

Budget Approval Meeting Minutes

Finch Elementary

Date: 3/14/2024

Time: 4:00pm

Location: Zoom

- I. Call to order: 4:04pm
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Dr. Tara Spencer	Present
Parent/Guardian	Ms. Edwina Lawrence	Absent
Parent/Guardian	Ms. Shaneka Parks	Absent
Parent/Guardian	Ms. Xiomara Bailey	Present
Instructional Staff	Mrs. Seggee Davis	Present
Instructional Staff	Ms. Erin Gore	Present
Instructional Staff	Mr. Terry Lee	Present
Community Member	Ms. Adriana Sola	Present
Community Member	Dr. Regana Hill	Present
Swing Seat		
Student (High Schools)		
Student (High Schools)		

Quorum Established: Yes

III. Action Items

A. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: Ms. Tesia Germain; Seconded by: Dr. Regana Hill

Members Approving: Ms. Erin Gore, Mrs. Seggee Davis, Ms. Adriana Sola, Ms. Xiomara Bailey,

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

B. **Approval of Previous Minutes:** *List amendments to the minutes:*

Motion made by: Ms. Tesia Germain Seconded by: Ms. Xiomara Bailey

Members Approving: Ms. Erin Gore, Mrs. Seggee Davis, Ms. Adriana Sola, Dr. Regana Hill

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

C. Approval of the Budget

Motion made by: [Dr. Regana Hill](#) Seconded by: [Ms. Erin Gore](#)

Members Approving: Mr. Terry Lee, Mrs. Segee Davis, Ms. Xiomara Bailey, Ms. Adriana Sola, Ms. Tesia Germain

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

IV. Discussion Items

A. Discussion Item 1: Presentation of the final budget

- i. Dr. Spencer shared the budget she decided for FY '25. Dr. Spencer went through the norms and shared that the members have gone through all the steps of the budget process. Dr. Spencer stated that she will review the budget, however the budget was updated based on the feedback received from the staffing conference with HR director, key leaders, and associate superintendents.

1. Budget Review

a. Budget Parameter

- i. Budget parameters were put in place to make sure the budget spoke to the school's priorities. Dr. Spencer shared she wanted to make sure to maintain reading and math focus foundational skill to ensure that every student would reach content mastery. Additionally, expose students to STEAM and obtain state certification by 2025. Lastly, to have an opportunity to improve teacher's efficacy and growth mindedness.

b. Strategic Plan Breakout Categories

- i. Dr. Spencer requested that when thinking through the priorities and how the budget is allocated we consider the following: priorities, APS Five and what priorities align with them, what specific strategies we have in place that speak to the budget, the specific ask and the amount that is associated with the ask.
- ii. Dr. Spencer continued to share that part of the work was to make sure to maintain the staff instructors as closely as possible because we've been seeing great traction with the staffing structure that we had. She stated that we want to make sure that we tried to align our budget to

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maintain those classrooms and maintain that our classrooms remain small.

- iii. Additionally, there was a focus to ensure that there was an increase focus on signature programming and prior to Dr. Spencer being at Finch the signature program teacher worked as a half day STEAM teacher and the other half day gifted teacher. Dr. Spencer stated that was a priority last year to make sure the teacher worked in 100% STEAM and maintain that for next year. Dr. Spencer continued stating that she wanted to make sure that we target the teacher leadership piece and being able to grow teachers and build capacity with teachers. Dr. Spencer stated that it was a goal to create a master teacher leader and the amount for that was \$105,000.
- iv. Dr. Spencer shared that the school received \$8,790 for family engagement. The monies allocated will be used purposefully and increase parent engagement awareness and knowledge just around school processes, system structures and how they can engage with our school team.

c. Summary of Position Changes

- i. Dr. Spencer explained that last budget meeting she asked to create a master teacher leader and to remove a couple of positions based on the knowledge that the budget was cut by \$745,000. The ask was to remove one classroom teacher, and a couple of supporting roles which will be a reading specialist, math specialist, reducing some of the specialist classes 2.5 to pair with another school, reducing some teacher tutors that come in to support teachers throughout the day, reducing a behavior professional, and two general education paraprofessionals. These changes would ensure that we were able to keep our classroom size small, and make sure that our staff structure remain as close as possible to what we had for the last two years.

