

David T. Howard Middle School

Date: **February 11, 2025**

Time: **4:45 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.**

Location: **Zoom & YouTube**

I. Call to Order: **4:47pm**

II. Roll Call; Establish Quorum

Role	Name (or Vacant)	Present or Absent
Principal	Tekeshia Hollis	present
Parent/Guardian	Doug Brooks	present
Parent/Guardian	Deonne Malick El-Deiry, Secretary & CAT	present
Parent/Guardian	Shalanda Miller, Chair	present
Instructional Staff	Regina Bryant	present
Instructional Staff	Sudie Nolan	present
Instructional Staff	Marquita Moore, Vice Chair	came late after attendance taken
Community Member	Heena Patel	present
Community Member	Boyd Baker	came late after attendance taken
Swing Seat	Andrew Anglin	present

III. Action Items

A. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by: Nolan Seconded by: Malick

Motion: Passes Unanimously 7/7

B. **Approval of January 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes :** Motion made by: Anglin

Seconded by: Patel

Motion: Passes Unanimously 7/7

IV. Public Comment (10 minutes, 2 minutes per speaker)

A. Ben Nemo provided a public comment on curbing cell phone use in the school and asked GO Team to review the Sutton Middle School policy

V. Discussion Items

A. Budget Development Presentation:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vS9WAYvV2P0onVtYacr79A1>

sXi5lXgkhoFVleg8ly4GuZd-JSrhxpmbTcUM9mdRng/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000&slide=id.p1

- i. Timeline of budget process Slide 6 reviewed
- ii. Strategic Plan reviewed
- iii. Budget Parameters reviewed
- iv. Signature Program Funding reviewed. Howard Middle School asked for \$789,910 per the January 2025 GO Team meeting, see slide 14. Principal Hollis updated us on changes made at district level since January 2025 GO Team meeting which included a principal meeting where she was told the ask of \$789,910 was not going to be approved.. Hollis updated the ask to be \$394,000 for SY26 and what was approved was \$273, 472.
 1. Malick asked if our funding last year SY25 was \$355,000, Hollis confirmed this was correct.
 2. Malick asked if we were to get to the Signature Program with one and a partial teacher. Hollis reminded us of the \$100 million dollar deficit at district level. Hollis expressed we need to link the signature program to fund the student outcomes that are desired.
 3. Malick asked if the Signature Program is in the Strategic Plan? Hollis confirmed it is but is not sure if it will be in the updated one. Hollis does not know if that will continue with the new strategic plan that is being written.
 4. Malick asked if all schools are seeing a \$50,000 decrease in signature programs. Hollis clarified that Howard is receiving an \$82,000 decrease in signature program funding and is not aware of other schools' decreases.
 5. Malick expressed concern as a non-title school this is one of Howards few extra funding resources provided. Also asked if Signature Coach will be able to focus solely on STEAM Signature Program. In addition she expressed concern for non-staff funding for signature program. Hollis confirmed she was provided \$273, 472 funds and she may change the items she funds. Hollis spoke to trade offs necessary this year.
 6. Miller asked to explain logistics of a 0.8 Science teacher. Hollis explained she will backfill from the rest of the budget to make it to a 1.0 FTE Science Teacher and confirmed we will need to make sacrifices to do that.
- v. Gifted & Talented: Hollis confirmed all teachers in “gifted” portion of the table presented are certified gifted. (slide 16)
 1. Malick asked about changes to Gifted Services and if we will see those on SY26 budget. Hollis stated it could affect SY 26 budget and stated the district desires us to not use a delivery model for gifted SY26 that will be phased out by state in FY27. Hollis explained how this could impact Howard SY26,

however she does not know staffing thus she is not able to provide GO Team information at this time. Malick asked if this will be presented to the GO Team prior to voting on the final budget in March. Hollis indicated it may not be secondary to not knowing staffing. Malick asked for the changes in gifted to be discussed. Hollis described current models of gifted and talented delivery (cluster, resource, collaborative, advanced content - IP/AP). She further explained the collaborative model and that Howard does use this model but most “gifted courses” are taught by gifted teachers. She further elaborated decisions for next year regarding gifted delivery will be made based on gifted certified staff staying and 51% students tagged as gifted. Hollis confirmed the state is removing the collaborative teaching model by SY27 and the district would like to shift this out SY26. Hollis reminded us currently gifted students are offered 2 segments and only 1 is required by state. Hollis is hoping to continue to offer 2 gifted segments to gifted students. She also stated some teachers are currently completing their gifted certification.

