

**1) How many public school district in the U.S. spend \$16,300 per student or even close to that amount?**

<file:///home/chronos/u-101489b5618d5facd3af4707b225e6f3b48d2e29/Downloads/Per%20Pupil%20Budget%20Comparisons%20Tabloid%20English.pdf>

<http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/10f33pub.pdf>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/05/23/the-dramatic-inequality-of-public-school-spending-in-america/>

**2) Why are Carey's class sizes so small? (No staff cuts compared to other elementaries, not fair).**

The class sizes in Carey represent the total population in each of the grade levels. Carey School has decreased staff by 3 in the past two years. These paraeducators were reassigned to other schools in the Blaine County School District.

In the development of the 2015-16 budget, Carey elementary class were reviewed for the ability to make multiaged classrooms, however, if two contiguous classes were to be combined the class size would be over the policy recommendations.

**3) Could Blaine County vote on a proposition to allow the Budget Stabilization Levy to be tied to property values so that it would increase and decrease with those values?**

No. The Budget Stabilization levy was created by the State Legislature. The Legislature is the only governing body that can change the levy.

**4) I didn't realize property taxes are "stuck" at 2007 level. Can we negotiate with the state to raise that level?**

See answers above and below.

**5) Is there a current risk to the Budget Stabilization tax? (Stabilization Levy)**

There is always a risk that the State Legislature could decide to remove the levy from funding in Blaine County and three other school districts. This came up three years ago with a State Representative from McCall (Ken Roberts).

**6) Are we at risk of losing the Budget Stabilization cap/levy?**

See above.

**7) Why not ask for another levy?**

That would be a Board of Trustees decision. This solution would be an option to explore as we progress through this process with the community.

**8) What is the projection for student enrollment?**

Blaine County growth projections from various sources range from .002% to 2%. Sources include the Idaho Department of Labor, Sun Valley Economic Development and the Blaine County Comprehensive Growth plan. There are companies like [Davis Demographics and Planning](#), that charge between \$12,000-\$14,000 to make student enrollment projections.

**9) What/where would the new elementary school be?**

An elementary school would be located in a place where the population was growing. Several years ago the district anticipated that an elementary school would be located either in Hailey or Bellevue. Hailey already has two elementaries within the city limits where Bellevue only has one small elementary which is limited in play area.

**8) Hispanic population growth?**

Hispanic population growth in Blaine County is increasing and white population growth is decreasing. See p. 16 from [Superintendent's State of the District report](#) for a graph showing the population trends of both Blaine County and Blaine County School District students.

**10) How can pay be reinstated for 6th grade environmental camp staff? This program is all inclusive unlike other overnight programs that are composed of an elite group of self-selected students, and most of them are more independent and mature at the high school level.**

Pay could be reinstated for environmental camp only if pay was provided for all staff that take students on overnight trips. To do anything else is a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

**11) My high school student is averaging 3-5 hours of homework time per evening! This seems to be a result of International Baccalaureate (IB) demanding detailed summative assessments for all classes (i.e. he is taking a weight-lifting class that is generating hours of homework content that should only be done at school). How can my student be inspired by IB turning supposedly fun classes into days on his personal time and his motivation? If this loss of fun and inspiration is due to IB, then please revisit the established curriculum at the high school for its value in serving students.**

The Board's Policy Committee is currently reviewing the policy on homework and will be making recommendations to the Board of Trustees this school year on revisions for this policy.

**12) Is it possible to take a good look at IB (from a teacher's perspective) and re-evaluate this program? Again, from a teacher's perspective, is this what's best for the students, the budget, the teachers?**

There certainly could be a review of what would result in the best outcomes for our students in their secondary education that meet the goals of the strategic plan.

**13) Shouldn't World Language staff be part of the IB program?**

The IB program requires students to take World Language classes. For the purposes of calculating the amounts in the handouts and one the posters, we separated the cost of World Language teachers. The reason for this was that our community has expressed a desire for World Language classes regardless of whether it is required by IB.

**14) Why run an IB/MYP (International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program) with no Diploma Program?**

The IB/MYP program is designed to be a stand alone program for all students.

**15) Shouldn't IB be a choice?**

IB was a choice made by the District and the Board of Trustees under the previous strategic plan.