d. Staffing Conference Changes

- i. Dr. Spencer stated that there were some changes to “the ask.” Several changes were made specifically because the staffing excel sheet did not calculate some of her changes. Due to the thinking that there was more money to operate in than there was. Some of the changes that was done was not able to create a master teacher leader position because the staffing did not align to having \$105,000. She was not able to create a master teacher leader. However, Title One Federal Program had carryover money that was place in the budget at the very last minute it was about \$50,000 that was placed in the budget and with that she was able to save a behavior paraprofessional position to support with behavior and support with duties in the classrooms just to make sure that our teaches were able to maintain a duty-free lunch. The funds from Title One saved the behavior paraprofessional and the remaining money would be placed in instructional materials and supplies so we would not start the year in a skeletal process with nothing.

e. Discussion of Reserve and Holdback Funds

- i. Dr. Spencer shared what money may come to us at the beginning of next school year. There is a leveling reserve of approximately \$64,000 and that money can be used to support some of the initiatives that she was not able to start the year with. For example, it can be used for hourly teacher tutors but as of now it is in instructional supplies. There is more money in the FY25 Title 1 Holdback account. Dr. Spencer will discuss this money at the next meeting after making a few corrections. Dr. Spencer questions the Go Team stating that after looking at how everything was allocated are there any questions about how the budget was created, how things were allocated, any positions that you would like to trade-off, or anything that you would

like for me to consider or anything that you would like to discuss.

B. Discussion Item 2: Go Team Questions/ Concerns

- i. Go Team member questions is there a way for extra funding to go into the art programs for example music and art. One member stated that kids like art and some kids learn different and they look forward to having those programs like every week or they like music and it gives them a break in between everything else.
- ii. Members continue to request is there a way that funding can go back to the art department so that they can continue being at the school the whole day instead of half a day. Dr. Spencer responded by stating that nothing with the special classes will change, will impact how often students receive art or how often they're able to go to music. This year a couple of days specials teachers had gaps in their schedule because they had seen all the classes and there were no other classes that they could support. Moving to half day ensures that teachers have full days where they can see more students. There were not enough students to make sure that art was going on all day for them because we didn't have enough kids. Students will be able to maintain a specials class every single day so one day they might go to art the next day they'll go to music the next day they'll go to PE then the next day they'll go to STEAM and then the next day they'll go to Spanish. Ultimately, student will still have the same opportunities and this ensures that our teachers have a full teaching schedule.
- iii. Another Go Team member's question for improvement of instructional services is PLCs include, or can an example be given of what would be included in that account. Dr. Spencer answers that the improvement of instructional services is for turnaround money. There are two positions funded in the turnaround money allocated to the school. With the money a coach and a counselor were funded with the money.

C. Discussion Item 2: Security Grant Survey

- i. Dr. Spencer shared that a grant was available to all Atlanta Public Schools where they will get \$40,000 to ensure schools are safe for staff and students. Dr. Spencer gave two examples of ways to use the money. One

option is to enhance the cameras that are in the building to make sure that they are all working properly, to make sure that they are all clear, and we're able to see everywhere in the building. The second option is to hire a security person that can walk the building consistently, walk in the parking lot, and be an extra layer of support when parents and visitors are checking in. Dr. Spencer stated that a decision does not need to be made today, however she wanted us to be aware that the school will receive \$40,000 and we have options on how we would like to spend it specifically for security.

- ii. Go Team member stated that can we get more lighting in the parking lot, can the parameter area like the fencing be fixed and some type of call box system in case something happens in the parking lot. Another member suggested fixing the gate or getting a buzz in gate so people can buzz in.

V. Announcements

- A. Dr. Spencer shares that Tomorrow is the final day to pick which 2025-2026 calendar is best.
- B. Map Assessment March 13-29
- C. Math and Literacy Fun Fair Carnival March 19 at 5:00pm
- D. Spring Break April 1-5, 2024
- E. Georgia Milestones Assessment April 29th- May 15th
- F. End of the year trip
- G. Next GO Team meeting

VI. Adjournment

Motion made by: [Dr. Regana Hill](#); Seconded by: Ms. [Xiomara Bailey](#)

Members Approving: Terry Lee, Erin Gore, Tesia Germain, Seggee Davis, Adriana Sola,

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

ADJOURNED AT 4:35pm

Minutes Taken By: Tesia Germain

Position: Secretary

Date Approved: 5/9/2024