

SOT Minutes
John C. Vanderburg ES
School Organizational Team Meeting
Google Meet: meet.google.com/wcf-hfkn-ksj
Thursday, February 6, 2025
3:45 – 5:36 pm

School Organizational Team Members:

Courtney Coughenour, Parent Member Representative
Anterio Kittrell, Parent Member Representative
Randy Norton, Parent Member Representative
Kat O'Connell, Parent Member Representative
Katie Byrnes, Staff Member Representative
Katia Cheetany, Staff Member Representative
Carolyn Lustig, Staff Member Representative
Ronda Reedom, Principal & Staff Member Representative
Rikki Wiggs, Assistant Principal

This meeting agenda is posted publicly on the school website at [Vanderburg.esd.k12.in.us/](https://vanderburg.esd.k12.in.us/).

The School Organizational Team may take items on the agenda out of order; may combine two or more agenda items for consideration; and may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to items on the agenda at any time.

Speakers wishing to speak during the public comment period for this meeting may call Rikki Wiggs or sign up in person immediately prior to the beginning of the meeting. Speakers will be called in the order in which they signed up. No one may sign up for another person or yield their time to another person. Generally, a person wishing to speak during the comment period will be allowed two (2) minutes to address the School Organizational Team. Speakers may also submit additional comments in writing.

It is asked that speakers be respectful to each other, Team members, the principal and District staff. Speakers that are disruptive will be asked to leave the meeting.

1.0 Welcome & Roll Call

SOT members are present.

2.0 Old Items

2.1 Review and approve [January 2025 SOT Minutes](#)

January's meeting was centered around students' MAP performance with a focus on growth. We looked at data and discussed planning to meet students' needs based on performance.

Dr. Byrnes and Mrs. O'Connell agreed for the motion to continue.

3.0 New Items

3.1 CCSD Code of Conduct ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))

Ms. Reedom informed everyone of the CODE of Conduct available in two languages.

3.2 CCSD Budget

There are different pools of money. Money from our legislature is based on our student population. We are working on the spring budget to plan for the upcoming school year.

Our admin's goal is to get the budget from a negative to a positive.

Vanderburg Elementary School - Budget Plan 25/26

Categories	Fall 2024-2025	Fall 2025-2026
Enrollment	Projected 479	Projected 466
Licensed	2,921,854 (\$120,813)	2,811,838 (\$126,392)
Support Staff (instructional/office/custodial)	797,553	809,356
Admin	360,636	373,105
SLAs	160,034	160,034 Pending Analyst Review
Carryover (supply/service, attrition, SLA)	201,695	At this time (zero) Pending Analyst Review
Supplies	158,152	55,550
English Learners*	132,250 Fund Teachers - Class Size Reduction	133,295 Partial Fund a Teacher
At Risk*	76,125 Fund Teachers - Class Size Reduction	76,696 Partial Fund a Teacher
Read By Grade 3**	120,813	126,392
TOTAL Budget Spent	4,398,231	4,083,269

On our count day, Ms. Reedom will get another budget. This is based on enrollment.

For this school year, the enrollment is 476, and for next year, the enrollment is projected to be 466.

The cost of teachers has increased from last year to this year, and this has affected our budget. In addition to the teachers, we have our support staff

and our administration.

Showing below is the service agreement; we must pay for these services.

*Additional Funding Source

**District Funded

Other: Do not come out of our budget (cannot reallocate funds)

*Read by Grade 3 State Grant: paid for Learning Strategist.

*SPED staff & GATE Teacher covered through CCSD funds.

*Service Level Agreements Include: English Language Learner Placement Testing, Landscaping & Maintenance, MAP Testing Costs, WIDA Testing, Utilities & Trash, Transportation, Family and Community Engagement, Juvenile Connections

We no longer have the carry-over of the pandemic money; therefore, we don't have additional money to support our budget.

Our budget is drastically less than last year due to not having the additional pandemic money.

There are required positions that we must have in our building. Ms. Reedom kept all those positions.

After accounting for all needed positions, we are at a negative of about \$72,000.

Our administration is considering class size, the ratio of students per teacher.

Enrollment is down across the school district.

These are our projections:

Grade	2024-2025 Projections	Today 1/27/25	2025-2026 Projections
Kinder	Students: 58 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 19/1	Students: 66 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 22 /1	Students: 63 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 21/1
1st Grade	Students: 59 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 20/1	Students: 63 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 21/1	Students: 71 Teachers: 2 (3) Ratio: 36/1 (24/1) Loss of teacher
2nd Grade	Students: 81 Teachers: 4 Ratio: 20/1	Students: 79 Teachers: 4 Ratio: 20 /1	Students: 66 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 22/1 Loss of teacher
3rd Grade	Students: 92 Teachers: 4 Ratio: 23/1	Students: 85 Teachers: 4 Ratio: 21/1	Students: 86 Teachers: 4 (3) Ratio: 22/1 (29:1)
4th Grade	Students: 92 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 31/1	Students: 85 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 28/1	Students: 93 Teachers: 2 (3) Ratio: 47/1 (31/1) Loss of teacher
5th Grade	Students: 97 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 32/1	Students: 91 Teachers: 3 Ratio 30/1	Students: 87 Teachers: 3 Ratio: 29/1

Our options:

Summary:

Two options to balance the budget (- \$8,467.60) & reduce class sizes...

Option A:

- Surplus 1 teacher (1st); do not fill empty 2nd grade position (Mrs. Thymianos retirement).
- Move Ms. Valenti to 1st grade & eliminate Humanities/Science to keep class sizes down
- Dr. Cheetany to RBG3 (required position funded by CCSD, not our budget)
- Remove 1 extra hour from Support Staff employees
- Send \$65,000 from SGF (school fundraising) to CCSD Budget for remaining negative (- \$8,467.60) and supplies.

