

## CSFP Briefing Document: School Board Responsibilities and Sample Budget Calendar

(A sample budget calendar guide designed for a school board member is on page 2. It can be used for planning as well as a guide for fiduciary responsibilities and community expectations.)

Board member responsibilities:

- hiring your superintendent, your auditor, and your attorney,
- financial decisions for employees,
- contracts the district enters into,
- the configuration of district facilities,
- adoption of curriculum, and
- a strategic plan for addressing the academic goals of your students.

In many communities you are the largest employer and your facilities are used for multiple purposes to support your broader community. You may have been elected by a larger voting community than your state legislator or county commissioner.

School Boards have a responsibility to create a vision and mission for a district and allow for public input in that decision making process. Creating a meeting plan for a year is critically important ensuring that a Board meets expected timelines driven by the state and district policies. Many financial items are driven by a state required timeline: quarterly financial review, budget adoption, audit completion, certification of mill levies, election deadlines for example. Other decisions may be more flexible, but can be influenced by surrounding districts' policies such as open enrollment, staffing decisions, hiring timelines, contract renewals, course offerings, etc.

A new challenge for school districts is the fluctuation of resources given the fiscal challenges of the state. This fluctuation may cause a revision of budgets two, three or even four times during a year. The changes at the state level may be after the district adopted budget, hired staff, offered contracts and committed to program and course offerings – forcing districts to make changes during a year. These changes create great challenges for school districts and add to the critical importance ongoing community discussions.

COLORADO SCHOOL FINANCE PROJECT

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**Sample District Budget Development Calendar for 2016-17 School Year**

*Italics = State Level*

<p><b>July 2015</b> New Fiscal Year Begins</p>	<p><b>August 2015</b> District: Plan budget calendar for 2016-17. BOE: Long –range budget forecast discussions with BOE. Decision due for Mill or Bond election. District: Receive preliminary assessed valuation</p>	<p><b>September 2015</b> <i>State: 2016-17 Revenue Forecast</i>  BOE receives quarterly financials</p>
<p><b>October 2015</b> October Student Count (10 day window)</p>	<p><b>November 2015</b> <i>State: Governor’s Budget</i>  District: Mill or Bond election, Odd years: School board election</p>	<p><b>December 2015</b> <i>State: 2016-17 Revenue Forecast. CDE releases student Membership Count.</i>  District: Receive final assessed valuation from county assessor. BOE: Certify mill levies property tax collection figures to county commissioner. BOE: Revised 2015-16 Budget Approved &amp; Quarterly financials</p>
<p><b>January 2016</b> <i>Legislature: Session Begins. Supplemental Process.</i></p>	<p><b>February 2016</b> <i>CPI Forecast</i> <i>Preliminary indication of school finance</i>  BOE: receives budget update</p>	<p><b>March 2016</b> <i>State: 2016-17 Revenue Forecast</i>  BOE receives quarterly financials BOE: Approve funded Capital projects</p>
<p><b>April 2016</b> District/BOE: Begin staffing decisions</p>	<p><b>May 2016</b> <i>Legislature: Finalize School Finance Act. Session ends</i>  District/BOE: Staffing decisions, preliminary budget must be presented</p>	<p><b>June 2016</b> <i>State: 2017-18 Revenue Forecast</i>  BOE receives quarterly financials BOE: Adoption of 2016-17 budget</p>