational endowment fund used to augment the BSA.

2. NO more cuts to classrooms, teachers or support staff. Cut ALL after school programs for next year. Have parents contact the Governor and legislators with their concerns.

3. I will preface my suggestion with some personal background. I am a drilling Navy Reservist with 11 years total service. My undergraduate degree is in Applied Mathematics, and I supervised the safe operation of naval nuclear reactors for several years in my career. Not only am I very analytical and logical, but I have been a leader in decision-making roles. It must feel like an insurmountable obstacle to have such a large deficit, and it takes great humility to come to the community in transparency and ask for help. So thank you for canvassing the community! I was always taught the best ideas come from the most junior of Sailors, so I imagine that the conglomerate of community input will help the situation. A community that bands together is powerful!
This budget uses at least 1/2 the fund balance and assumes a conservative \$300 BSA. It focuses on cutting spending on things rather than on people. Extra-curriculars like the pool, theater, and athletics are cut. However, of these 3, the pool is most important to cut. This is the time to lobby for the Borough and the community to step in to keep the pool running. It cannot be a KPBSD financial burden anymore. Choose to cut theater and athletics or use the \$2.3 million surplus to keep those programs funded for another year. However, I think teams need to focus hard on fundraising next year regardless to continually offset a budget deficit. Interactive Flat Panels are a FLAT NO GO. I know the argument is made for teachers needing replacements due to old technology. Schools have operated without technology for thousands of years. A temporary deferment to restablize the budget is the more logical decision here. Cut discretionary spending in areas that are furthest from the school building or on things rather than people. If you cut spending on people or increase PTR, you risk losing more staff. We already have a hard enough time keeping people. If you lose them, you will never get them back. Therefore, the main philosophy of this budget is to use current sources of revenue to prioritize spending on people and cut spending on things recognizing that people are the real return on investment . Keep the long-term game in mind here. It is better to keep your people and have less money in your fund balance than to hold onto your fund balance like an old miser, lose your people, and risk worsening staffing down the road while having a thick wallet and a continued budget deficit.

4. Cut District Office staff. Reduce amount of personal days that Superintendent has, same with Administration. They already have more than the rest of their staff- why? Easy budget cut. Reduce the hours spent in school, shorter school days. 4 day work week? Get a more affordable health care plan.

Unassigned Fund Balance

1. I could not select an option between using 1/2 and all. I created this budget using 1/2 the fund balance and still had a \$645,000 deficit. I did not cut personnel positions or increase PTR. Instead of doing that, I selected to use "all" of the fund balance. However, assume the \$2.3 million surplus stays in the fund balance.

Foundation Funding

2. I assumed a more conservative BSA in the event the \$680 per student is reduced.
3. if BSA goes up \$680, this should come close to balance budget. Just no button for \$680 BSA increase.

Expenditures

Your Suggestion

1. Please try not to cut student extracurricular activities. As a parent, I'd be willing to help pay for these programs more. Even if that means sourcing outside supporters for these programs. They have such a positive impact on students, especially those who find it hard to find reasons to stay in school and off drugs.
2. Can you make an option so that high schools, who often have students studying elsewhere for most of the day, do not receive PTR credit for these students? Like make an option so that the actual number of students in a high school class is similar to the actual number of students in an elementary class, not just on paper.
3. Look at my suggestions and carry over the minimal surplus to next year. Hopefully revenue will increase, and we can fund more programs, but for now, we aren't running a deficit and we're keeping as many programs open as possible without depending on an increase to the BSA. I am actually all for a \$100 increase to the BSA, and using those funds to increase the PTR, but wouldn't plan on it.
4. I suggest closing remote schools. Nikolivesk, Seldovia, maybe even Ninilchik. There is too many buildings to maintain and staff.
5. 4 day school week and buy out the contracts of teachers with 1-2 years left to retirement.
6.
 1. Get home schooled funded students to become brick and mortar schools for funding.
 2. Put an actual number of staff members that would need to be cut if the PTR was changed.
 3. Can we get revenue from the home school students who participate in after school programs? Making them a class so they have to be enrolled.
7. Consolidate schools
8. We need to create a small high school/middle school category for those schools like Seward MS and HS with less than 200 students. The PTR of the big middle & high schools should be raised and the small middle/high schools should be lowered. This would create a more equitable education across the district. It might even save \$\$ in the long run.
9. Close small schools and transfer students to nearest school. Such as Moose Pass students to Seward; Anchor Point students to Homer. Nikiski Jr-Sr to Kenai High School; close one of the Homer schools and combine two elementaries into one larger elementary, and do the same in Seward. The student population is Not there for so many small schools.

