

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET AND FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 16, 2017

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 Development Update
2. BFAC Lead Discussion
3. What's Next

Committee Members in Attendance

- **Community** - Tammy Dixon, Mark Rebillot, Theodore R. Lee Jr., Toni Terry, Felicia Josey
- **Principals** –
- **Central Office** – Jennifer Lang, Herb Joseph, Olufemi Aina, Raynise Smith, Lisa Bracken, Shaquita Barnes, Kelly Redman, Alisha Moncrief-Millner

DISCUSSION

The meeting started with a word of welcome by Lisa Bracken, as host of the meeting. Mrs. Bracken quickly opened the meeting by restating the purpose of the BFAC Committee before going into the FY2018 Budget Development Update discussion. During this discussion the following timelines were disclosed:

- Feb 3: School Budget Due
- Feb 6: Departments Received Budgets
- Feb 27: Department Budgets Due
- Cabinet Retreat was initially slated for late February; however due to some changes, the new proposed date is early March. At this later date, all parties would be able to discuss and balance the budget more in depth.

Mrs. Bracken then briefly informed the committee that a draft for the Budget Primer is currently on the website for review. The Budget Primer gives updates on financial climate, FY17 history, highlights, financial rating, cluster maps, challenges, strategic priorities, budget parameters and guiding principles, etc.

Click [here](#) to view the draft FY2018 Budget Primer.

Mrs. Bracken then gave updates regarding the mid-year check-in. During this discussion, she highlighted some categories and amounts in which savings and/or reallocations had taken place in FY17. Mrs. Bracken then moved on to speak about legislative updates and the potential financial impact bills could have on the district. In discussion, she emphasized the huge immediate impact in which HB 211 would have on the district. HB 211: Income tax; homestead exemption; certain dwellings within a school attendance zone; create tax credit. She also explained that at this time, it is too early to tap into other bills that could possibly have a potential impact.

Mrs. Bracken then explained that moving forward into FY18, general fund resources would be cost neutral. She then gave the committee an update on the FY2018 potential funding. Some of the updates included but are not limited to: an increase to state health contributions, additional funding to be received by buyback services to offset other Local Revenue, assuming 1.5% COLA to all employees instead of the 3% from multi-year, and school allocations numbers which are anticipated to be almost spot on to the forecast.

Currently, how are expenses trending?

The Budget team is currently tracking trends and at this point in time, expenses are trending right on and very close to actuals. We are in a good place in the budget process for FY2017.

Mrs. Bracken then took a deep dive into FY17 CLL budgets that could possibly be pushed out to schools for more accurate reporting. This push would only relate to direct services to schools that are currently budgeted at CLL. Mrs. Bracken explained that in FY18 a school flow through account will be created to house budgets until the actual need is requested by a school. Mrs. Bracken also explained that this push will be a gradual process to be implemented over an extended period of time. Conversations are being had with Budget Center Managers and Chiefs as to what expenses would actually be pushed out to schools as well as to what methodology should be used in order to do so. Principals are currently receiving the Budget Accountability Report (BAR) which lists each account associated with a schools location, including salary and non-salary line items. Therefore going forward the Budget team will gradually incorporate more line items to be seen on the BAR for review. In doing so, this will get Principals more accustomed to seeing this shift.

What type of training will Administration receive for this process?

The Budget team will continue to work closely with Principals and other Administrators to ensure the understanding of this process.

Lastly, Mrs. Bracken then steered the committee members into the BFAC led discussion on potential topics such as: per pupil funding, CLL vs School Based Controls, 80/20 split and autonomy vs economy. The committee had extensive and in-depth conversations surrounding the impact of funding to schools with less than 500 students, school closures and mergers, SPLOST funding and program efficiencies. Mrs. Bracken ended the led BFAC conversation on a good note with informing the committee that she would take back any questions surrounding their concerns for solutions from the appropriate person(s).

The BFAC committee was given dates for the upcoming calendar and Mrs. Bracken explained that at the March 16th Budget commission meeting, the Tax Commissioner and Assessor are slated to be in attendance. During this time, the Budget team would receive a better understanding of the Revenue Forecast as well as a better feel on the “real” budget gap.

Conclusion

Mrs. Bracken encouraged committee members to send suggestions for agenda items for the next meeting.

Next Meeting – March 16th, 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.