

WebEx 2 Response for ED 636

After listening to the WebEx conversations, I found several takeaways to help me understand more about budgeting. The first point that caught my attention was the lack of budget that k-12 and higher education had while the private sector was able to generate more from involved parties. The three things that were offered as ways to improve budget were:

- Raise revenue through taxpayer support and other means
- Use social media to increase engagement
- Class size can have a major impact on budget – more students per teacher ratio

I'd like to talk a little about the social media part. I often scoff at Twitter and make fun of social media. With that said, my colleagues and I have found using donorschoose.org to be an excellent way to get very needed items for school. We've used it for books, sports equipment, technology and more. I would say this website has provided over \$10,000 in real materials for our school – just in the last year. We've even had students write up proposals and get donations for art projects and the aforementioned sports equipment.

Learning about other districts was also fascinating to me. Shakopee is looking to build and expand. It is said to be a 2-3 year process. Things that can help this happen are to predict the numbers and come up with a proposal. At my current school, we are doing this right now. As I type, the walls of our new school are being built and the land was purchased in the spring. We were awarded a federal grant and received a loan at the lowest possible bonding rate. It will be an exciting few years to come ☺

One of the things that struck me in a negative way was hearing that the neediest students will eat up the budget. This often goes with SPED. I thought immediately of our SPED department and how much we pay for those teachers, yet one of our SPED teachers only services two children. She probably makes more than half of our staff. In addition to spending extra money, we teachers have to spend extra energy on said students. I know it's a part of the deal and all children have that right to learn, but I thought I'd vent a little.

Lastly, I enjoyed hearing about theory versus practicality. Chris emphasized greatly that a principal should almost if not always use practicality to determine the budget. As a new principal, get the budget a year before (or even three years before) and make patient decisions on it. Make sure to not be hasty with budget decisions, and again, make sure to lean on the side of practicality.

Thanks for the make-up opportunity. I know these forces you to do more work and I appreciate your patience with me on it. Take care!