

Anchorage School District

Budget 2011-12

Questions and Answers

Proposed Fiscal Year 2011-12 Financial Plan

Q What wage and benefit increases have been agreed to in the ASD's union contracts? What is the basis for the increases?

A The district has eight different union contracts. [Copies of all negotiated agreements](#) can be found on the asdk12.org website. Negotiated contracts for the 2011-12 school year have salary increases ranging from 1.7 percent to 2.5 percent. Most of the district's negotiated agreements provide step increase for members as they gain experience.

Several factors are looked at in considering salary increases. Some of the factors reviewed when considering increases include: cost of living; increases received in other comparable negotiated agreements; wages paid for comparable positions outside the district; the district's ability to recruit and retain individuals in the various positions; and district budgets.

The increase in district costs for health insurance benefits for 2011-12 vary by bargaining agreements. In most cases, the district's contribution is increased by \$120 per month per member.

Q How is ASD's reserve fund calculated and how much is in it?

A Based on external auditor recommendations and an industry standard, the district attempts to retain 3 to 5 percent of the district General Fund expenditures as a reserve fund.

These funds provide for general financial stability, adequate coverage for cash flow of district operations, and funds for emergency or catastrophic events. These funds can also be allocated to be used as a one-time budgetary revenue source in the event that the district anticipates more expenditures than revenues for a particular year.

Using the FY 2011-12 budget, the district's reserve fund is currently calculated at 4.2 percent of General Fund expenditures.

Q What are the legal requirements for providing special education programs?

A Required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Special Education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability between the ages of 3 and 22, including instruction in the classroom, home, hospital, institution and other settings. As defined by IDEA, the term "child with a disability" means a child "with cognitive impairment, hearing impairment (including deafness), speech or language impairment, visual impairment (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, autism,

traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, or specific learning disability; and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services."

Services may include academic instruction in the general classroom with support or instruction using intervention curriculum in a special education classroom, mobility training, vocational education, speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and adaptive physical education as specified in each student's Individual Education Plan.

Additional services that may need to be included in the IEP are transportation, adaptive technology, specialized equipment, behavior interventions, social skills, study skills, interpreter services, and other specified supports depending on the individual needs of each student with a disability.

Q Can the district offer retirement incentives (buyouts) to the highest-paid teachers and then hire new teachers at a lower salary?

A The district can offer early retirement incentives, but they're usually not lucrative enough for teachers to want them. This is because retirement bonuses no longer count towards the Teacher Retirement System pay calculation.

As a rough example, if a teacher with 29 years of service accepted an early retirement incentive, they would receive approximately \$2,000 less per year in retirement income than if they waited one more year for full retirement. So, if the district offered a \$5,000 incentive, that money would cover only about 2.5 years of the difference between that teacher's early retirement pay and full retirement pay.

Q What is the estimated cost to offer a high school course in summer school with a teacher real-time at a school site versus online?

A The estimated cost of a summer school course with an actual, real-time teacher, using the average teacher salary, is \$7,527. Additional costs for offering real-time courses include: a building team of custodians, administrators, secretarial, safety security, counselors and all of the costs associated with keeping the building open.

Summer school online courses have a cost of \$3,452 for the teacher. Additional districtwide cost for offering online courses include: secretarial, a director and technicians.

Q In adding the cost of the energy conservation specialist to the 2011-12 budget, did ASD include an offset adjustment to account for anticipated energy cost savings?

A Based on research conducted with the help of the Council of the Great City Schools and the results of past energy conservation pilots facilitated in ASD facilities, the district anticipates a 5-8 percent savings from a focused energy conservation program.

The cost of the proposed energy conservation program is approximately \$160,000 and has been funded through a reciprocal net reduction to the General Fund allocation for utilities costs.

Further reductions to utilities costs were not made given the uncertainties of factors not in the district's control, such as the cost of utilities is directly affected by weather and the purchase price of fuel and electricity.



How much do student activity fees cover for the costs of providing high school sports?



The following chart includes students who receive fee waivers and does not include the cost of using ASD's own facilities.

Sport	Addenda	Travel & Equipment	Bus	Extra Facility	Sport Total	Number of Students	Cost Per Student	Fee	Percent Covered
Tennis	\$29,587	\$5,843	\$8,050		\$43,480	281	\$155	\$175	113%
Cheerleading	\$71,248	\$13,836	\$4,485		\$89,569	490	\$183	\$175	96%
Drama Debate/Forensics	\$21,782	\$2,594	\$3,450		\$27,826	148	\$188	\$175	93%
Track and Field	\$103,351	\$16,512	\$15,180		\$135,043	599	\$225	\$175	78%
X-Country Running	\$44,151	\$87,521	\$12,995	\$15,000	\$159,667	554	\$288	\$185	64%
Football	\$132,333	\$68,933	\$20,240	\$45,000	\$266,506	884	\$301	\$185	61%
Volleyball	\$75,348	\$19,966	\$6,440		\$101,754	302	\$337	\$185	55%
X-Country Skiing	\$66,921	\$62,521	\$24,725	\$25,175	\$179,342	510	\$352	\$185	53%
Basketball - Boys	\$65,695	\$22,517	\$12,995		\$101,207	268	\$378	\$185	49%
Rifle	\$50,704	\$20,186	\$7,820		\$78,710	184	\$428	\$185	43%
Soccer - Boys	\$81,082	\$53,887	\$7,590	\$170,000	\$312,559	731	\$428	\$185	43%
Basketball - Girls	\$65,772	\$23,159	\$9,660		\$98,591	214	\$461	\$185	40%
Wrestling	\$67,126	\$24,053	\$8,280		\$99,459	192	\$518	\$185	36%
Gymnastics	\$43,584	\$19,731	\$12,880		\$76,195	84	\$907	\$195	21%
Swimming and Diving	\$64,916	\$13,061	\$11,960	\$240,274	\$330,211	363	\$910	\$195	21%
Hockey	\$98,658	\$17,332	\$21,562	\$244,000	\$381,552	389	\$981	\$195	20%