10. I would much prefer to cut my workdays and all the workdays of everyone if it means being able to keep the pools and theaters in service. Our students and our community need these services. I hope whatever is decided those choices are taken into huge consideration.
11. have more fund raisers and communicate as a community
12. There are so many groups of people who use our building for activities that are not school run, all outside building use should be eliminated that do not directly impact our school activities. There are also groups that owe money on facilities use that should be collected.

If we cut work days for classified staff to only days with students in the building, we can still run our programs. When we increase PTR, we lose programs.
13. We can go to a radio station like the one on K-beach Road. And we can put up a fundraiser at events that we hold at SOHI.
14. This is if we get only a \$300 BSA increase for FY25.

Elementary School Counselors

1. Having elementary school counselors in our schools is being proactive and not reactive. We need our counselors for our students and staff's well being. We are making a difference in many lives.
2. Reduce number of counselors by 50%
3. While an important position for the highest risk user groups, it is once again a position that seems mostly utilized by a smaller margin. The middle of the pack/low maintenance group is once again sacrificed because our resources are appropriated for a select few. At the risk of sounding callous, at some point the community and the parents need to take on this role of providing non-academic support to these children. The schools cannot save everyone, especially on a budget that already projects a deficit. I feel that we need to reach that tipping point in which we are able to be honest with ourselves and the general public that schools cannot cure the ills of society. The most we can do is create a safe space for children but poor parenting and home neglect of children are way too strong of forces for our schools to counter. We need to put some people's feet in the fire and not constantly put that burden on our school personnel.

Elementary Schools K-6 >=250 Salaries & Benefits

1. Reduce number of non-classroom teachers (counselors, specialists)

Elementary Schools K-6 100-250 ADM Salaries & Benefits

1. Reduce number of non-classroom "teachers" - specialists, counselors, SPED

Small Schools

1. Reduce numbers of non-classroom teachers (specialists, counselors, SPED)

Discretionary Funds

1. I think this should be removed. It would save \$142,937. Teacher materials are purchased by the district. If they felt inclined to purchase something not covered, they could anyways. \$250 is not much to cover items anyways.

Counseling Assistants

1. This job has busy seasons and slow seasons in my experience. If we shorten the days the workload would balance out a bit. And save money.

Custodians

1. All support staff cut 5 days. Make it fair to the support staff.

Pool Managers/Pool Supervisor

1. Would be helpful to include what pool managers do - specifically during the school year. Could their contracts be flexed to work outside of the instructional school year?
2. This would have pools open when School is open.
3. Could pools be run like the local hockey rinks where clubs pay fees for it during the non-school times?
4. This is the time to shift the pool responsibility to the Borough. The community needs to rise up to make the pool happen. It cannot be a KPBSD financial burden anymore.
5. Keep Pool Managers, Cut Pool supervisor. Can't the pool managers be supervised directly by the Director of Operations?
6. Is there a charge for people outside of KPBSD Umbrella (students/staff) to use the pool? Money maker
7. Leave pools open year round. Close for 5 days like all the rest of support staff. That's a week before or after summer swimming lessons. Many swimming lessons for young people. Benefit to the community.

Theater Techs and Theater Manager

1. I am guessing that there are slow times when they may not need to be on contract.
2. Call upon the community to keep the theater program going for next year. I am all for extra curriculars for kids, and the community needs to step in to make it happen.

Bilingual Tutors

1. Cut bilingual tutors

Connections Homeschool Program

1. What positions at Connections does this include? It just says the home school program, not an actual job classification.