vi. Position Change Summary (slide 17)

1. Principal Hollis reviewed updates

- a. Losing a non-instructional aid and 0.5 FTE Fine Arts Teacher
- b. Addition of second hourly security guard and Hollis will update the community on morning tutorials next week for position added.
- c. Adding an Hourly Reading Teacher to help shift our standards and focus on literacy.
- d. Shift to hourly ISS staff due to our demands of ISS.
- e. Adding Master Teacher Leader to help shift ELA standards. This will bring us to 2 Master Teacher Leaders.
- f. Losing district funding for 2 permanent substitutes and need to add “Hourly Teacher Tutor”
- g. Fine arts teacher will shift from a 1.0 to a 0.5

2. Malick asked for clarification of the role of Master Teacher Leader versus Instructional coach and how Master Teacher Leader will support Howard Strategic Plan. Hollis described the roll. Master Teacher Leader works with students and teachers. Master Teacher Leader helps with teaching when teachers are out, they can do pull outs, professional development, PLC, test days and analyzing data.

3. Miller asked if the positions in the removed column of the Fine Arts Teacher and non instructional aid are vacant. Hollis confirmed they are not, and Howard has no vacancies.

vii. Non Staffing items (slide 18)

1. Hollis explained that these items are similar to the previous budget. She did call out that she is adding some staff stipends. She is not using district funded

- field trip funds as some items are ranked higher. She confirmed there would be field trips and referenced using parent school organizations to support field trips. She stated the budget is tight. Hollis did call out the \$45,000 security grant and the two hourly security guards.
2. Malick asked for clarification around the “intervention” position and asked if we were going back to two intervention positions as mentioned during the literacy presentation. Hollis stated Howard cannot afford to have two full intervention staff but itemize the addition of an hourly reading teacher ,certified in reading, who will be maxed at 29 hours per week.
 3. Malick asked for clarification on positions working with our ELL students as we added this population to the strategic plan. Hollis confirmed we provide these services in both co teaching and resource model and staff is earned and funded by the state found under the “Special Education” positions.
- viii. Strategic Plan Break-out reviewed (slide 22)
1. Reviewed changes in support again with Science STEAM, Connections, ESOL, Master Teacher Leader, Reading Teacher, Wrap around services for safety and security
 2. Hollis to keep class sizes around 26
 3. Most software needs are supported through Parent Organization, hoping the district absorbs \$25,000 the school currently has on books.
- ix. Questions for GO Team (slide 25)
1. Miller requested clarification on 0.5 Art Teacher and Instructional Aide position removals. Hollis confirmed changes. Malick expressed concerns for changes in the Art Program decreasing. Hollis confirmed the same offerings for Fine Arts would continue just the frequency of them would change. Malick confirmed with Hollis that the amount of sections of art would decrease though thus less students would have access to these courses. Miller reiterated the importance of the arts. Hollis asked if GO Team would like to flex positions in a different way. Malick confirmed the budget is tight and we are hoping to advocate to not have these losses that support our students and staff and their needs at Howard. Malick requested we fold in more administrators in these conversations to support the staff and students. Principal Hollis confirmed she has advocated already about similar concerns as a school that has one of the lowest per pupil funding. The Go team was informed today’s vote is “has our principal utilized the funds allocated to meet the strategic plan”. Hollis indicated she does support continued advocating for additional funds. Hollis expressed concern that if the GO Team voted against the budget it may suggest she did not use the funds appropriately. Malick asked GO Team Office staff, Diane Jacobi, to clarify what the vote was for. GO Team office staff Diane Jacobie reminded us this meeting was not the appropriate venue to advocate for more money and Principal