Option B:

- Surplus 2 teachers (1st & 4th); do not fill empty 2nd grade position;
- Move 1 teacher from 3rd to 4th grade to keep 4th grade class size down
- Move Ms. Valenti to 1st grade & eliminate Humanities/Science to keep class sizes down
- Dr. Cheetany to RBG3 (required position funded by CCSD, not our budget)
- Keep extra hours for Support Staff
- No need to send money from SGF to CCSD Budget.

Discussing the options:

Ms. Reedom presents Option B.

Mrs. Gunderson asked about the science program. Ms. Reedom clarified that the classroom teachers will continue to teach Amplify Science in the classroom.

We will have two autism programs at our school next year.

Even though we will be losing a fourth-grade teacher from the position, we will not lose the teacher from the building; she will be placed in the second autism program.

Therefore, Ms. Reedom is considering Option B.

Take into consideration:

1. APEX - The fundraiser will be vital to help support our school.
2. We need to support our students in various aspects.
3. There is also an option of adding a CTT, which comes at a very low cost for the school. The CTT will be for third grade to help the teachers with the higher number of students.

4. The fall budget may be different, but for now, our decision is based on the budget we are looking at.

Mr. Norton- a parent- asked about money raised from a fundraiser:

PTA works with APEX to raise money, and then they fund their committees for activities such as the Harvest Festival. Last year we got 25,000 for the school. We are not allowed to raise money to pay teachers. We cannot fundraise to pay teachers, but we can fundraise to purchase supplies.

Dr. Byrnes- Staff- presented option A as her choice to support lower class sizes.

Thoughts: By count day, we could rehire someone, but this may not happen. What if we keep the teacher and then support the position in the fall?

Admin agreed that class size matters, but our support staff needs the extra hour we give them. Additionally, having two autism classes next year requires us to have support staff and not lose anyone; this is a safety issue.

Ms. Reedom: It is extremely important to have our support staff.

Ms. Reedom went over both options A & B based on a parent's question for clarification.

Dr. Cheetany - Staff- What is the possibility of getting a CTT to support third grade's higher number of students as presented in Option B?

A CTT (**Certified Temporary Tutor**) about \$15,000. We can pull that from supplies, or we can take money that is raised from APEX and push that to supplies and pay for it from there to get a CTT.

Mrs. Coughenour - Parent: If supply money can go to CTT, can we use it for support staff?

No, because it is a different line item in the budget.

Mrs. Silvernail - Parent: If the district has a ratio they aim for, why do they not budget us for that?

The problem is the cost of the teachers and the loss of the COVID money. This situation is happening across the district where schools are losing teachers. The increased cost of teachers.

Mrs. O'Connell - Parent- If we get more money in the budget in the fall, will we be able to bring back the teacher we lose from our building?

Ms. Reedom clarified how timing is critical in this process, depending on the time of the school year and the surplus.

Mr. Norton - Parent- asked about the budget in both options A and B and if there are any other options.

Ms. Reedom answered that these two options are based on the budget we have.

Discussion about options for fundraisers to support our school.

Mrs. Benoit - Parent- asked about the biosphere fundraiser and if there are any extras that we can

The biosphere money is separate from the school district money because it is a separate category. The fundraiser for the biosphere has dwindled in the past few years, where we used to raise \$30,000 and now we are around \$12,000. This is a drastic difference.

Mr. Norton - Parent- What can we do to help? These are difficult decisions to make.

Ms. Reedom: Being here, understanding, and supporting our school is the one thing that parents can do. Possibly converse with the others about the value of the APEX fundraiser where we might go out and find bigger corporations, so we are not depending only on our parents.

Mrs. O'Connell - Parent/PTA: They are putting together a flyer about what the APEX money gets used for.

Mrs. Meade - Parent: She suggested some donations from different places. She is willing to help with the APEX fundraiser. She wants to work on approaching businesses if they can support our school.

Dr. Byrnes - Staff - summed up the options we have regarding the budget, staffing, and the effects on our school as a whole.

Mrs. Brnoit - Parent - From a parent perspective, she praised our third-grade teachers. She is willing to help as a parent and supports the idea of having CTTs to support the larger classrooms. Additionally, she presented the importance of the PTA events and the need to have their funds for our school community.

Mrs. Coughenour - Parent- Having a child who is going into the third grade next year, she voiced her concern about having a high number of students in that grade level. She suggested that we could consider Option A and hope we have more money in the fall

budget.

Admin: We need to provide a balance of the budget now. If we send the \$70,000 to the district means that we will be sending money that we will not be able to get back. We are still losing a teacher despite the options.

Mr. Benoit - Parent- And then that puts us at extra risk of disrupting the kids with movement after count-day, right?

She asked to clarify the loss of two teachers in Option B, but one of the teachers is staying in the building and going to autism.

Ms. Reedom explained that she communicated the change with all the staff being impacted by the change to balance the budget. The teachers can surplus themselves if they do not agree with the change, but at this point, all the teachers agreed to stay based on all the changes.

Mrs. Gunderson - Parent - COVID emergency funds are gone, so is this something that happens every year?

Ms. Reedom: Previously, with our retired principal, we faced certain budget situations, but it was different because the budget analysis was different. This is probably one of the more challenging situations we are facing, not just in our building but also district-wide.

Voting Option B:

Courtney: Nay

O'Connell: Yay

Cheetany: Yay

Byrnes: Yay

Lustig: Yay

Norton: Yay

Reedom: Yay

Ms. Reedom will be meeting with the budget analyst tomorrow!

4.0 Information

4.1 Next Meeting: **Thursday, March 27 @ 3:45 pm**

The meeting adjourned at 5:36.

5.0 Public Comment Period (Two (2) minutes maximum allotted)