

Hope-Hill Elementary School

Date: January 31, 2023

Time: 5:30p

Location: Virtual Zoom Call

- I. Call to order: 5:35p
- II. Roll Call

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Maureen Wheeler	P
Parent/Guardian	Alex Wu	P
Parent/Guardian	Amanda Siegel	P
Parent/Guardian	Robin Tolochko	P
Instructional Staff	Natalie May Walther	P
Instructional Staff	Jocelyn Nettles	P
Instructional Staff	Khadijah Williams	P
Community Member	Carol Cooley	5:42 joined
Community Member	Donell Woodson	P
Swing Seat	Derrick Ross	P
Student (High Schools)	Vacant	

Quorum Established: Yes

- III. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: [Robin Tolochko](#) Seconded by: [Alex Wu](#)

With the addition of an overview of the GO Team’s role in the hiring of the new principal (to be covered during the Principal’s Report).

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

- IV. **Public Comment**
 - a. Not Applicable

- V. **Approval of Previous Minutes:**
 - Minutes approved with the addition of the 2 documents sent by Alex Wu (Draft strategic plan with small change & the priority survey results)
 - Motion made by: [Alex Wu](#); Seconded by: [Derrick Ross](#)

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

VI. Discussion Items

a. Strategic Plan Update

This was handled effectively during our last meeting, so we therefore moved on to discussion points b and c.

b. Review Budget Development Process

This was presented by Ms. Wheeler, who reviewed the Principal's Role in the Budget Development Process. The GO Team is tasked with ensuring that resources are allocated to support key strategic priorities.

We are currently at our Budget Choices part of the process . We need to make sure our draft budget reflects our strategic priorities.

Ms. Wheeler remind us of our Strategic Plan Priority Ranking, where we listed our top 3 priorities as:

1. Provide wrap around services to meet the needs of the whole child
2. Demonstrate high levels of academic growth among all students
3. Maximize instructional time daily to provide engaging opportunities aligned to the standards for students.

Meeting these three priorities most directly drive the budget. The budget recommendations are tied directly to the school's strategic vision and direction. The proposed budget for the general operations for the school are reflected at **\$5,662,733**. There are funds in our budget that are locked because they are designated by the district. Our **projected enrollment is 350 students**, which is a decrease of 25 students from last year. However, our budget will actually increase for next year.

Ms. Wheeler explained how much the school earns per student, based on their grade level and our projected enrollment for each grade level. She then explained different conditions that earn the school money.

The EIP line item is very high this year because the district is accepting the state funding formula and giving us back pay for the past 2 years when we did not receive the correct amount.

Our general budget total allocation **\$3,667,504**. Ms. Wheeler then discussed other allotments that we receive, and some funds (**\$1,995,228**, FTE Allotment) that are funded by the district that we cannot touch. They are designated for certain staff (i.e. social worker, media specialist) that are required by the district. This is also the last year that we will get CARES money (currently **\$185, 983**).

Ms. Wheeler stopped to take any questions about how we earned the money in the budget.

A question was asked about the CARES allotment: this is the last year we are getting that money. We need to be strategic for how use this money. Next year, we will need to prioritize things again with our budget because 2/3 of EIP money won't be there, and the CARES money won't either. So budget next year will be **down about \$450K**, unless our enrollment increases. Ms. Wheeler will make sure the new principal is aware of the change in budget amount.

c. **Budget Allocation Presentation (Principal)**

So that leaves us a little more than \$3 million for us to allocate with the budget.

Ms. Wheeler likes to invest in people and positions rather than “stuff”. We should fund with putting students first and according to our needs.

Ms. Wheeler showed the Team the current budget allocation for staff, and non-people budgetary items like supplies and technology.

We are luckily we are in the position that we don't cut anyone. Ms. Wheeler would like to propose adding the following staff:

- a. Bring back our counselor full time
- b. Add a 4th and 5th grade teacher to keep class size consistent school wide, at about 16 students per class. (Though 2nd grade would be at 23 per class.)
- c. Add an EIP teacher for whom we can use some of the extra EIP funds that we have this year. In this scenario, we would have dedicated EIP teachers for K, 1, 2, and a 3-5 Reading and 3-5 Math. It essentially adds an additional teacher per grade level. This will continue to reduce class size.
- d. Since 2nd grade will have slightly larger class sizes, we will have a dedicated full-time Parapro for 2nd grade.

Ms. Wheeler is also suggesting/requesting the following:

- e. Leveling Reserve: We are required to have some money in reserves (unallocated) in the event that we have lower than expected enrollment and

don't meet our budget allocation. With \$73k in reserve, we can be approximately 15 students under and it will be a wash and we would just give that money back to the district. The GO Team office is asking us to decide now how the reserve will be spent, but Ms. Wheeler is asking us to leave that money for the new principal because she cannot predict what the needs will be for next year, so she would like the new principal to have some funds to use as he/she decides. These funds will be released after the first 15 days of school/ FTE count.

