

MINUTES

Parent Subcommittee on District and School Budget Priorities Family and Community Involvement Budget Advisory Subcommittee

Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1450 NE 2 Avenue, Conference Room 916 & Zoom Meeting
Miami, FL 33132

Monday, September 12, 2022

Members Present: Ms. Mina Hosseini (Vice Chair), Ms. Beverly Heller, Ms. Maria Norton, Ms. Janielle Murphy, Mr. Elias Seife, Ms. Meriel Seymore, and Mr. Antonio White.

Members Present Via Zoom: Mr. Scot Evans, Ms. Isabelle Exume, Dr. Lisa Robertson, Ms. Laura Philpot

Members Excused/Absent: Mr. Eddy Barea, Mr. James Lopez, Ms. Zoraida Serret, and Ms. Nadeige Therasias-Joisil.

Others Physically Present/Via Zoom: Ms. Martha M. Diaz, Ms. Nicole Crooks, Ms. Tabitha Fazzino, Christopher Snider, and Ms. Lisa Thurber.

I. Introductions: The meeting was called to order. Those present introduced themselves. Committee members and staff were welcomed.

II. Approval of the Minutes for June 13, 2022: Ms. Hosseini asked for the approval of the minutes for the June 13, 2022, Parental Advisory Subcommittee. The minutes were approved.

III. Presentation on the Sunshine Law and Bylaws: Ms. Lisa Thurber, Administrative Director of Community Engagement presented the following:

Under Florida's Sunshine Law, any gathering, whether formal or informal, of two or members of the same board or committee (advisory committees included) to discuss some matter on which foreseeable action will be taken by the public board or commission is considered a meeting.

Ms. Thurber indicated that the following are opinions of the Attorney General:

- Advisory Committees that make recommendations to government entities must comply with the Sunshine Law.
- Advisory Committee members must adhere to statutory voting requirements.
- Advisory Committee members are subject to criminal penalties for violating Sunshine Law.
- Three basic requirements apply to any formal or informal Board meeting (or Board subcommittee meeting) where any vote, resolution, rule, formal action, or discussions about such matters will take place, including the Sunshine Law, and they are as follows:
 - Reasonable public notice of the meeting must be given;
 - The meeting must be open to the public and in a location accessible to the public; and
 - Minutes of the meeting must be taken and must be made available for public inspection following the meeting.
- Under the Sunshine Law, reasonable notice needs to be provided as follows:
 - The time and place of the meeting, as well as an agenda (or if no agenda is available, subject matter summaries might be used—should follow an established practice);

- The notice should be prominently displayed in the area in the agency's offices set aside for that purpose [e.g., Citizens' Information, calendar];
- Emergency sessions should be afforded the most suitable and effective notice under the circumstances; and
- The public should be notified at least 24 hours in advance about any Special meetings.
- As it pertains to keeping minutes, the written minutes of meetings need not be verbatim transcripts, but minutes do need to be taken, even if the meeting is being recorded.
- Members of a public board or commission are not prohibited under the Sunshine Law from meeting together socially, so long as the matters which may come before the board or commission are not discussed at such gatherings. If such matters are discussed, it is a violation of the law.
- The following pertains to public records:
 - All documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form are considered public records.
 - All materials made or received by an agency or its employees in connection with official business which are used to perpetuate, communicate, or formalize knowledge is what constitutes a public record.
- It is a violation of the Sunshine Law for a member to provide written interaction regarding a memo between the members prior to the meeting. A memo of this nature must not be circulated for comment. The same principles apply to e-mail: the Sunshine Law prohibits members from communicating via e-mail.
- A public record may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of only in accordance with the applicable retention schedule. There is usually a 3-5 year minimum before records can be destroyed.
- The Public Records Act is applicable to letters or other documents received by a Board or Committee member or District staff in their official capacity as a board, committee, or staff member. E-mail is also subject to the Act.
- Compliance with the Sunshine Law's requirements is of paramount importance because a violation can lead to the invalidation of any action taken by a Board or Committee. Further, a civil fine of up to \$500 may be assessed for any violation of the Law, and criminal penalties (though never seen) may be imposed upon any member who knowingly violates the Sunshine Law.
- According to the Florida Statute 112.3143 as it pertains to voting conflicts the following applies:
 - "Public officer" includes any person elected or appointed to hold office in any agency, including any person serving on an advisory body.
 - "No county, municipal, or other local public officer shall vote in an official capacity upon any measure which would inure to his or her special private gain or loss; which he or she knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of any principal by whom he or she is retained or to the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which he or she is retained, other than an agency as defined in s. 112.312(2); or which he or she knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of a relative or business associate of the public officer."
 - "Such public officer shall, prior to the vote being taken, publicly state to the assembly the nature of the officer's interest in the matter from which he or she is abstaining from voting and, within 15 days after the vote occurs, disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes."

Sunshine Bylaws

Ms. Thurber explained that The Family and Community Involvement Advisory Committee (FCIAC) was established in 1993 to support the work of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) Office of Community Engagement. Under School Board Policy 2111, Parental Involvement – A HOME-SCHOOL-

DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP. The Committee is authorized to assess the progress in implementing this policy using outcome-based data, including, but not limited to, the School Climate Survey and the Educational Engagement Survey, and make written recommendations for improvement.

Ms. Thurber indicated that there are 37 voting members, a majority of whom will be persons not employed by M-DCPS. Active members who have regularly attended the majority (6/8) of meetings may continue to serve for two years.