**16) Why is special education such a large cost? Isn't it reimbursed by Federal government funds?**

When the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed it included language that indicated that the Federal government would continue to increase funding for special education programming until it was entirely covered by Federal Government. However, this has never happened. Students with disabilities are provided the supports they need to be successful in school. At times these services can be intensive. The District currently receives \$650,000 in federal funding for special education services. Maintenance of effort requirements in the IDEA law mandate that services be kept at current levels unless there is a significant reduction in the number of students qualifying for these services

**17) Is it possible to create a chart of each special education federal mandate and list the monies being expended on each mandate?**

The federal government's main requirement for special education is that each district provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education as well as ensuring educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities for ages 3 - 21. In addition, there is the Idaho Special Education manual ( [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/special\\_edu/manual\\_page.htm](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/special_edu/manual_page.htm) ), 240+ page document of guidelines and regulations, that assist districts in meeting requirements. For more information about federal regulations, please go to the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) website at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html> .

**18) Why is there such a big gap between Special Education between costs and reimbursement?**

See response to above question.

**19) In “World Languages Grades 6-12” (on handout/poster), there’s a note that World Languages is not a required core subject by the state of Idaho. This same note is not included next to Drama, Art and Music. Are these 3 subjects required by the State? If not, why is there not a note next to them to?**

The note should have been next to Drama, Art and Music as well as World Languages. None of those classes are required by the State of Idaho.

**20) The past 5 weeks or so we have had our school RN here almost daily for a good portion of the day. She never sits down. It has illustrated the need for more school nursing hours. How do we make this a priority for our district funding?**

Priorities for district funding is an ongoing conversation with stakeholders. In the last two years the amount of nursing services was doubled.

**21) How did you calculate the cost of “Grades 6-12 With Class Sizes of 25 or Less”? (on handout/poster)**

The formula used for computing how many teachers are needed for a secondary school is:  
[(Number of students x 7 periods a day)/22 students per class]/5 classes per teacher  
This is the way teachers were allocated to secondary schools in the current budget.

**22) If we were able to group students into class sizes of 20 or 25, how many less teachers would be needed?**

We do currently allocate teachers by class sizes of 20 in grades K to 2 and class size of 25 for grades 3 and above.

**23) What are the projected changes in expenses due to teachers retiring and new beginning teachers being hired?**

Certified staff at the bottom of the salary schedule will make approximately \$120,000 with all of the benefits included. A new certified staff member to the district with ten years of experience will earn approximately \$85,000 with all benefits included. The savings is approximately \$35,000 per year per new certified position. The district typically has 15 to 18 certified positions a year that will need to be replaced. Not all of these positions are at the bottom of the salary schedule and will produce that type of savings. Additionally, not every certified staff member hired brings in ten years of experience. To maintain our current certified salary schedule in movement will cost approximately \$700,000 per year.

**24) Are the retirement needs increasing - so we are losing more money on this part of the budget?**

Retirement benefits are all paid by the Public Employees Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI). The district pays a percentage into the system based on our payroll amount. Regardless of how many staff members retire from BCSD the retirement amount paid into the system will only be based on that percentage of payroll.

**25) We expect some veteran educators to retire soon - how much can we save when we replace them with younger, cheaper teachers?**

See question 22 above.

**26) Can we give employees a cap of \$ to find their own health insurance and lower costs?**

We are a large enough employer we are required to provide our own health insurance under the affordable care act.

Leaving the health insurance pool would have an affect on our ability to re-apply to the pool at a later time. The Finance Committee evaluated the district's health insurance and the district re-bid the health insurance last fiscal year.

**27) What is the value of each of our real estate holdings that do not have a school?  
Can some of these be sold to raise money?**

The District has very little land available for sale. If we sold all available land the proceeds would not be enough to cover the cost of one year's deficit of approximately \$3,000,000.

**28) What is the number of part-time employees (over the years) for the past ten years?**

The number varies from year to year mostly in the transportation department. Most of the bus route drivers are compensated for hours of work between 25 and 35 hours per week. These positions come with a full benefit package as School Board policy states anything over 20 hours

per week is eligible for a full benefit package. Other than the bus route drivers the district has very few part time employees.

**29) I value clean buildings but I don't know if ours are overly clean, or just clean enough. \$2 million is a big budget item. Could we compare our square footage to other schools cost per square foot?**

We would need to compare not only square footage, but cost of living for other districts compared to ours as well.

**30) Can we share some athletic director positions between schools?**

We have one full time athletic director. Two schools have a staff member each that receives a stipend on top of their regular contract to handle athletic director duties.

**31) What is your target for reserves?**

Previous boards have targeted 9% for reserves as noted in past audits. With a 9% fund balance, the set aside amount would be approximately \$4,800,000. The current fund balance is \$7,700,000 in which we decreased by \$1,700,000 this past fiscal year. This continuance will put the district at the 9% threshold in two years.

