

Budget Blog 2

It All Starts with ADMs

In the world of education there are LOTS of acronyms. When it comes to education budgets, there are two very critical acronyms - ADMs and BSA. I will devote this blog to ADMs and my next blog to the BSA.

ADM stands for Average Daily Membership, and it represents the count of students enrolled in a school district during a specific 20-day period of time in October. The count period is set every year by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (EED) and ends on the 4th Friday in October. During this period of time, districts count the total number of students enrolled in each school, which then sets the overall budget for the school district for that school year. This means that we develop our budget in the spring every year; however, we don't know until the fall if we will have the budget we expected to have because it all comes down to the number of students enrolled in our schools at the start of a school year. Now you see why I titled this blog... *It All Starts with ADMs*.

This year the Sitka School District had 1,314.53 students enrolled during the count period. Since this number represents students, it seems odd to think of students as less than a full number; however, a number of students are enrolled for less than a full day, some student move in or out of the school district during the count period and thus they don't count as a student enrolled for the full 20 days, and we only get to count students enrolled in our REACH homeschool program at 0.90. Consequently, we end up with a student count that is rarely if ever a whole number. However, every full and partial student counts and makes a huge difference to our district.

It is important to note that enrolled is not the same as attended, so if a student is absent a day during the 20-day count that student still counts towards our ADM because he/she is still enrolled even if he/she is absent. That is not to say that student absences don't negatively impact learning, but for the process of getting money from the state to operate our schools it does not hurt the district if a student is absent for a day during the count period, which is important because even if a student is absent we still have a teacher, pay the utilities, and provide instructional materials for students for the entire time they are enrolled. You might wonder what happens if a student enrolls in the Sitka School District after the count period. The answer is that no additional monies come to a school district after the official count period ends in October. We still provide the same high quality education regardless of when a student enrolls; however, students who enroll after the October count do not increase our funding from the State of Alaska or the City of Sitka's contribution to our public schools.

I hope this focus on ADMs helps you to realize that every student counts and matters to the Sitka School District. The dedicated teachers, administrators, and staff work hard every day to make sure that learning is meaningful for each of our students. Every day and every student matters as we work to reach our vision of providing an education that truly helps our students realize their potential and contribute in our connected global society!

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or comments. You can call to talk to me or submit comments through this website using the Comment link associated with this blog entry or the Budget Comments link in the navigation area to the left of this text.

Whew! One education acronym down!

Mary Wegner
Superintendent
Sitka School District