

# YOU ASKED. WE ANSWERED!

## MBA and *PATHWAY* to the MBA Answers Revealed

We asked you to share your budget development, Meritorious Budget Award (MBA), and *Pathway* to the MBA questions. Then, we asked Karin Smith, MBA, SFO, school business consultant with Heinfeld, Meech & Co., P.C., and a professional MBA reviewer, to provide answers. **Here's what she had to say.**

### Q: HOW DOES APPLYING FOR THE MBA (OR *PATHWAY*) ACTUALLY IMPROVE MY BUDGET?

**Karin:** There is an increased emphasis on transparency with our schools' parents, staff, and community. The MBA program allows you the opportunity to provide your community with the full picture of your budget, the factors and process used to build your budget, and comparable data from prior years and projected years. The reviewer comments give you the opportunity to further explain sections within your budget in a more meaningful, easy-to-understand format.

### Q: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO IS CONSIDERING APPLYING?

**Karin:** Consider building an MBA committee within your district. The MBA includes information beyond just the numbers, so it is important to have team members who can help you gather information such as enrollment, student achievement, tax rates, assessments, etc. Consider including a team member who has no school finance expertise. This person will be a great sounding board to ensure you are clearly explaining the elements of your budget in an easy-to-understand format. The person's role will be to build your glossary of terms!

### Q: WHO REVIEWS MY BUDGET?

**Karin:** Your peers! This is one of the hallmarks of the award program. The MBA Committee sees the extreme value of volunteers from the school business community serving as reviewers.



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