During the month prior to the opening of schools, staff from the Office of Community Engagement will contact each of the member organizations, regions, and district offices for the name of their representative(s), or to fill any vacancies that may arise.

Ms. Thurber explained the responsibilities of each committee member, how officers are elected, and that a quorum of 13 members must be present before business can be conducted.

This committee, the District and school Budget Priorities Parent Subcommittee, which reports to the FCIAC, is formed with a minimum of seven (7) voting members, no fewer than nine (9) and no more than twenty members, including at least one representative from each Region and at least one representative from each school level. The Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting by a 2/3 vote of the membership of the FCIAC provided that at least five (5) working days written notice of the proposed change has been given to all members of the committee. In order for there to be a quorum there must be at least seven (7) physically present.

IV. Financial Outlook for FY 2022-23 Based on the Adopted Budget: Mr. Steiger, Chief Financial Officer provided the latest updates:

- We are now at the start of the 2023-24 Budget season. We have submitted the AFR (Annual Financial Report) and we submitted and passed the Final Adoption of our Budget last week. On Friday, September 9, we truly finished the 2021-22 year and the 2022-23 budget. We are living the 2022-23 budget. Monday, we start the official kickoff for the 2023-24 budget.
- The budget that just passed was an odd one. We have been over the last few years just trying to keep our heads above water. We have tried to make investments with ESSER as much as we can, but our budget has just been treading water. Those days are officially done.
- Two years ago, we ended the fiscal year with a Total Fund Balance of \$390 million, which was meant to be a little high because of ESSER and things we knew were happening.
- If you look at this past year, we ended with a Total Fund Balance of \$260 million.
- If you look at the 2022-23 budget closely, our expenditures (excluding beginning fund balance) substantially exceed our revenues. We will end this year probably just above the 3%, with a Total Fund Balance that is unhealthy, just above acceptable.
- This is becoming a trend. The last three years shows expenditures are exceeding revenues. If that happens again in 2023-24, we will be bankrupt.
- The 2023-24 budget will be destructive in some form or fashion. Either we get a lot of money from the state and do not give any money to our employees and instead use it to cure the structural deficiency that is now in our budget. Or we make very large reductions, roughly \$70-80 million. That is what we will be looking at before any cost increases, revenue adjustments, really before anything. Which is what we did in 2021, in order to save jobs and programs.
- The 2023-24 budget will be a particularly difficult year. If the referendum fails, it will be catastrophic. Right now we are operating on the belief that it will pass.
- All funds in ESSER, ESSER II and ESSER III have been allocated.
- The Chief Enrollment Officer is Ms. Tracey Crews and enrollment is actually up for the first time in years.
- Family Empowerment Scholarships are unknown at the moment because the State has not yet sent anything. (scary black box)

- Thoughts about the Educational Referendum:
 - General Election is November 8th
 - Absentee Ballots and early voting begins in early October
 - There will be Townhall Meetings that will begin October 3rd and run through October 20th, in every Board Member District. Attending those and asking others to attend will be important.
 - The Website is secureourfuture@dadeschools.net
 - The Referendum will continue to fund what it has always funded. The Referendum passed in 2018 with 72% approval. It funds improved compensation for our personnel and student and school safety (School Police Officer at every school).
 - The above goes through a Citizen Oversight Committee (Secure Our Future Oversight Committee) and they provide annual reports to the Community. We share all the revenue we receive and how it is expended. The Oversight Committee will stay.
 - The law changed and Referendum money must now be shared with Charter Schools on a per student basis. Charter Schools make up about 25% of the overall student population.
 - Having your voice out there is really important because it is not an easy thing to understand in terms of taxes. People do not want their taxes to go up but actually in terms of School Millage, we are actually the lowest we have been since 1976 even with the Adoption of the Referendum (projection).
 - The budget is very large (\$7 billion) but what people do not understand is that a significant portion of that is the Federal Funds, another significant portion is the Capital Budget which is not related to operating at all. Many of the dollars coming from Tallahassee, come down via categoricals. The state is giving us money, but they are also telling us how we need to spend said money.
 - It is so important that this referendum pass so that programs are not impacted, so we do not have to make significant cuts to instructional salaries.
 - The Referendum has allowed us to employ an additional 290 police officers.
 - If the Referendum fails, the most likely scenario is that everyone at the District takes a 15% pay cut.
 - Referendum raises about \$300 million plus for this year and expires on June 30, 2023. The reason for this increase in millage is to be able to spread more dollars over 25% more students (i.e. the charter students). If passed it is effective from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2027.
 - This is the ideal moment to take on a very small tax increase for a very major benefit. If we compare last year to this year, the millage is going down and you are capped at your residential property at a certain amount, so overall it is not that much of a burden, more like a few extra dollars a month.
 - What you get for this small invest is as follows:
 - An amazing school district that is A rated
 - Police Officers at every school, to enhance safety
 - Investments in programs that are unprecedented around the country
 - A District that will not waste your money. Every dollar we have been trusted with of yours as a taxpayer is spent wisely.
 - The leanest government entity you can imagine.
 - This Referendum is not about getting dollars to buy things. This Referendum is about dollars to invest in people, and by doing so, we are increasing the purchasing power of thousands of employees who are residents of Miami-Dade who will in turn take that income and invest it into local businesses.

V. Walkthrough of Individual School Financial Data: Tabled for a future date.

VI. Calendar for FY 2022-23: The committee agreed and approved to hold the meetings the second Monday of every month from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

VII. New Business: For Next Meeting: explanation of the Funding Compression; the District cost differential; and elections.

VIII. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.