

Grady High School GO Team

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 19, 2017

Location: Computer Center, Grady High School

Attendees: Blankenship, Bockman, Brandhorst, Bray, Brewer, Cramer, Damiani, Herrera, Kinard, Pilson, Styles

Guests: Hollis, Barnes (Instructional Coaches), Lynette Slovensky, Kelly Redman (APS Budget Rep)

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 4:08pm.
2. **Approval of Agenda:** The meeting agenda was approved unanimously.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the November 14, 2016 meeting were properly presented and approved unanimously.
4. **Strategic Plan Review** - The Go Team briefly reviewed the approved school Strategic Plan to ensure alignment of the plan and the draft budget. As a reminder, the Go Team established the priorities and measures and the school administration sets the strategies accordingly. The school administration then sets the budget accordingly.
5. **FY18 Budget Development Presentation (attached Draft FY18 Budget)**

Instructional Coaches Barnes and Hollis reviewed the Draft FY18 Budget. A few areas of focus and consideration included: loss of Title I funding due to the school falling below the threshold 40% FRL minimum, need to provide teachers with the tools to review and manage data as necessary to improve student performance, and the need to support the cluster signature theme. See the attached presentation for allocations and rationale information. Highlights of the budget review discussion include:

 1. All funding now goes into one central budget and must be allocated accordingly. For example, all Media Center funding is now in the overall budget, as are several other items that used to be line itemed separately.
 2. Teacher allocations increased, including earning an additional Special Education teacher. The school administration is still considering how to assign an additional 1.5 teacher allocation. Allowed flexibility assigning earned allocations has enabled the school to keep instructional staff stable, despite losing Title funds.
 3. Concerns about loss of Title I funds - Discussion included:
 - In previous years, schools were partially funded if they dropped below 40% FRL. This is not the case for FY18. New federal guidelines have a 50% threshold for receiving Title funds, which will be in place for FY19. Grady has been consistently at 37% for several years.

- MARTA Breeze cards were once funded out of Title I to allow students who qualified for FRL to have access to transportation. Those cards will be funded out of the general school fund.
 - A number of staff positions normally funded out of Title I, including Ms. Marable, Parent Liaison, will stay on staff, funded out of regular funds.
 - Grady will be allowed to keep durable goods (technology, equipment, etc.) that was originally funded through Title I.
4. Budget includes approximately \$2000 (about 40 hours) to support after school activities that require a Student Resource Officer (SRO). This should allow our clubs and activities to continue after hours.
 5. The school is currently expecting a increase in 1.5 teaching positions that have not yet been assigned. Focus for new hire will be in Reading or Math/Social Studies.
 6. Loss of Response to Intervention (RTI) and Student Support Team (SST) staff - All RTI and SST staff were cut from the central district budget. Duties of these personnel would have to shift to other staff members or schools would have to allocate the personnel from their general budget. Currently, the school administration is exploring ways to keep the RTI/SST personnel, including budgeting the position out of general funds or time sharing between instructional and administrative duties. The team briefly discussed the importance of and value add that the RTI/SST personnel brought to the school with a desire to keep the support position.
 7. Cluster and Signature Funds - The team discussed the Cluster and Signature funds and how they are allocated across the district. Highlights of the discussion include:
 - How are cluster funds allocated across the district? They are equally allocated, basically a per pupil allotment. Cluster funds will support several things including band and orchestra positions at feeder elementary schools.
 - Is the Grady cluster getting adequate signature funds compared to other clusters because we have opted for a different signature theme that might not have an associated established cost (like IB)? The Cluster Planning Team was given assurances that funding would be equal and would allow flexibility, which was a major part of the team's decision-making process. College and Career signature theme has many different demands than an International Baccalaureate program. Information provided by the district indicates that signature funds are allocated based on where the cluster and school are in their implementation of the new program. The concern is that the community wants a robust program despite following a different model and that funding should be provided accordingly.
 - The Go Team would like to investigate how to approach APS to ensure equitable funding to support development and rollout of the signature theme.
 7. After questioning equitable distribution of funding, the Go Team discussed how the school will be addressing the rollout of the signature theme without significantly more funding to do so. APS will be paying for all students to take their AP Exams, which financially supports Grady's signature program and aligns with the school's strategic plan. Some action items the school is taking include:

- Focusing on bringing down the student:teacher ratio in the on-level classes to increase the ability for student-teacher interactions.
 - Compiling projected numbers for AP classes for the next school year and will review those to determine areas where balances and adjustments can be made to ensure optimum and equitable enrollment. Herrera requested that instructional staff be included in this conversation and planning. The school must consider how AP classes will fit into the larger schedule needs and graduation requirements.
 - Reviewing the foreign language offerings and how to balance out enrollment across all languages.
 - Seeking student input on any changes. Many classes and teachers have a reputation that drives enrollment. Damiani made the observation that many students, unsure of what they really want to do, gravitate towards the classes and teachers that are consistently strong which seems to be in the social sciences and language arts.
 - Continuing to push Move On When Ready enrollment. Increased enrollment would relieve pressure on some classes and because the state provides funding for the program, there is a large value-add to the school. Currently 10% of Grady's students are enrolled. The Go Team briefly discussed ways to support this including ensuring transportation options for all students and providing an SAT/ACT preparation class. Currently, Grady's highest performing students do not enroll in MOWR at high rates because college admissions recognize that AP classes are often more rigorous than the lower level college classes.
 - How can the school increase support for career development as part of the signature theme? The Atlanta Career Academy provides students a chance to be certified in a trade. All interested Grady students were admitted this school year. Signature theme funds could also be used to build more robust career offerings in the school's College and Career Center.
8. Overall school budget is down although tax revenues are up. Why? School system is facing increased fixed costs associated with benefits, unfunded pensions, and charter schools that are growing faster than revenues.

6. **FY18 Budget Approval** - The presented budget was information only. Final budget will be presented and approved on Monday, January 30 at 4pm.

VII. Public Comment - No public comment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:35pm.

Submitted by:
Janet Kinard, Go Team Secretary