



## Budget Stabilization Task Force

6:30 –8:30 p.m. | June 25, 2018 | Board Auditorium

**Prepared by:** Laura Flores

**Coordinators:** Ali Ghilarducci, Community Engagement Coordinator, Travis Zander, Director of Budget and Planning

### Objectives:

- Agree upon rules for decision-making
- Review charge and set expectations
- Provide feedback on preliminary roadmap
- Login to MindMixer

**Call to order:** 6:33 p.m.

### MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Adolphus Anderson, Cesar Benavides, Todd Bisang, K.C. Cerny, Vanessa Dainton Santamaria, Christina Dunigan, Jason Durst, Bradley Dusing, Amir Emamian, Kevin Garcia, James Haynes, Dulce Hernandez, Robert Kibbie, Tanner Long, Claire Milam, Helen Miller, Larry Perez, Kazique Prince, Beatriz Rice, Alba Donajhi Sereno, Robert Thomas, Deborah Trejo, Ken Zarifis

### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Nicole Conley Johnson, Christian Casarez Clarke, Andrew Hoffman, Travis Zander, Ali Ghilarducci, David Edgar, Jeff Herbert, Cristina Nguyen, Kristen Hilsabeck

### INTRODUCTIONS

- Ali Ghilarducci, Community Engagement Coordinator
  - At your table, introduce yourself and your connection to AISD. Share with one another the origin/story behind your name. First, last or both, your choice.

### AGREEMENTS FOR DECISION-MAKING

- Group generated agreements
  - Be succinct with comments
  - Be respectful of others' time (be on time)
  - "Stay above the line"
  - Be honest
  - Do the right thing
  - Use simple declarative sentences
  - Allow an idea to be developed before expressing an adverse comment
  - Let others finish speaking before talking
  - Work toward consensus
  - but allow room for dissent/be mindful of the validity of minority opinions
  - We are here to understand, not just be heard
  - Speak your truths and believe others' truths
  - Try not to attribute motives
  - Ask clarifying questions
  - Ask for examples



- That we adopt an equity lens (need to agree what this means)

## Discussion Notes: 7:20pm

- Nicole
  - introduces herself and explains budget situation with committee. Job one is understanding the data. “We want to look at the data differently.”

## Questions and Comments from Members

- What are the chances of a “buy-in” by the Board?
  - 8 members were appointed to this committee by the Board
  - Reporting back to the Board
  - Communicating with the community
  - there isn’t always agreement amongst the Board members but this committee can make an impact because it is representative of the community that AISD serves.

## HOUSEKEEPING

- Timekeepers:
  - July 16 - Bradley Dusing
  - July 30 - Jamie Haynes
  - Aug. 15 - Andy Anderson
- Co-Chairs
  - Weekly phone-call
  - Finalize Agendas
  - Robert’s Rules of Order
  - Media Training

If more than two people volunteer, there will be a private ballot at end of the night. Ideally one staff member and one non-staff.

- Candidates:
  - Staff
    - Kevin Garcia
    - Larry Perez
  - Non-Staff
    - Jason Durst
    - Robert Thomas
    - Claire Milam
- It was suggested that the task force delay the vote, until coordinators can give a better description of what the duty entails and give people who could not attend, the opportunity to express interest.
- 10 voted in favor of delaying
- 10 voted in favor of proceeding with the vote this evening
- 3 abstained
- Nicole
  - Suggested delaying the vote to give members more time to learn about the candidates and what the commitment entails.
- Group expressed interest in tri-chairs given the potential workload.



- Tanner
  - suggest move to tri-chairs
- Robert
  - seconded
- motion passed unanimously

### HOW WE GOT HERE 7:30pm

- Travis begins “How did we get here” and explains AISD Fund Balance History
  - State funding for public ed decreasing as a percentage in comparison to local. State has not infused more money into the system despite inflationary pressures
  - Enrollment declining since peak in 2012, we’re funded per pupil.
  - Economically disadvantaged population is shrinking, affects title I and state allocations
  - Special Education population is increasing. These are our most costly to educate students and what we are given to support them is often insufficient to meet the need
  - The district fund balance or savings is decreasing and it’s unsustainable. District did a one-time accounting trick to shorten the fiscal year by 2 months. This means using 12 months of revenue to fund 10 months of operating expenses but that’s a one time bump. 2018-19 budget dips \$30 million into fund balance and next year it’s anticipated to be over \$70 million
  - The board has a policy of keeping a healthy fund balance of 20% of operating budget or else we could be seen as a credit risk which could affect our ability to pay our debt or state could deem district insolvent.

