

William M. Finch Elementary School

Date: 10.23.25

Time: 3:30 pm

Location: ZOOM

I. Call to order: 3:48 PM

II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Dr. Tara Spencer	Present
Parent/Guardian	Ms. Edwina Lawrence	Present
Parent/Guardian	Ms. Jasmina King	Absent
Parent/Guardian	Ms. Kashon Caldwell	Present
Instructional Staff	Ms. Erin Gore	Present
Instructional Staff	Ms. Tatyana Mcknight	Present
Instructional Staff	Ms. Tesia Germain	Present
Community Member	Dr. Terence Lester	Present
Community Member	Pastor Eric Thomas	Present
Swing Seat	Rekina LeCount	Present
Student (High Schools)		

Quorum Established: [Yes or No]

III. Action Items

- a. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: Ms. Tatyana Mcknight; Seconded by: Ms. Erin Gore

Members Approving: Ms. Edwina Lawrence, Ms. Kashon Caldwell, Ms. Tesia Germain, Dr. Terence Lester, Pastor Eric Thomas, and Ms. Rekina LeCount

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

Motion [Passes/Fails]

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

Motion made by: Ms. Erin Gore; Seconded by: Ms. Edwina Lawrence

Members Approving: Ms. Tesia Germain, Dr. Terence Lester, Pastor Eric Thomas, Ms. Rekina LeCount, Ms. Tatyana McKnight,

Members Opposing: 0

Members Abstaining: 0

Motion [Passes/Fails]

IV. Discussion Items

a. 2025-2030 Strategic Plan Development:

i. Atlanta Public Schools 2025-2030 Strategic Plan Overview

Dr. Spencer explained the district's mission is to educate and empower Atlanta's students to shape the future. As we are a community of believers – getting back to the basics.

Dr. Spencer outlined three main district goals: increase 3rd grade ELA proficiency by 20 percentage points, increase 8th grade math proficiency by 20 percentage points, and increase college and career readiness indicators by 20 percentage points by 2030

Dr. Spencer presented district key performance indicators including 68.8% student attendance rate with 80% target by 2030.

ii. Finch Elementary School Key Performance Indicators

Dr. Spencer reported 9.6% of third graders scored proficient or above in ELA, with goal of 35% by 2030

R. LeCount confirmed that 9.6% was current performance

Dr. Spencer explained that facility utilization is at 37% due to families moving out of attendance zone as housing becomes less affordable.

Significant improvement is needed across all key performance indicators as multiple barriers exist, including socioeconomic challenges, attendance issues, and housing instability.

iii. Factors Affecting Student Performance

Mr. Lester asked how economic disadvantages impact student proficiency and what community support is needed.

Dr. Spencer explained that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds often lack early learning opportunities from birth to kindergarten, with parents working multiple jobs and unable to afford daycare. She noted disparities exist where some kindergartners can read while others cannot identify letters. Also acknowledged that the Parent Resource Center fridge was empty because families had used available resources. Early learning gaps significantly impact student readiness.

iv. Mission and Vision Statement Revision

Two proposed mission statements were presented for feedback.

Dr. Spencer explained the school leadership team worked to revise the mission statement to ensure it reflects daily work and can be committed

to by all. Dr. Spencer explained she inherited the current mission and wanted to create something the team could fully commit to.

Option 1: "Our mission is to create a culture that intentionally embraces and develops compassionate and resilient learners who are kind, accept responsibility, and become productive citizens"

Option 2: "We are committed to intentionally nurturing accountable, proactive, and compassionate citizens through student-focused learning, collaboration, and equity, empowering every child to reach their greatest potential with integrity and commitment"

T. Germain stated Option 2 reflects the work done at Finch.

E. Lawrence Edwina strongly supported Option 2.

Dr. Terence preferred Option 1 for being succinct and laser-focused, particularly appreciating the words "resilient" and "develops".

GO Team members generally favored Option 2.

v. Strategic Plan Goals Review

Current continuous improvement goals were reviewed and confirmed.

Dr. Spencer presented current goals: increase ELA proficiency from 17% to 22%, increase math proficiency from 19% to 24%, and increase attendance from 67% to 70% by end of 2025-2026 school year and asked if team wanted to maintain, increase, or decrease the 2030 strategic plan goals set in September.