Secretaries

1. Parent teacher conference day and teacher in-service days would be an easy cut for secretaries. The additional week after school has ended for the year is a great pool to shorten days from.
2. I think if you distribute the reduction across the school year, it will have the most minimal impact (i.e. the secretary can take off 1-2 unpaid Fridays/Mondays per month). If you reduce by having the secretaries start later in the school year (like start when teachers start) and end earlier in the school year (end when teachers end), that will be disastrous. Those are some of the busiest times of the year. I think that spreading this reduction over the course of the 9 months we are at school will impact both the secretaries and the schools the least. Maybe a separate schedule between the attendance secretary and bookkeeper so they are not taking the same days out so we can maximize staffing within the building.

Special Education Aides

1. These aids should not be working on the days that kids are not in school. I have heard from several that they do nothing on in-service and parent teacher days.

D/O Salaries/Benefits

1. I think that cutting positions at DO may be better, but that wasn't an option.
2. Students are the focus of education, so unfortunately the first people to be affected will be those in the district office who are furthest remove from schools.
3. District office staff pay needs to be decreased. Schools are struggling and yet these folks keep getting increases.

Discretionary Spending Accounts

1. Cut excess spending

Tech Plan

1. \$1.1m seems egregious and should be reduced. Does the \$1.1 account for the reimbursable amount? Do the online applications and subscriptions fall under this category or curriculum? There are way too many online platforms (maybe these were necessary during Covid, but are not utilized anymore) Also, why does the district use both Outlook and Gmail? Let's streamline and cut costs there too.

Interactive Flat Panels

1. What they have is working perfectly fine, no need to upgrade just because it is there. Use what we have.
2. If the current ones work, then they should NOT be replaced. Why fix what's not broken?
3. Teachers can make do with the technology they have for a year. I am a huge fan of Promethean Boards, HOWEVER, it is more important to cut spending on things rather than on people by shortening hours or increasing PTR. People are the real investment, not stuff. Technology is a luxury.

Hanover Study

1. Why is this not on the cut list? No one knows what it's for. It's a colossal waste of time trying to get all the consent forms. The students do not take this seriously. What is this even used for other than to pick at all the rosy parts and make the district feel better about themselves? It's one thing to highlight the positives but when we are looking at a deficit, we don't need to be spending \$50,000 to fool ourselves, especially with a flawed survey that no one really puts any thought on. We can do that later when we have a surplus. Or better yet, use this to hire a social media/communications specialist to better streamline the PR and information from the district to the general public.

Board AASB Dues

1. would be helpful for the public to know what AASB means.

And the difference between the dues and the policy updates. What do they do for the district?

2. What benefit has this provided our district?

Phone/Internet

1. I am certain there is room for conservative techniques to minimize electricity and heat. Many schools have unnecessary appliances plugged in doors ope etc..

Electricity

1. Years ago, there was an incentive program in this district to encourage schools to purposefully reduce their electricity usage. Those schools received a portion of the savings directly. It would be great to reinstitute this incentive program to encourage students and staff to turn off lights, computers, etc. when not in use.

Charter Schools budget

1. Cut Charter Schools all together, bring the kids back into the other schools and reduce the use of the buildings and the staff, or bring staff in from those schools to cover the extra staff needed for the few more students in the schools. Why are we paying so much for so little in the Charter Schools.

Liability/Property Insurance

1. When was the last time we shopped around and got quotes for this from other companies? Are there any ways to reduce premiums through a change?

Salaries/Benefits

1. We need to call on communities to raise money for extra curricular salaries and benefits if the cuts are that impactful. These are usually supplemental income sources.

Substitutes/temporary hires/overtime/Personal Leave cash outs salaries/benefits

1. Why not pause personal leave cash out for a year?

Discretionary Accounts

1. Cut Connections, there are other options for homeschool, let people choose other options.

Transportation

1. Again, my philosophy is to reduce spending on things to keep investment in people as the priority. Community members need to band together to make the new bus routes work with their schedules.

Extra-curricular Travel

1. Extra-curriculars need to fundraise to have money for travel. I know it is very expensive for teams to travel, but there is money from donors in the community and grants available.

Discretionary Accounts

1. This is the year to slim up and cut excess spending.