

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET AND FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 15, 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. FY2018 Budget Process
2. Investing in Transformation for Students
3. Per Pupil Funding
4. What's Next?

Committee Members in Attendance

- **Community** – Marshall Norseng, Felicia Josey, Mark Rebillot, Tony Terry
- **Schools** – Rosalyn Triplett, Theodore Lee, Tammy Dixon
- **Principals** –
- **Central Office** – Deborah Scott, Jennifer Lang, Tammie Workman, Herb Joseph, Eugene Herrington, Kelly Redman, Rhonda Dunn, Evangeline Britt

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. Mrs. Bracken began with providing feedback for the Superintendent's employee Meeting that was conducted the night before with a diverse group of approximately 100 APS employees. Mrs. Bracken informed the committee that FY18 projected enrollment was distributed to the schools with an anticipated deadline for feedback of December 16, 2016. It was explained that all concerns regarding enrollment would be addressed by the districts demographer. Several questions were asked concerning the enrollment projections by committee members. Theodore Lee, Jr. asked if it had been taken into account the schools that are moving back to a newly renovated building. Mrs. Tammy Dixon asked if we are taking into account charter schools that were being built within a 5 or 10 mile radius of an APS school. Mr. Mark Rebillot asked if the APS demographer was working with the City of Atlanta. Mrs. Bracken stated that the demographer takes into account several factors including trends, charters and community development. Mrs. Bracken stated that if at a later date further conversation was needed in regard to enrollment projections a speaker could be invited to the meeting.

Mrs. Bracken also informed the committee that she is on track to send out the budget assumptions on January 9, 2017 and school budgets on January 10, 2017.

Mrs. Bracken then began a discussion regarding the Superintendent's employee meeting. She explained that six topics were discussed to include: Central Office Considerations, Major Program Changes, Flexibility and Autonomy, School Allotment Guidelines, Signature Programs, and Compensation and Personnel. Mrs. Bracken wanted to receive the committee's thoughts concerning the topics.

Central Office Guidelines:

Mrs. Bracken explained employees were asked about making strategic cuts vs. percentage based cuts. The committee's feedback and concerns were as follows:

1. Mrs. Tammy Dixon stressed concerns about the number of CLL employees that actually support/touch the schools.
2. They would like to protect the teacher/student relationship and assure that 80% of the budget is going to direct instruction.
3. The committee is interested in seeing data from Thomasville Elementary School.

School Allotment Guidelines:

Mrs. Bracken began to discuss the option of raising class sizes and the potential impact it would have on the district. She discussed that the Superintendent's employee meeting outcome was potentially \$4.5 million if we raise class size by one. The committee stressed several concerns and opposed raises in class sizes.

Signature Programs:

Mrs. Bracken explained the options of the Cluster, Flex and Signature funds. She explained that Flex funds were \$9 million, Cluster was \$2.5 million, and Signature was \$7 million. The committee presented options for implementing a hybrid of flat plus per pupil for flex funds. They also discussed allocating more funds at the elementary level to address literacy issues.

Compensation and Personnel:

Mrs. Bracken explained employees were asked about making suggestions for compensation by 1%, 2%, and 3% COLA or step or a combination of COAL and step. She further explained that the consensus of the employee meeting was to give a 1.5% COLA across the district. The committee's feedback and concerns were as follows:

1. The question was asked about how many employees APS has. Mrs. Lang (from the compensation department) answered the following way: 6200 people funded from all funding sources, 5700 people are funded from the general fund, and 1200 people are not step eligible.
2. The committee agreed on a step (equivalent to about 1.57%) with the understanding that roughly 1200 APS employees would not receive any increase or compensation.

Mrs. Bracken mentioned that it was her intent to have the committee participate in the "Investing in Transformation" exercise. Time did not permit so Mrs. Bracken stated that the exercise would be conducted at a future meeting. She explained that cabinet and other APS employees participated in the exercise in a different format and the feedback was that the game was very helpful in assisting them in understanding the budget process.

Conclusion

The BFAC will continue to discuss budget development and school allocations. Mrs. Bracken stated that the Budget Commission meeting could potentially move to January 26th and if so the BFAC meeting will be reschedule to that date also. Mrs. Bracken will provide the BFAC committee with the recommendations to the school allotments and send them the forecasted enrollment.

Next Meeting – January 19th, 2017

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.