



McFarland Spartans
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McFarland School District

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District Administrator: Aaron Tarnutzer

September, 2024

Recently, the news media has highlighted how some Wisconsin public school districts have become aware of significant fiscal situations that were not previously known and/or understood implying mismanagement of funds. We thought you may be wondering what our district does to ensure that this does not happen here. We are pleased to share that our district has a long history of using sound fiscal practices including these highlighted practices:

- **Fiscal Planning** that meets or exceeds the requirements of [Board Policy 6210- Fiscal Planning](#)
- **Budget development** that meets or exceeds the requirement of [Board Policy 6220- Budget Preparation](#)
 - Clear timelines
 - 5 year fiscal and enrollment projections
 - Staff allocation management and Board Approval of all positions
- **Frequent public budget presentations** throughout the year during board meetings, the Annual Meeting, and the Budget hearing that exceeds what is required by law.
- **Monthly reporting** to the school board on actual expenses and revenues versus projected [School Board Agendas](#) as an example please see this Board meeting agenda, [June 17, 2024 Meeting](#)
- **Yearly external audits** which state our district is financially sound with internal financial practices including controls and checks/balances that keep us functioning at a high level. These audits are shared with the public and posted on our website ([click here](#)) for audit reports and more.
- **A fund balance** (reserves to cover cash flow) that meets or exceeds the requirements as outlined in [Board Policy 6235- Fund Balance](#).
 - To avoid expenses associated with the short term borrowing of money for cash flow, we need to maintain a level of reserves of at least 16% of our budget. Expenses include legal fees, interest expenses, and lost earnings on reserves.
 - Prior to 2017 the district had to short term borrow. Since 2017 the School Board and district leadership have maintained a sustainable reserve to avoid this borrowing.
 - The estimated reserve level for 2024-25 is 20%; however, a portion of these reserves are being used to help balance the budget in FY 24-25 and reduce the referendum amount for the 3 year referendum, resulting in the reserve level being closer to the 16% limit.

We are committed to being transparent with our finances. We continue to seek to provide budget information in a form that is easily understandable to the public, while also providing access to more detailed information for those who are interested.

Please note that our next **Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing will be held in the District Office Board Room located in McFarland High School at 7 p.m. on October 21st, 2024.** The Annual Meeting is a meeting of the school district stakeholders to take action on items such as approving the budget for the current school year, approving the District to dispose of surplus property, and determining the salaries for our elected School Board Members. Please join us to participate in this meeting if you are a U.S. citizen aged 18 years old or older and have resided in the School District of McFarland for at least 28 days.

Thanks,

Aaron Tarnutzer, Superintendent and Jeff Mahoney, Director of Business