

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Notes

November 1, 2023



Welcome and Introduction

Board member and CAC committee chairperson Joe Ferdinando opened the meeting by introducing himself, defining the purpose of CAC, and reviewing CAC meeting logistics. As defined in the regulation, CAC serves as an instrument of the Board of Education and CAC members serve as advocates for our public schools and advisors to the Board on topics for which the Board seeks advice. Given the funding challenges this year, most topics will be budget-based. All CAC meetings are open to the public with CAC members seated around the table and participating in the discussion. Members are expected to support the Board of Education's mission with the goal of providing the best possible education for students.

There were 37 total attendees, including 21 CAC members.

Preliminary Budget Presentation

Dr. Lawson provided new information regarding the FY25 budget, including:

- Primary impacts on upcoming FY'25 budget: (1) Preliminary revenue projections; (2) Blueprint implementation; (3) expiration of ESSER III and Leads grant federal money
- Per pupil revenues: Cecil is now ranked 24th out of 24 LEAs
- Staffing comparison of similar counties (Calvert, Cecil, St. Mary's Wicomico): CCPS has the fewest number of FTEs and does not overspend on any of our employee groups
- Funding comparison of similar counties: CCPS is the lowest funded
- A summary of each pillar of the Blueprint
- A summary of funding formulas based on school demographics, with the new Blueprint requirement that 75% must be in the child's school (Foundation formula: \$8,642; Compensatory education (55.5% of our students): \$7,519; English language learners (ELL): \$8,642; Special education: \$7,951)

Q & A Session

Mr. Ferdinando mentioned that the Board would seek advice and feedback from the CAC members regarding the preliminary budget at the next CAC meeting and gather ideas for future meetings. He then opened the floor for questions and discussion regarding the presentation. Questions/topics discussed included the following:

- Concern about being mindful of race issues when presenting differences in funding distribution between schools
- Discussion about state funding formula based on county wealth (wealthier counties get less from the State); local MOE formula currently has no inflation factor or escalator
- Discussion about CCPS fund balance and its importance
- Concern that CAC can't fix the decreased revenue problem
- Discussion by members on the importance of CAC advocating for local funding over MOE
- Concerns over lack of revenue to support CCPS needs
- Discussion about recent CCPS survey to parents/staff and CAC feedback regarding cuts
- Request for data and talking points to advocate for local funding
- Request to discuss curriculum and school safety in future CAC meetings

Adjournment

Mr. Ferdinando thanked CAC members and other attendees. Information regarding the next meeting, scheduled for December 6, will be sent to CAC members via email.