Hollis has no control over how much she has been allocated. Jacobi directed us to the superintendent and board of education for conversations regarding additional allocations. Jacobi stated she did not believe potentially holding up our schools budget would help our students. Malick asked for clarification on the change from January and February Signature Funds. Jacobi reminded GO Team the Signature Funds was a request. Miller expressed concerns again for the challenge Hollis is in and concerns she shared last year that raises were given but no budget increases were provided to match the raises. Miller highlighted our budget is mostly people and teachers, and students need support. Miller expressed need to figure out how to fund field trips, and discussed surplus at state level. Malick shared concerns that we are one of the highest enrolled schools but receive lowest funding and our community continues to fill the gap financially. Miller pointed parents and the community to have discussions with superintendent and district leaders, and confirmed Hollis cannot solve this funding problem. Malick confirmed and advocated again for a meeting with GO Team members and district leaders including Superintendent, Cluster Superintendent Audrey Sofianos, APS BOE Katie Howard & Ken Zeff and At Large Members prior to voting on the budget and pointed out that the timeline allows for that. Malick reiterated that community members are asking for her to do that. Moore confirmed we should advocate for more and reiterated the task tonight was to determine if the budget Hollis put forth aligns with our plan. Moore expressed concern for us getting off track during the meeting. Malick again expressed concern that Hollis does not have the financial resources to align with our strategic plan to support the teachers and the students. Hollis asked Jacobi if we do not vote to approve the draft budget how does this impact posting for positions, timeline and next steps. Jacobi stated she was not aware of a team that voted down a draft of the budget between Monday and present time. Malick interrupted and expressed concern for this statement. Miller asked for Jacobi to be allowed to speak. Jacobi reiterated this is a democratic process and Malick could vote against. Jacobi then started again the vote is not for how much Howard was allocated, it is how are we spending the allocation and does it support the school's strategic plan with a consensus this week. Jacobi stated after the vote Hollis goes to cluster superintendent and HR staffing conferences and advocates for the approved draft budget for our school. Jacobi then stated after the cluster superintendent meeting and after the HR staffing conferences there are no changes, so when it comes back to GO Team in March we can make the final vote. If there are changes in step 6 and 7 we can discuss in March and how they impact strategic plans and goals. Miller asked if we don't vote today will this delay Hollis' next steps. Jacobi says potentially and stated it could take away school level flexibility, meaning

what districts funds is what we get. Jacobi reiterated that is how most districts staff buildings. Malick reiterated we had not voted yet. She then asked Jacobi, if we do not support this draft budget, Dr Bracken and Superintendent would take away Howard flexibility in funding allowed by our charter. Jacobi stated in the years she has been at APS there has never been a school that has not been able to come to consensus on their budget. Malick reiterated this vote was on a draft of a budget not a final budget. Jacobi clarified if the GO Team cannot come to a consensus on a final budget that could be a potential outcome. She stated again with a charter system not one person gets to make flexibility decisions, which is why they want the GO Team to come to a consensus on a final budget. Jacobi stated it could be different than the current one. Per state law the school needs a budget and if Go Team does not come to consensus, one way to come up with the budget is to remove flexibility. Jacobi then stated she does not know what Lisa Bracken and Superintendent will do if GO Team cannot come to a consensus on the final budget, but she wants GO Team to know a potential outcome. Malick confirmed the deadline for the final budget was March 14, not today. Jacobi agreed March 14. Jacobi then stated the hope for today is to get to a budget that can go through cluster superintendent review and staffing and not be changed. She stated that per finance budgets get locked on the 28th but that doesn't mean if something happens minor changes can't be made. Jacobi then stated that she has seen a budget come back from staffing conferences and Go Team did not agree with what happened thus finance had to unlock the budget. Jacobi states they are available to help. Hollis clarifies again regarding the impact of vote today on her next steps and timeline. Jacobi states if the GO Team cannot come to consensus this week, she does not know how that would impact Hollis timeline. Jacobi stated she would need to discuss with the cluster superintendent and team and expressed concern for potentially slowing things down.

- x. Leveling Reserve review (slide 29)
 - 1. Hold back set by district \$208,044
 - 2. Howard has hit enrollment number last 2 school years
 - 3. Field trips: parents funded SY25, school funded SY24. Hope is to get the school back to fund these, see this on field trip and transportation line.
 - 4. New ELA Standards may need additional PL support to roll out.
 - 5. Concerns around the 30+ printers needing ink/toner and that new need at school level.
 - 6. Added one more Teacher Tutor to help try to get back to the 2 substitutes that were removed as a SY26 district level resource.
 - a. Nolan requested clarification around the Hourly Teacher Tutor position and asked if they would be providing intervention or

substitute support. Hourly Teacher Tutor will be a certified teacher and will be able to help teach as a substitute. Hollis confirmed the Hourly Reading Teacher will provide intervention.

7. STEAM: outdoor classroom

xi. Additional Discussion:

1. Miller expressed support for Hollis' plan to help get back closer to the 2 intervention support staff and the hard choices being made. Miller agreed to work outside of today's meeting with Malick and others to advocate for additional support. Miller offered to be a point of contact for GO Team members should they want to advocate outside of today's meeting.

