

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET AND FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 17, 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. Brainstorm Future BFAC Topics
2. School Allotments
3. Per Pupil Funding
4. Investing in Transformation for Students
5. What's Next?

Committee Members in Attendance

- **Community** – Marshall Norseng, Felicia Josey, Mark Rebillot
- **Schools** – Rosalyn Triplett, Theodore Lee
- **Principals** – Andrew Lovett
- **Central Office** – Deborah Scott, Raynise Smith, Jennifer Lang, Tammie Workman, Herb Joseph, Wendy Angelety, Alisha Moncrief-Milner, Eugene Herrington, Kelly Redman

DISCUSSION

The meeting started with a word of welcome by Robert Morales. As host of the meeting Lisa Bracken opened with an overview of the agenda and explaining how to make the advisory committee be more advisory to the district. Each member was provided a copy of the presentation, the general fund staffing allocation guidelines and a copy of a school budget template to follow along during the meeting. Mrs. Bracken began with asking the members what future topics they would like discussed in the BFAC meetings. Members were asked to share their thoughts. Deborah Scott asked to have a discussion around SPLOST and how we accumulate revenue. Raynise Smith asked about a discussion around mileage rates and what a mil increase can do and state funding. Marshall Norseng wanted a discussion around benchmarking to other districts, DeKalb and Fulton were discussed. Mrs. Bracken added that using other urban districts around the country could also be helpful. Mr. Rebillot wanted to ensure that this discussion would tie back to the schools. School consolidation and what it cost to run small schools is another future topic. Tying budget/finance decisions to the school level and the state funding model are also future topics mentioned.

Lisa Bracken then began a discussion of the School Allocation Guide. She stated that staffing formulas will be approved January 9, 2017 by the Board of Education. She indicated that the document was broken out into three areas; Core Teacher Allocation, Administrative/Support/Special Program Positions and Non-Personnel Allocations.

Mrs. Bracken asked the committee to give feedback on the allocation guide. An activity asking them to put a question mark by items in the guide they had questions about. Putting an X by items the district could do less. Placing a + where additional resources should be added. Then writing in other functions that should be pushed to the schools through an allocation. The group was asked to go through the allocation guide alone first. Then they were asked to compare their thoughts with another member. Then the group discussed their findings. Items with questions were:

1. Why are certain school support staff positions not formula driven? Tammie Workman helped explain that they are done based on need within a specified funding amount.
2. What is a talent development school? Should all schools be talent development? Andrew Lovett helped to explain the difference between gifted and talented. He also explained what talent development could mean at a school. There are a certain number of gifted children and then there are children that fall into talent development. He did

agree that maybe all schools should be talent development schools. Mrs. Bracken will look into the language in the allocation guide to see if it should change.

3. Why were the AP allocations not consistent with the enrollment guidelines? Mrs. Bracken explained that with flexibility principals could add APs or other positions. If an enrollment is close to the guidelines but not meeting them a decision could be made to add an additional allocation.
4. How to maximize EIP and making changes to EIP and REP? It was discussed that it is hard to find an EIP model to fit all students.

Items where the district could allocate fewer resources were:

1. Flex funding could be done differently. The floor in the flex funds penalizes small schools.
2. Move from using FRL (Free and Reduced Lunch) as a direct measure. This is not the only indicator of poverty in schools. Mrs. Bracken made a point of saying that you could have two schools at 100% but poverty can look very different in each one.

Items where the district could allocate additional resources were:

1. Smaller classes at every school level.
2. Moving any additional resources to schools is a good idea.
3. Deciding on what is the right size for funding the funding formula.

Functions that should be pushed to schools through an allocation were:

1. Is cluster still something specific or do we want to combine that with flex or signature funds?
2. Currently cluster funds are used to plug funding holes in schools. Need improvement in this area. There is confusion among schools as to who is over cluster funding. There has been a bottleneck regarding the trickle down of these funds. It was identified that Angela Smith was a point person for cluster funding
3. A portion of cluster funds should be used for the entire cluster to have PD or another cluster function or activity.

Mr. Mark Rebillot led the next agenda item relating to his analysis of per pupil funding. He wanted to share his analysis of what actually flows through to the school level based on enrollment. He identified some cost drivers for the departments at the school level and asked if we are really getting a return on the investment. He also asked what are schools getting from the CLL and is what the schools gain worth the allocated dollars. Mr. Rebillot's analysis did not include SPLOST or Special Revenue funds. He will continue this topic at the next meeting and

would be providing the email of his analysis to members for review. Tammie Workman thought it would be helpful to focus on one school to see how all areas are broken out.

Conclusion

Mrs. Bracken concluded the meeting with an overview of the activity the Board participated in that discussed how transformation at APS looks like and what decisions will have to be made to prepare students for college and career and to have a choice filled life. She recapped information from the Board Commission meeting and reviewed resources on how to split the Board Parameters. The overarching question at the Commission meeting was, what can the district do differently and what will we have to just let go of. She stated that at the next meeting they would review the activity and have a discussion at that time. They will also discuss some of the unfunded components of transformation.

Next Meeting – December 15th, 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.