

**ALEXANDRIA CITY SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MARCH 16, 2022 – 6:30 TO 8:00 P.M.**

VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Drane at 6:30 p.m.

2. Public Comments

There were no public attendees, and thus no public comments.

3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

There was a motion to approve the December 2021 minute, which was seconded and approved.

4. Staff Report (Mr. Robert Easley, Director, Budget & Fiscal Compliance)

- a. City Manager has fully supported ACPS appropriation request – monitoring anything on the State side, but it closed session w/out budget actions
- b. ESSER/ESSERII/ARP-ESSERIII – Community updates will be provided re: status of Federal funding, progress made through use of funds; reminder that funds span across 3 years – should be out in next few weeks
 - i. Q: When are there reporting requirements to the State and/or updated plans that need to be submitted? That is what will be issued shortly. There will be a monitoring visit in April 2022 (auditing documents; plans in plan v. actual spending; etc.)
 - ii. Hope to re-engage community on use of the funds; give community input on the use of the funds; etc.
- c. ACPS website update is underway; content and context they present information is being reviewed and updated; work groups in place to look at revising the website; Budget office is undertaking effort to review Budget Book (what is required/recommended by professional boards – or required to qualify for awards, etc.); they are looking at what is required and what if anything could be improved to make presentation better. They could use tools we are gathering to incorporate into the work that they are doing. (They are referencing past BAC recommendations and future BAC work.)

- i. Timeline – April 8 deadline to provide review of financial services section, to submit back to communications (what will they keep, revise, archive) – but this is the 1st stage – will be an iterative process
 - ii. Should be just in line with BAC plan to issue memo in May/June
 - iii. What are plans to foster feedback outside of ACPS staff? No concrete plans as of yet.
- d. Mr. Easley reported being pleased to receive feedback from Maureen McNulty o/b/o PTAC

5. Board Report (Ms. Kelly Carmichael Booz, Alexandria City School Board)

- a. Looking forward to seeing the ESSER update, with focus on increase in substitute pay, staff COVID leave, adding some pay for staff covering break periods (new uses of ESSER funds). Important to remind community that ESSER funds are Federal funds related to COVID; and are one-time (will not repeat)
- b. BAC Recruitment – encourages us to consider PTAC communication – recruiting PTAC representative and she will also encourage Board members to recruit
- c. Council and Board met a few weeks ago to review budget; bulk of the questions were around the fund balance issue – if you look at Board Briefs, March 4 there was a Board Brief on general fund balance

6. Next Steps: Scope of Work

- a. Reviewed BAC research on other school divisions’ budget communication strategies; BAC members referenced [worksheet template](#) and highlighted 2-3 strategies from each jurisdiction we might replicate in Alexandria. [Divisions examined by BAC members:](#)
- b. Brainstormed strategies we might incorporate into BAC memo in the following areas (or beyond) ([Google Jamboard](#) used to record thoughts during presentations):
 - i. in-person/virtual opportunities for public comment (e.g., hearing, town hall)
 - ii. methods for members of the public to submit comments or questions (e.g., online form, text, etc.)
 - iii. affirmative outreach efforts (e.g., present to community group, PTA, etc.)
 - iv. outreach/communications directed at larger community (beyond school-involved individuals)
 - v. sample public facing budget “explainers” or fact sheets on general budget process, budget proposal(s), or by subject matter (e.g., special education)
- c. BAC Reviewed draft timeline of next steps for BAC memo creation
 - i. March 16-May 18 – BAC members make edits to outline of draft memo (working outline will be shared by March 23)

- ii. May 18 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. - BAC Meeting (Virtual) – BAC members review draft outline/memo and settle on draft recommendations
- iii. May 18-May 30 - BAC members make final edits on memo and approve
- iv. June 2 – BAC Memo is Presented to School Board (in writing or orally if desired)
- v. June 15 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. - BAC Meeting (Virtual) – BAC Members discuss End of Year Report

7. Discussion

- a. Mr. Easley was very complimentary of BAC’s research thus far and thinks it can be incredibly valuable for ACPS staff. Noted in particular use of links to the Board presentation video – could highlight the specific section where they start the discussion versus a link to the entire meeting. He would love to share our preliminary thoughts with his budget team.
- b. Mr. Booz was also pleased with the research. She would love to ensure Board has information on this for a variety of reasons, some even beyond budget issues. She noted that some of this relates to structure of the website which is outside budget teams’ hands.
- c. Mr. Reyna noted that he has grouped our findings into three “buckets” on the Jamboard for future use. He also noted that other jurisdictions have used interesting tools for broader community engagement directed and specific to under-represented communities (ex: places that he has seen). We should also highlight things like translation.
- d. One idea: a handout on “How and When to Advocate on Budget Issues” – this would encourage thinking prior to budget “season” when preparation/planning is necessary.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was then adjourned.

Budget Advisory Committee Members:

- Nancy Drane [Chair]
- Selena el Hajji
- Sukumar Rao
- Ryan Reyna

ACPS Staff Liaison: Robert Easley, Director, Budget & Fiscal Compliance

School Board Liaison: Kelly Carmichael Booz