

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FINANCE REPORTS



What is FARMS?

The Finance and Resource Management for Schools (FARMS) manual is the official guideline for schools and a one stop shop to support Principals, school body (Council | Board) members and Business Managers to effectively manage the financial and other resources of a school.

How often must members review financial reports?

Financial reports must be presented and reviewed at each meeting. Members should ensure they receive the mandated monthly reports and understand the key financial information provided.

If we are not meeting during a month, do we still receive the reports?

Yes.

Reports should be sent or made available each month, regardless of whether a meeting is scheduled.

When should financial reports be available?

Mandated monthly finance reports should be available after the 10th of each month, ready for the next meeting. Annual and irregular reports must be provided according to the timelines set in the FARMS manual.

What financial reports should members receive?

At a minimum, members must receive the following mandated monthly reports:

- Consolidated Finance Summary
- School-Held Funds Balance Sheet
- School-Held Funds Job Budget Variance

What is a Balance Sheet?

This report provides a snapshot of the school's financial position at a specific point in time. It lists what the school owns (assets), such as cash, property, and equipment, and what it owes (liabilities), such as unpaid invoices or unacquitted grants.

What is the Consolidated Finance Summary Report?

The report gives a clear, high-level snapshot of the school's finances each month. It brings together information from both the School-Held Funds (SHF) and Department-Held Funds (DHF) to show how much is available after commitments and what the school's financial position is expected to be at the end of the year.

What is the School-Held Funds Job Budget Variance Report?

This report shows how individual activities or projects (called "job codes") are tracking against their approved budgets. It compares the budgeted amount for each job with the actual income and expenses to date and includes commitments such as purchase orders.

Can we request additional Reports?

Yes.

Members may also request optional reports, such as detailed profit and loss, corporate expense reports, or job-specific cost analysis.

Who is responsible for providing the reports?

The Principal.

The Principal must also arrange for optional reports if members request them.

What is the annual budget and why is it important?

The annual budget is the school's main financial management tool. It shows all expected income and expenditure for the year. Members should review it regularly to check that spending is aligned with school priorities and the approved plan.

Who is responsible for preparing the school's annual budget?

The Principal and Business Manager prepare a draft budget in consultation with relevant staff.

Members review, discuss, provide input prior to formally approving the budget.