2. No further comments or feedback

xii. Miller called for a motion "to approve the draft budget as presented with the understanding that Principal Hollis has allocated what she has been given to what we have outlined as our strategic priorities"

1. Motion Made by: Moore, Second: Anglin

2. Votes: In favor 8/9, Opposition 1/9 (Malick)

VI. Electronic Devices: Community member from Virginia Highlands Elementary, Hayley Ward Johnson expressed concerns regarding electronic devices and referenced the letter read last month at GO Team. She referenced conversations she has had with Principal Hollis. She suggested a staff survey and highlighted the want for engagement in the community. Ms Johnson expressed she would be willing to establish a Committee. Johnson stated community members have stated they would donate up to \$10,000 toward this concern. Johnson expressed concern regarding use of watches. Johnson highlighted Sutton Middle School and Marietta policy that limits electronic devices.

- A.** Hollis confirmed watches and airbuds are included in the school guidelines. She expressed the challenge to differentiate and manage smart watch use versus watch use.
- B.** Brooks shared his experience as a parent of both Midtown and Howard students and effectiveness of both policies in their schools. He spoke to concerns regarding the breaking of pouches.
- C.** Nolan expressed her experiences as a 7th teacher and concerns with smartwatches used at school with some students. She supports further conversations amongst the entire community regarding devices.
- D.** Anglin expressed his experience as a 6th teacher and how he differentiates between watch versus smartwatch/phone to his students.
- E.** Hollis shared comments from 8th grade teacher that texted her regarding their experience. She stated students have become accustomed to new school rules.
- F.** Malick shared how students use shared google forms and schoology messenger to chat. She expressed support for continued conversations on this topic. She asked for clarification around the number of incidents secondary to electronic devices and asked if staff is able to deliver consequences for use of electronic devices.

- G. Hollis informed GO Team members that one thing that was changed this year was level one infraction notices for all grade levels. Historically it was only for 8th grade but they have added this year 6th and 7th grade. This does not go into infinite campus but there are consequences and parents are contacted. Hollis confirmed Administrators are following through and requested staff input.
 - B. Bryant acknowledged there was a problem in the past with electronic devices but the new policy has been helpful. She also stated she has something in her class should there be problems with electronic devices. Bryant confirmed Administration support with consequences. Bryant shared historical experiences at Inman.
 - C. Nolan confirmed Administration does follow through with consequences for electronic devices. She shared her experience with phones she finds outside of classroom use and she delivers those to administration.
 - D. Malick asked for clarification around the asks for a Committee and Survey. Highlighted partnership with school and Go Team would be beneficial.
 - E. Miller confirmed that Johnson could draft a survey and share it with staff.
 - L. Hollis suggested May as time for the survey.
 - G. Johnson discussed different surveys for different individuals, staff versus parents.
 - N. Patel highlighted the need for committee and support for Johnson in developing surveys or asked if GO Team can do that.
 - O. Miller suggested we first identify if there is an issue and then use the data to determine next steps and present the data to the stakeholders.
 - P. Johnson will provide draft of surveys to GO Team and School for input once drafted.
- VII. Principal's Report**
- A. Robotics placed 3rd in State Competition
 - B. Science Fair results from Metro Fair will be announced Thursday
 - C. Technology winners will be announced Friday
 - D. Novelis partnership with recycling
 - E. ELA Curriculum is available for review, 6-12 preview is at Midtown HS
- VIII. CAT Representative Report**
- A. CAT meeting is later in the month
 - B. 2nd District Test & Assessment Meeting happened
 - C. Test & Assessment Engagement Committee data will be presented at the next CAT meeting and district.
- IX. Announcements**
- A. Complete GO Team trainings before next meeting
 - i. Budget
 - ii. Ethics
 - B. **GO Team Meeting Schedule – subject to change**

- All meetings will be held at 4:45 p.m. in the Media Center or Virtually and on the school's YouTube channel.

- March 11, 2025 – Budget Approval Meeting – No Public Comment
- April 22, 2025 – Public Comment

X. Public Comment (10 minutes, 2 minutes per speaker): none

XI. Approval of Adjournment: Motion made by: Moore Seconded by: Malick

Motion: Passes Unanimously

Minutes Taken By: Deonne Malick El-Deiry

Position: Secretary

Date Approved:

DRAFT