- f. There is also Title 1 money that they hold back because of when we receive that the money. She also asks that we hold that so the new principal has some money to spend later.
- g. CARES funding: Would still like to have a school resource officer covered with this money, as well fund 2 kindergarten Paras full time, so all 4 will be full time.

Ms. Wheeler showed a graph where 75% of our budget is student driven (going directly to students).

Our funding aligns to our priorities. Also our cluster priorities (STEM) is also funded.

This plan should give the students individualize acceleration and remediation as needed. We will take any additional questions on our February 15 meeting, and we will vote on this during our March meeting.

Amanda ask for an explanation of EIP teachers. We have 4 push-in EIP teachers currently, and they cover the gaps between regular ed and special ed. They work with a dedicated group of students who qualify for these services. Ms. Wheeler mentioned that K. Williams is also an EIP teacher although self-contained, so we get funding for that model. Our EIP teachers are our most highly qualified, experienced teachers.

Nettles asked if 1st would each get a dedicated para. Not at this point, but class sizes will be smaller and there will be a dedicated EIP teacher, so those points will be helpful. If we get extra \$, then maybe the next principal will want to hire.

Robin asked how our strategic priority of providing better wrap around services is reflected in our budget? What does a full-time counselor provide for the students? Ms. Wheeler told the team our Parent Liaison and our Behavior Coach help provide those wrap around services. Currently our Counselor can only trouble shoot issues because he is at Hope-Hill only 2.5 days per week.

Ms. Wheeler responded that the level of intentional instruction that a teacher can provide at 16 v. 26 is massive. Smaller class sizes makes it easier for teachers to get to needs of all children. Putting additional support in the class allows the teacher to meet the child where they are, either remediation or acceleration. This might not be wrap around services but more whole child support (from APS 5). How we are choosing to spend money on additional staffing supports the APS 5.

Alex Wu asked about the point that was made earlier that there was not enough physical space to add another 2nd grade classroom, so we were going to further reduce class sizes with paras and other support structures. Ms. Wheeler said that the district bases capacity on a much higher class size than she would like to fund. She could have fewer homerooms per grade level and make class sizes larger, but then that would impact how we have been able to build culture, show growth, and meet the remediation and acceleration of our kids. We do all of this with smaller classes sizes. Maybe it is time for a SPLOST renovation? We cannot build out but we could go up. Currently all of the rooms in the building are being used as a classroom. Nothing is being used for offices. Our (instructional) coaches are in closets because we made room for an additional classroom.

Cooley mentioned that all of this sounded great, but wanted to know how the families getting information about the services that are offered, and what is their participation in these supports? Parents don't always take advantage of what is being offered. Ms. Cooley wanted to know how this is being communicated to the families? And how responsive are the parents are to the programs that can assist them? Ms. Wheeler said she would like to discuss this with Ms. Cooley personally, but the short response is that we saturate parents with resources but cannot force them to use them. With connections like what we have through Ms. Cooley, we are getting better responsiveness.

Derrick said that with our budget, we clearly demonstrated strategic vision with wrap around services. What he doesn't see is how we are demonstrating high levels of academic growth among all students and engaging opportunities aligned with standards. Ms. Wheeler said that we can provide excellent intentional instruction with smaller class sizes, especially with differing needs. The ability to reduce class size and have additional support in the classroom allows the teacher to spend more time with the kids who need it, either acceleration or remediation. **Donell** said that we will start our next meeting further delving into that topic.

Williams asked if we had a full time school psychologist, would it take away from another full time Para? Wheeler answered that if we allocated her (Ms.

Valentine) to full time, she could do more for behavior and support for our students. We would need to get more input from the staff if we wanted to fund this position. We would need to think more about this and discuss. The team agreed that this would be in line with our priority of wrap around services. Ms. Wheeler suggested that we should think if we should get a full time psychologist or full time Parapro. But we could possibly fund the para position in the future. Ms. Wheeler asks that we “hold tight” to everything but consider how it would look with a full time psychologist v. a full time Parapro. The problem is that we would have to fund the psychologist up front, whereas we can add a Parapro at a later date.

VII. Information Items

a. Principal’s Report

For the Team members that missed the Principal’s Coffee, Ms. Wheeler repeated the process for hiring a new principal. The district will send out a QR code to staff and parents, and the HR department will put together a Leader Profile. Then will hold a virtual staff meeting and virtual parent meeting.

Tier 2 of the process involves Robin and Donnell meeting with HR department and going through the resumes of people applying for the position.

The Tier 3 interviews will be with the 6 finalists and the panel (GO Team, the PTA co-chairs and the Foundation chair).

VIII. Announcements

IX. Adjournment

Motion made by: [Amanda Siegel](#) Seconded by: [Derrick Ross](#)

Members Approving: ALL

Members Opposing: None

Members Abstaining: None

Motion Passes

ADJOURNED AT 7:15p

Minutes Taken By: [Jocelyn Nettles](#)

Position: [GO Team Secretary, 2022-2023 school year](#)

Date Approved: [\[Insert Date When Approved\]](#)