



TRANSPARENCY OF SCHOOL BUDGETS IS A GUARANTEE OF SUPPORT FROM PARENTS

Success story about the effectiveness of public hearings

How much does the state allocate for education in your school? What are they spent for? Why do parents have to provide additional financial support, if we have free education according to our Constitution? What is the parents' money spent for? What are the costs of the school budget?

Similar questions arise every year at the beginning of academic year in each school and continue to arise throughout the school year. Due to lack of funding from the republican budget, local self-governments have to reimburse all costs of the school buildings, ancillary premises, territories, utilities and other services at the expense of already scarce local budgets. School named after R.Shabotoev in Yurievka village of Issyk-Ata rayon, Chui oblast is not an exception.

In spring 2016, LSG bodies of Yurievka ayil aimak and R.Shabotoev school administration decided to kill two birds with one stone, firstly, to take part in the competition "Real participation of citizens in improving financial literacy of young people" in the framework of the project "Voice of citizens and accountability of local self-government: budget process" (hereinafter - the Project) funded by the Government of the Switzerland

and implemented by the Development Policy Institute. Secondly, in order to report to the parents and students through organization of public hearings on the school budget.

March 18, 2016, the budget hearings were held with the participation of parents, board of trustees, deputies of the local council, academic staff and students of the 10-11 grades, where Zarlykov A., the school director delivered his report. Also, the head of AO, Dzhekshembaev B. and chief accountant, Shambetalieva N. spoke at the hearings.

"Government does not address our problems, it simply allocates money for their solution and how to solve them depends on us", said the head of AO B.Dzhekshembaev. "Each year we plan the money for the "Education" sector in the local budget. For example, in 2016, this sector has received 1,548,100 soms, of which 531,000 soms were spent to purchase the coal, 319,000 soms for utilities. In 2017, one of the priority issues that we have identified was the repair of the school building facade and allocated 223,700 soms for it. In general, for the next year we anticipated 167,000,700 soms for this sector, which was 18% of the total cost of our local budget."

After seeing and hearing the figures, the participants of the hearings made conclusion that R.Shabotoev school in Yurievka village as a budget organization could not survive without additional support from the parents, in addition to the funds allocated from the republican budget.

Participants also discussed the draft budget for the 2016-17 school year and other issues on the effective use and pro-active involvement of the community, including parents in the management of the school. After all, transparency of the budget process is the key to trust, in this case, on the end of parents. Parents noted that holding the budget hearings contributed to the transparency of funding and would help improve the efficiency of the use of funds in schools, thereby improving the quality of their children's education and motivation of teachers. At the hearings, participants were also able to discuss the importance of money in the life of society, role of the state and the school, as well as role of money in housekeeping, which is very important in a person's life, which lives in the village.

At the end of the hearings, participants thanked the organizers for holding public hearings and expressed their wish to visit future reporting by the director and other accountable officials on the use of the school funds.

In addition to the hearings, with the supervision of the social teacher, T.Dzhishambaev, organizers conducted trainings on the school budget for the parents, board of trustees, members of local council, and students of the 10-11 grades and academic staff of the school. According to the parents, the trainings were interesting. The parents were actively involved in the discussion of the report by the board of trustees, listened to the lectures and recommendations by the deputies.

About 240 people participated in these events. "Since that period coincided with the World Week of Money 2016, we also conducted class hours with the students of 9-11 grades on financial literacy", said Talgat Dzhishambaev. "The main goal of all these activities was to increase transparency and accountability of the school administration to students and their parents. To summarize the events we held the budget hearings, during which we all discussed our school budget including costs and revenues in detail."

Topics of the class hours for high school students were different: "History of money", "Family and budget", "Household budget". Students took an active part describing their role in the development of the family from the economic point of view, and showed great interest in discussing issues like "Money is evil or good;

goal or means?" And during the training "School budget", the parents demonstrated their pro-activeness. They listened to the report on the budget presented by the board of trustees, lectures and recommendations by the deputies.

After the public hearings on the school budget, R.Shabotoev school became a full member of the National competition announced by the Project among all schools in the country within the Global Week of Money in Kyrgyzstan, and one of 14 schools selected from Osh, Jalal-Abad, Batken, Issyk-Kul and Chui oblasts and Bishkek. As a technical support during the public hearings, all schools that expressed their initiative received promotional materials from the Project: banners, brochures, posters, T-shirts and certificates.



April 12, 2016, the National competition released the final results, where R.Shabotoev school took the 3rd place.

All schools have provided detailed reports on the activities that have been considered as competitive materials and evaluated by the tender committee, which consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Development Policy Institute and the VAP. Having considered all of the contest materials, the jury awarded 3rd place and a prize up to 20,000 soms to R.Shabotoev school in Issyk-Ata rayon, Chui oblast. In addition, according to the Regulations, the curator of the school received a cash award of 5,000 soms", commented Meerim Seyitova, coordinator of the Project for conducting the competition.

"For the prize money, our school purchased a digital camera and a color printer, brand Epson L300. Now we will be able to have photo archive of our school and print photos for various events", said Talgat Dzhishambaev.

The total number of participants in the public hearings on the school budget in 2016 among the 14 schools was 1999 people.

"The more money, the harder it is to live within our means".

Tokoev B., student of the 10th grade after the training "Household budget"