### BEGINNING WITH THE END IN MIND

- The BTSF Charge is explained:
  - Review and carefully consider broad stakeholder input
  - Review and carefully consider pertinent data and information
  - Discuss a broad range of possible actions to stabilize the district’s budget
  - Develop recommendations to enable the district to meet all of its financial obligations, and remain in alignment with its stated priorities and strategic direction.
- Expectation Setting
  - LA Unified: Hard Choices
  - Boston Public Schools: Investing in Student Success
- Group work begins 7:52 p.m.
- Groups were asked to review the reports from two school districts and discuss what they liked and might want to replicate and what they would want to do differently. The idea is to understand what we want our end product to look like and work backward.
- Written comments from groups:
  - Like the Boston Public Schools
  - prefer that it is about “investing” and “funding the future” vs. “hard choices”
  - include section on revenue
  - include various scenarios and trade-offs
  - Clarify why the task force chose what it did
  - include “dissent” and “minority” opinions
  - LAU includes all student populations



- Definition of equity
- outcome oriented decision making
- There's a diversity of needs that need to be addressed across the district
- Strive for transparency
- Important to include drivers of the deficit
- Include what happens if we do nothing - a timeline of specific way points that are known
- Make sure we talk about revenue, not just cuts
- Include the presentation of various scenarios
- Include trade-off/implications for every scenario
- Prioritize an equity lens
- Understand and prioritize what gets outcomes, not just fluff
- Full list of ideas and justifications for why some dissented
- Alternative sources of revenue should be discussed
- Audience should be considered. Is it the board or the public?
- The report should be written to provide community members info to relay to the board.
- Boston keeps it simple but puts hard choices on the table and presents multiple constituencies. Uses factual language, not emotionally charged
- Root cause of the budget decisions should be transparent
- If we use an equity lens then we should not decontextualize Austin the way Boston and LA did

## ROADMAP

- Calendar
  - July 16, Monday
    - School Finance Commission
    - Funding Formula
    - Fiscal Forecast
    - Demographics
  - July 30, Monday
    - HR Staffing formulas
    - Benefits
    - Energy Savings
  - August 15, Wednesday
    - Teaching and Learning Programs
    - DMGroup Inventory
    - Transportation
  - September 12, Wednesday
    - K12ology
- What's missing? Suggestions?
  - Present dense information early in the meeting to save time
  - Offer resources to members before meeting
  - three meetings is not enough time
  - Submit questions on a google doc so answers are brought to meeting
  - Break out spending by school, specifically title I
  - Boundaries, balancing schools



- Sub-committee needed to discuss equity
- community members need to be on the committees
- offering the committee starting points of the work the district has already done in terms of exploring options to allow us to get to the work of the committee
- be respectful of volunteers' time
- discuss campus maintenance plans with an eye on equity
- need an equity work group
- transparency
- scenarios
- final discussion to include what did not make it to the end result
- where is the money going and how does that connect back to the budget?
- zero based budget, starting from what would a perfectly funded school look like
- want to see 2018-19 budget data including cuts
- how are cuts affecting equity?
- want to see vendor lists and contracts, how much we spend on KXAN advertisements, Central office org. chart, programs and budgets
- Would like both a budget summary and metadata
- Is the process going to focus on looking at numbers? The focus should be on equity before limiting ourselves by only looking at this through a financial lens. Let's flip that around and start focusing on equity.
- Are you really not going to feed us when we're here for 3 hours?
- Executive Director of Finance
  - If it pleases you, we will provide dinner for these meetings.

## CLOSURE AND REMINDERS

- Candidates are invited to stay and share with anyone else who wants to stay, why they think they are qualified to be chair
- Candidates:
  - Kevin Garcia
    - Interested in being a chair of the committee because he feels that his experience as an Assistant Principal at Reagan Early College High School will allow him to be an asset. He has a Business Degree and has managed small and large budgets including Title funds as the Director of Professional Development and Academics at Southside ISD.
  - Larry Perez
    - works in East Austin. He is an educator and is here to focus on equity. He is interested in being a part of the committee because he wants to see schools on the east side succeed. Elementary Teacher of the Year 2017-2018
  - Jason Durst
    - Is here because he has children who attend Hill ES. Thinks the district is amazing but can be improved and wants to make it better. Director at Dell, experience in making impactful decisions for his organization and creating teams with a focus. Experience with diversity and working with groups of people. Jason grew up in California and attended a school where he was the minority (10% Caucasian) and feels that because of his experiences he considers himself a great candidate for the position.



- Robert Thomas
  - Is here because public education saved him, but he also watched the public education failed his sister who was diagnosed with dyslexia in high school. His children all graduated from AISD and he continued to volunteer with the district to make sure no child is left behind. He was part of the Bond Oversight Committee that helped look closely at facility issues for over 5 years. Feels passionate about helping focus ideas to improve education for the children.
- Claire Milam
  - Single mother and small business owner. Reticent to commit to additional responsibilities. Lives in Rundberg neighborhood. Two high school students. 504 and special education students. Taught at Region 13 that allows her to be well informed. She is invested and truly cares about the work this committee will do. Is excited about being part of the committee and hopes that the committee members support each other and end this process with an informed recommendation that focuses on equity. Claire is bilingual

#### **PARKING LOT ITEMS**

- How to gain buy-in from the board?
- District Equity Self Assessment
- Google Q&A Shared Doc?

**Adjourned:** 8:42 p.m.