

**Caesar Rodney School District  
Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Meeting  
Meeting Agenda  
5:00 p.m. at the District Office  
January 17, 2024**

**I. Opening**

The meeting commenced at 5:00 at the District Office. The following members were present: Joyce Denman, Shari Gary, Adewunmi Kuforiji, Julie Lavender, Kim Willson, Jessica Marelli and Cheryl Precourt. Meaghan Brennan, Caesar Rodney School District (CRSD) Director of Finance; Nicole Polite, CRSD Supervisor of Finance, were also present.

**II. Discussion Items**

- A. The December Monthly Financial Report was discussed with the committee.
- B. An update was provided on the District's remaining Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds. Ms. Brennan explained that funds must be encumbered by September 30, 2024 and the majority of expenditures have been for instruction and summer school. Details on the percentage spending for each category was shared with the committee. The spending plan for the remaining funds are HVAC projects at the high school and smart boards at all schools.
- C. The Final FY 2024 budget was discussed with the Committee and included the following specific items to note:
  - i. The September 30<sup>th</sup> unit count included an increase of 106 students equating to 43 units which indicates an increase in intense and complex categories.
  - ii. The final budget included anticipated funding for the certified unit count, All Other Cost reduction plan, and choice and charter billings.
  - iii. Final choice and charter billings resulted in decreased revenue from the preliminary budget.
  - iv. The majority of the budget items were reduced by 2% in the preliminary budget and those reductions were maintained in the final budget.
  - v. The largest adjustments to the final budget were for salary items.
  - vi. The Finance department is working with program areas to identify efficiencies and working to ensure the District is maximizing interest-bearing appropriations.
- D. The following items were also discussed:
  - i. Ms. Gary asked if the district had received the final reassessments to begin reviewing tax rates. Ms. Brennan stated we have not received any information on

final reassessments from Kent County and noted that Kent County is leading the reassessments. Ms. Gary stated that with reassessment she understood not going referendum but questioned how that impacts public view of being able to operate without it. Ms. Brennan explained that long term there are unaddressed needs across the district to ensure we can retain talent and compete with other districts but that waiting will allow the district to move forward with a thoughtful approach for the next referendum.

Ms. Precourt emphasized importance of achieving things listed on referendums. She shared that other districts have provided rate comparisons and the desirability of a higher rate up front which decreased as time went on. Ms. Precourt also noted that the district may have to answer questions around spending of COVID funds.

Mr. Kuforiji explained the necessity of giving voters something to vote for such as capital projects, safety and security, or athletics.

- ii. Ms. Brennan shared that Spring unit count begins January 19, 2024 and that increases in units should result in additional funds.

### **III. Adjournment**