R. LeCount recommended maintaining current goals given the severity of challenges and timeline, then reassessing at year end to avoid being unrealistic.

Dr. Spencer agreed and emphasized that the strategic plan is a working document to be revisited annually. Current strategic plan goals are maintained and will be reviewed annually and adjusted based on progress.

vi. Additional Strategic Plan Goals Discussion

The team considered whether additional goals should be added to the strategic plan. Dr. Spencer: Asked if any additional goals beyond literacy, numeracy, and attendance should be included.

T. McKnight suggested adding specific intentions for meeting attendance goals, such as addressing parent resource room needs. Dr. Spencer clarified that specific actions and strategies would be addressed in a separate section of the strategic plan, not in the goals themselves. Dr. Spencer: provided an example of action item: "Increase community partnerships each year by two local communities to ensure Parent

Resource Center is fully stocked." No additional goals are proposed at this time. Opportunity to add goals will be available before the January deadline.

vii. Community Partnerships and Resources

E. Dr. Lawrence asked if this was the place to make suggestions about partnering with food banks to fill the empty Parent Resource Center fridge.

Dr. Spencer confirmed Parent Resource Center was established and a new staff member started Monday to focus on community partnerships she also reported assistant coach from the Hawks visited Monday to discuss supporting the school Dr. Spencer emphasized openness to creating new partnerships, especially corporate partnerships.

K. Caldwell offered to reach out about parent resource room needs and mentioned partnering with City Departments for mentor program.

viii. Instructional Improvements

Strategies for improving student outcomes were outlined.

Dr. Spencer explained that teachers are diving deep into using data to inform decisions and stated PLCs are focused on high-quality instructional planning, implementing instructional strategies, and being reflective to accelerate student growth. Data-driven instruction and reflective practice are key strategies for improvement.

V. Information Items *(add items as needed)*

a. Principal's Report

Dr. Spencer highlighted

- Pre-K program is important for early learning and kindergarten readiness and reported special education students participated in Special Olympics with some achieving first place.
- The first through third graders attended an event at Mercedes-Benz Stadium where Bijan Robinson read to students as part of the literacy initiative.
- Announced Title I informational virtual meetings on October 28th at 10 AM and 5 PM.
- Listed upcoming events: Picture Day October 29th, Helen Ruffin Picture Book Reading Bowl October 30th, Red Ribbon Week, extended learning day November 4th for Election Day, Thanksgiving luncheon November 11th, and book fair November 10-14th

b. APS Forward 2040 –Comprehensive Long-Range Facilities Plan Update -

Proposed changes to school configuration and cluster assignments were presented.

- Dr. Spencer emphasized that none of the plans are final.
- Finch and Perkerson Elementary would merge and be housed in the Sylvan Hills Middle School building as Perkerson, Finch, and Gideons would join Washington Cluster, meaning Carver Cluster would disband.
- Dr. Spencer also noted feeder schools would become H.J. Russell for middle school and Washington High School for high school. The School of the Arts at Carver campus would expand to 6-12 instead of 9-12, with preference given to students in the current Carver Cluster.
- The next public meeting will be on November 10th with virtual options at noon and in-person options at 6 PM at CLL.

VI. Announcements

- a. Title 1 Informational Virtual Meeting- Oct. 28th at 10am and 5pm
- b. Picture Day-October 29th
- c. Helen Ruffin Picture Book Reading Bowl- October 30th
- d. Red Ribbon Week- October 27th- 31st
- e. Thanksgiving Luncheon- November 11th
- f. Scholastic Book Fair- November 10th – November 14th]

VII. Adjournment

Motion made by: **Ms. Tatyana McKnight**; Seconded by: **Dr. Terence Lester**

Members Approving: Ms. Tesia Germain, Ms. Rekina LeCount, Ms. Erin Gore, Ms. Edwina Lawrence, Pastor Eric Thomas, and Ms. Kashon Caldwell

Members Opposing:

Members Abstaining:

Motion [Passes/Fails]

ADJOURNED AT 4:42 PM

Minutes Taken By: **Rekina LeCount**

Position: **Secretary, Swing Member**

Date Approved: **11/20/2025**