**32) What is the process for determining funding for the Community Partners? I see that there are organizations like the Hunger Coalition that have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in providing food to struggling children in the classrooms that are not reimbursed through this fund. Perhaps a consistent application process should be considered.**

The majority of our partners do not ask for funding. We have Memorandum's of Understanding (MOU's) with several community partners. Through the MOU's, community partners are asked to let the district know what their request is for the following year. Those needs are then compared to the needs of other district programs to determine where the budget concentration will be. Any additional funding requested by the community partners are considered during the budgeting process each year.

**33) Does the new Obama care health program make us pay certain amount?**

The new health care plan has some fees attached to the program for large employers. Those fees are passed on to the federal government to help subsidize the cost of the health care plans that are being subsidized by this program.

**34) Have you ever considered eliminating complimentary cell phones and vehicles to administration?**

We do not provide complimentary cell phones and vehicles to administration. Cell phones and vehicles are provided due to job requirements.

**35) Does FTE (full time equivalent) include part time?**

Yes, two part time employees are the equivalent of one full time employee. Part time employees are calculated together to add to the full time equivalent.

**36) Does the State career ladder impact our salaries?**

No, our salary schedule is above the state's minimum salaries.

**37) In one year (2011?) it looks like the "savings amount" went down more than expenses went up. How? Why?**

In fiscal year 2011 savings increased by \$1,397,873 and expenditures increased by \$576,626. In fiscal year 2012 savings decreased by \$971,263 and expenditures increased by \$1,863,718. In fiscal year 2013 savings decreased by \$1,701,256 and expenditures increased by \$1,199,986. During the fiscal year 2012-2013 the Board of Trustees approved the Superintendent contract buyout.

**38) Is there a possibility of reclaiming \$ from old textbooks - maybe District garage sale?**

We currently sell our old textbooks and equipment when we no longer use them.

**39) How much money is and has been spent on the 7 Habits program? I am concerned with with the actual benefits where the kids don't seem to like it or want to follow it.**

The individual schools all pay for the consumable supplies necessary for the Leader in Me program. The district pays for the annual renewal costs per building as well as any additional professional development for new staff.

**40) Are we under contract to the Leader in Me program?**

Leader in Me is the current Board approved social/emotional curriculum at the elementary. This year's funding for Leader in Me is \$19,000. This can be found on p. 89 of the current year's budget. The focus of the \$19,000 is on the annual renewal costs and professional development for new staff to the District that have not been trained.

**41) We should look at other creative funding opportunities - not just ways to cut. Grants? Is there a precedent in other wealthy communities where citizens make contributions to a fund?**

We could consider hiring a grant writer.

**42) Why not ask for another levy?**

A new supplemental levy would be one of the options the district will consider in the future.

**43) Please explain the no new elementary school money to be moved to a general fund levy?**

The new elementary school was approved in 2009 in the School Plant Facilities Levy. This levy was passed by the voters for that purpose. Idaho Statutes do not allow School Plant Facilities Levy money to be used for general operating expenses in which the General Fund is. A supplemental levy would need to be approved by the voters in exchange for the district not collecting an equal amount on the School Plant Facilities Levy.

**44) Where is PD (Professional Development) listed in one place? For example, personal/individual teachers, workshops in district, conferences including travel, admin., etc.**

You can find that information in the 2015-16 Budget here.

[http://www.blaineschools.org/pages/Blaine\\_County\\_School\\_District/Departments/Finance/Budget](http://www.blaineschools.org/pages/Blaine_County_School_District/Departments/Finance/Budget)

**45) There is no true line item budget per school? Per District Office?**

You can find that information in the 2015-16 Budget here.

[http://www.blaineschools.org/pages/Blaine\\_County\\_School\\_District/Departments/Finance/Budget](http://www.blaineschools.org/pages/Blaine_County_School_District/Departments/Finance/Budget)

**46) Has the district considered going to a four day work week?**

Recent reports on four day work weeks do not indicate there is much cost savings in these models. When reviewing this option the cost savings will be in utility costs and transportation costs. Transportation is reimbursed by the State at 85% so the cost savings is very minimal. Utility costs only make up 1 ½% of the general fund. The savings in utility costs do not make a substantial cost savings by going to a four day work week. Staffing costs are still the majority of the district expenditures. State laws require students to be in school a certain number of hours per year which will require staff time to remain the same. This is a decision that will be made by the Board of Trustees after receiving feedback from the community.