What is the McKinney-Vento Act and how does it affect transportation of homeless students to school? What are the transportation options and costs and how much of that is paid through federal funds versus district funds?



The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, signed into law in 1987 and reauthorized as Title X, Part C, of the No Child Left Behind Act is federal law and applies to all school districts regardless of their receipt of federal funds. Under the McKinney-Vento Act, school districts are required to do the following:

- Identify all homeless children and youth in the school district's boundary.
 - Broadly defines homeless to include families living in shelters, transitional housing, doubled up (in certain situations), motels (in certain situations), sleeping in cars, tents, and other places not meant for human habitation.
- Immediately enroll students, regardless of a district's documentation requirements, and immediately provide services comparable to other students in the district.
- Inform students they have the right to stay in their school of origin for the duration of the school year that they become or are homeless.
 - Defines school of origin as the school they last attended while permanently housed or the school zoned for where they are currently staying if new to the district.
- Provide transportation to that school of origin while the student is homeless.

Child in Transition and ASD Pupil Transportation use the following transportation modes; modes are listed in order of preference.

Walk

- CIT students follow ASD guidelines for walking to school.
- If student is staying in the walking zone of their school of origin, they walk.
- No cost to ASD.

ASD School Bus

- Always the preferred option when transporting.
- Using existing buses is the most cost effective option in all situations.
- Using existing bus routes is not an option in all situations. Student may be staying in south Anchorage, but attending school in east Anchorage.
- McKinney-Vento requires districts to immediately implement transportation for students. In many situations, ASD busing cannot respond immediately to busing demands.
- Cost to ASD is minimal when using existing routes.

People Mover Bus

- Used primarily for high school students.
- ASD not comfortable allowing elementary and middle school students to ride on People Mover buses unsupervised.
- CIT will use People Mover for elementary and middle school-aged students if parent can

ride with student.

- Option is limited by People Mover routing, not all schools are on bus routes.
- Cost \$1.75/single trip, \$25/month.

Gas Cards

- If ASD bus is not available and family has access to reliable transportation, gas cards are provided.
- Holiday gas cards are used because they can only be used for gas.
- Amount of card is based on distance, calculated using Google maps.
- CIT monitors student's attendance and gas cards are only provided for days student attends school and arrives at school on time.
- Cost \$0.23/mile, minimum for card is \$5.

Taxi Cabs

- Used when all of the above are not an option.
- Used often when we first identify a student, before ASD busing can be arranged.
- Decision to use an ongoing cab plan is only made when it is the only option available and we are required to transport.
- CIT regularly reviews taxi cab plans and requests ASD busing for those students using taxi cab plans.
- Cost \$5 minimum, \$2.50/mile.

Anchor Rides

- Used primarily for preschool and kindergarten.
- CIT, after consulting ASD Pupil Transportation, did not feel it was appropriate to place preschool or kindergarten students in a cab if they are not riding with older siblings.
- Used when transporting long distances, such as transportation to and/or from Eagle River.
- Also used when there are many students going to or from the same location. In these situations, we are able to rent a van based on time rather than trip.
- Cost \$29.50/trip, 75 percent discount for siblings on the same trip; \$58/hr when renting designated van, minimum two hour rental.

The overall costs for the 2009-10 school year are as follows:

Taxi Cab	<u>\$319,851</u>
ASD General Fund	290,362
MV Grant	6,570
Title IA	22,919

Gas Voucher	<u>\$64,500</u>
ASD General Fund	55,400
MV Grant	1,100
Title IA	8,000

People Mover	<u>\$27,678</u>
ASD General Fund	24,678
MV Grant	0
Title IA	3,000

Anchor Rides	<u>\$49,383</u>
ASD General Fund	44,867
MV Grant	0
Title IA	4,516

Total Transportation Costs	<u>\$461,412</u>
ASD General Fund	415,307
MV Grant	7,670
Title IA	38,435

Financial Support

School transportation under the McKinney-Vento Act, in general, cannot be paid for with federal funds due to supplanting prohibitions. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Grant can be used to pay for school transportation as well as providing other forms of assistance to homeless students. Title IA funds may be used to pay for school transportation when a homeless student becomes permanently housed during the school year. It is allowable in that situation because McKinney-Vento only requires school transportation while a student is homeless.