

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET AND FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 20, 2016

PURPOSE

The Superintendent has established the Budget and Finance Advisory Committee (BFAC) for the purpose of providing guidance and counsel on matters of budget and finance as may be determined by the district administration. The Committee is comprised of representatives from the community, charter schools, principals, and central office.

Agenda

1. Recap September Meeting
2. Homework Review
3. Since We Last Met
4. Budget Parameter Feedback
5. What's Next?

Committee Members in Attendance

- **Community** - Tammy Dixon, Felecia Josey, Marshall Norseng, Rev. Daldred Mason, Hiewet Senghor, Tyronia Smith, Fleda Jackson
- **Principals** – Andrew Lovett, Robin Robbins
- **Central Office** – Joseph Herb, Tammy Workman, Jennifer Lang, Robert Morales (CFO), Lisa Bracken, Kelly Redman, Eugene Herrington, Alana Bethea, Shaquita Barnes

DISCUSSION

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Robert Morales (CFO), with words of welcome, afterward the meeting was turned over to Lisa Bracken. Mrs. Bracken opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the monthly meeting before giving a brief overview of the agenda.

As the first order of business, Mrs. Bracken began with a recap of the September's meeting, reiterating the purpose and expectations of the Budget & Finance Advisory Committee. Mrs. Bracken then discussed the Revenue and Expenditure assumptions with the group as it relates to a potential \$25 million budget gap heading into FY2018.

Mrs. Bracken then spoke briefly about potential budget balancing strategies and other cost saving tools that could be beneficial to the FY2018 budget process. Some of those balancing strategies included, but were not limited to:

- School Consolidation
- Raise Class Size Funding Level
- Reduce School Allotment Guidelines (extended core, support staff, per pupil, etc.)
- Leveling

Once the group was aware of some of the cost saving tools, Mrs. Bracken instructed the group to take about 20 minutes to engage in a group exercise that would identify district practices they felt we as a district should stop, slow down, or do differently (more cost effectively) to assist in closing the gap for the FY2018 budget cycle. After the exercise was completed, Mrs. Bracken reviewed the suggestions made by each group. The results of the exercise were as follows:

START

- Focus programming (do 1 thing right, not many things (STEM, IB, etc.))
- Early literacy programs
- Furlough days
- Substitute management
- Sunset ineffective programs
- Program evaluations
- Saturday/ After school for teachers
- Better use of common planning/ PD days
- Rezoning to maximize building capacity/usage
- Rezone to minimize transportation usage
- 4 day weeks/ Summer shut down

SLOW DOWN

- Turnaround strategy
- Compensation
- Flex funds
- District-run professional development days
- Cluster/Signature programs/ Modify timeline
- One-size fits all approach to turnaround/ signature programs

STOP

- CRCT
- Project 2021
- Number of Administrators at CLL
- Increasing class sizes
- No new textbooks for now- look at new barcoding methods for tracking
- Delaying decisions for small schools (set a standard for what is baseline)
- Increase the use of digital textbooks to maximize the use of technology resources
- Catering to certain cluster/parents for political reasons. Balance overcrowding fairly.
- Purchasing programs mid-year
- During day professional development for teachers. This increases the money spent on substitutes.
- Accruing sick leave while on leave (if legal)

After the results were reviewed, Mrs. Bracken thanked everyone for their participation and requested that if they had any other ideas as to how to close the funding gap, to please email her or bring them to the next meeting for discussion.

Mrs. Bracken then informed the group on how busy the Budget department had been since they last convened with meetings with Expanded Cabinet, the Board and staff. She then briefly discussed some of the survey results as well as some of the key take-aways from each meeting and further explained that all gathered results would be combined and presented to the Board as recommendations for closing the gap.

Mrs. Bracken continued with the meeting by discussing the budget parameter feedback for both resource parameters and expenditure parameters. From this discussion, the following questions were asked:

Question:

What role do stakeholders have as it relates to these parameters?

Answer:

The District's stakeholders have the most impact with the expenditure parameters.

Question: What methodology will the district use to identify ineffective programs?

While no decision has been made, the district will likely develop a protocol to perform internal audits and use other measures to identify ineffective programs and report findings to Senior Cabinet for review.

Conclusion

The BFAC was asked again to discuss strategies to close the FY2018 budget gap with their communities and be prepared to have further discussion at the next meeting. Mrs. Bracken also encouraged committee member to send suggestions for agenda items for future meetings. Members were informed that if none were submitted, she would continue the meetings as an informative platform.

Next Meeting – November 17th, 2016

We look forward to working with you and your support in our efforts to improve community involvement and transparency in the District's budget process. Thank you.