

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

Detailed school budget needed

Want to know where \$59.5 million in Pottstown School District spending goes?

The chart at right shows a very general breakdown from the district's published budget — certainly not detailed enough to really understand where the money goes.



Commentary by
Tom Hylton

Clearly, if we school board members are serious about our jobs, we need far more details than we have now.

Last month, we received an Excel spreadsheet from our finance director showing the salaries and benefits of all school district employees for 2015-2016. You can find it on our www.pottstowncitizens.org website by clicking on the "Pottstown School District" tab at the top and then the "personnel/wages" drop down menu.

At our finance committee meeting Sept. 15, I will ask the board to formally request the compilation of a detailed budget by the end of 2016.

Here are just four examples (which I've boldfaced at right) of why we need more information:

Instructional Assistant Salaries: \$2 million. Forty years ago, with far more students, Pottstown had 5 aides districtwide. Now we have 80. Why?

Professional Education Services: \$1.9 million. Just what are these services?

Transportation: \$1.5 million. How can a district of 5 square miles need all this money for buses and vans?

Tuition: \$4.7 million. Wow! This includes charter schools, but also tuition to private schools for special education students. Let's get the details.

School board members are supposed to protect taxpayer dollars. To do so, we need more information.

Object	Description	2016-2017
110	Administrative salaries	\$2,521,062
120	Professional Education Salaries	\$15,338,450
130	Other Professional Salaries	\$998,822
140	Technical Salaries	\$468,383
150	Clerical Salaries	\$1,081,515
160	Crafts and Trade Salaries	\$504,409
170	Operative Salaries	\$215,914
180	Service Work Salaries	\$1,233,319
190	Instructional Assistant Salaries	\$2,040,089
210	Health Care Insurance	\$5,247,410
220	Social Security Contributions	\$1,884,898
230	Retirements Contributions	\$7,285,478
240	Tuition Reimbursement	\$100,000
250	Unemployment Compensation	\$50,000
260	Workers Compensation	\$230,000
310	Administrative Services	0
320	Professional Education Services	\$1,900,000
330	Other Professional Services	\$545,000
340	Technical Services	\$13,500
350	Security Services	\$365,000
390	Other Purchased Services	\$400,000
410	Cleaning Services	\$180,000
420	Utility Services (Electricity)	\$623,000
430	Repairs/Maintenance Services	\$405,000
440	Rentals	\$130,000
450	Construction Services	\$699,500
460	Extermination Services	\$7,000
490	Other Building Services	\$15,000
510	Student Transportation	\$1,506,325
520	Insurance	\$253,000
530	Communications	\$140,000
540	Advertising	\$5,000
550	Printing and Binding	\$5,000
560	Tuition	\$4,695,000
580	Travel	\$67,949
590	Misc. Purchased Services	\$30,000
610	General Supplies	\$1,500,000
620	Energy (Gas/Oil)	\$275,000
640	Books and Periodicals	\$440,000
700	Equipment	0
750	Equipment—Original and Additional	\$43,035
760	Equipment—Replacement	\$321,965
780	Tech Infrastructure	\$55,000
810	Dues and Fees	\$30,000
830	Bond Interest Payments	\$1,537,563
840	Contingency	\$369,481
860	Donation for Community	\$10,000
880	Refund Prior Years Receipts	\$5,000
890	Misc. Expenditures	\$1,159,200
910	Bond Principal Payments	\$2,193,000
930	Fund Transfers (Athletics)	\$510,000
TOTAL		\$59,553,150

This chart is organized according to a numbering system used uniformly by all school districts in Pennsylvania.