Operating Models for School System Flexibility Options
Advisory Committee Meeting

1. General Information

Meeting Name:	Operating Models for School System Flexibility Options Advisory Committee Meeting	Date/Time:	Thursday, August 14, 2014 6:00PM – 8:30PM
Facilitator:	Angela Smith	Notes Recorded By:	Kathleen Yarbrough

Attendees:	**Maureen Wheeler**, *Principal Hope-Hill ES*; **Stephanie Johnson,** *Principal Jackson HS*; **Tony Burks**, *Principal Douglass HS*; **Betsy Bockman**, *Principal Inman MS*; **Jermaine Dawson**, *Principal Harper Archer MS*; **Cheryl Twyman**, *Principal Fickett ES*; **Janet Kinard**, *Neighborhood Group*; **David Payne**, *Neighborhood Group*; **Rita Simmons**, *TOTY Cleveland ES*; **Danielle Gilley Costarides**, *TOTY North Atlanta HS*; **Josh Noblitt**, *District 1*; **Maria E. Armstrong**, *District 2*; **Clare Richie**, *District 3*; **Rocky Rief**, *District 4*; **Erica Morris Long**, *District 6*; **Caterina DeCosta McAffee**, *At-Large*; **Chuck Burbridge**, *Chief Financial Officer*; **Elwood Duckworth**, *Operations*; **Pam Hall**, *Chief Human Resources Officer*; **Linda Anderson**, *Asst. Superintendent Curriculum*; **Tammy Workman**, *Asst. Superintendent Student Services*; **Greg Middleton**, *Associate Superintendent Middle Schools*; **Rebecca Kaye**, *Senior Research Associate Policy*; **Allen Mueller**, *Exec. Director Innovation – Charter Schools*; **Raynise Smith**, *Exec. Director Teaching and Learning*; **Rubye Sullivan**, *Director Research and Evaluation*; **Angela Smith**, *Superintendent's Office*; **Two Students**; *Mays HS*

2. Meeting Objectives and Scope

- Distribute Timeline and Team Expectations and Norms
- Review APS Data
- Review the Operating and Flexibility Options
- Receive Community Input

3. Agenda

Time	Topic	Discussion Leads
6:00-6:10 PM	Welcome and Introductions	Angela Smith
6:10-6:15 PM	Meeting Overview and Objectives	Angela Smith
6:15-6:20 PM	Community Input and Feedback Station	Angela Smith
6:20-6:23 PM	Charge	Angela Smith
6:23-6:30 PM	Working Together	Angela Smith
6:30-7:10 PM	APS Data Overview	Rubye Sullivan
7:10-7:55 PM	Georgia Department of Education	Lou Erste
7:55-8:10 PM	Transition to Community Input	Angela Smith
8:10-8:30 PM	Questions/Discussion	Advisory Committee

4. Discussion

Topic
Welcome and Introductions • Welcome to the Operating Models for School System Flexibility Options • Advisory Committee you have been appointed or nominated. You have the responsibility and ownership of making a recommendation to the superintendent about which operating model best fits APS. I am taking you on a journey over the next 6 weeks. You have each earned a seat to help shape our approach to this work. I want to thank all of you for participating in our meeting tonight and ask that the public honor the meeting decorum.
Meeting Overview and Objectives • Communicate charge • Set norms for how we will work together • Review and understand district data • Understand Operating Models for School System Flexibility Options
Community Input and Feedback Station • Community input will take place after the meeting • During the meeting, anyone can provide input at the computer located in the back of the room or go to the following link https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Operating_Models_for_School_System_Flexibility_Options_August_14 • We ask that the public honor meeting decorum • Applause, commentary, outbursts, jeering, or speech that defames individuals or stymies or blocks meeting progress is not permitted. • A series of meetings will take place in your communities. These meetings are for school employees, community, and stakeholders. They will begin the week of begin 8/25.

Charge
• APS has established an Operating Models for School System Flexibility Options Advisory Committee to assist the district in reviewing input to determine the best operating model for our students and schools. The advisory committee is comprised of community citizens, teachers, parent council leaders, two students, a district PTA representative, principals, and other district employees.
• The purpose of this committee is to:
    o Review the elements associated with the state's recommended operating models, including, but not limited to, waivers from Title 20, fiscal impact, school governance implications, accountability and performance considerations, and consequences;
    o Build the knowledge base to develop an executive summary for the Superintendent, which will include detailing the operating models and the impact on our school district; and
    o Monitor the district's drafting of all final documents associated with the Superintendent's recommendation.
• This group will be listening learning and then making a recommendation to the superintendent for her review. She will synthesize what this team and the community has to say. She will then send a recommendation to the board. The board will have to approve the recommendation.

Working Together
• Group Norms
    o We will assume good intentions.
    o We will have a positive attitude.
    o We will listen actively.
    o We will come prepared for each meeting.
    o We will participate fully in each meeting.

- o We will invite the contributions of every member and listen to each other.
- o We will operate in a collegial and friendly atmosphere.
- o We will make decisions that are in the best interest of students and learning.
- o We will be guided by the Atlanta Public Schools mission statement which is to educate all students through academic excellence, preparing them for success in life, service and leadership.
- Does anyone have any recommendations for the group norms? No recommendations were given. It looks like we have a good set of norms.

APS Data Overview
- Graduation and College-Going-Discuss risk factor and predictors of dropout rate (see slide 14)
  - o Turn and Talk Activity Share Out:
    - We need to strengthen how we teach our students to ensure perseverance. We need more detail behind the numbers. It would be good to know what are the risk factors in earlier grades
    - The graduation rate is very low? Also data show students are not staying in college. What do we need to do to keep those students in school?
    - We need to look at the elementary school (ES) level to build a strong foundation.
    - It starts at home with parents supporting their students expecting good grades, and going to college. Everyone doesn't have those parents. Teachers need to be that support for some students.
    - How far down in the data do we have to drill to decide how flexibility will have an impact?
    - Graduation rate in the previous year was 51%. There are great things happening we need to figure out what those great things are. Every student that drops out has a story. Flexibility can tailor interventions aimed at those on the path of dropping out. We can tailor to individual schools and students.
    - How do we track students long term? Some students are dealing with tough circumstances at home no matter where they end up we can track them. Where does the gap occur? We know we need a lot more early intervention.
- College & Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) (slide 16-17)-CCRPI is important data but there are inherent biases. This data are part of our accountability. These results are from 2012-2013, so it is lagging data.
  - o Turn and Talk Activity Share Out:
    - Noted that actually middle school (MS) closer to state than (ES).
    - Many teachers in ES are generalist with a passion for literacy. We also need to have other passions like science and math.
    - If we know we have to close the gap to get points on CCRPI we need to look at the data to determine who is in the gap and not performing. These students need to be given instructional resources. We need to set high expectations for all students.
    - ES is 10 points behind the state. However, when we look at MS the state dropped down by 3 points and APS dropped down 1.7 points. Student performance crashes at high school (HS) state dropped down 2.8 points and APS dropped down 6.2 points.
    - Rubye explained that these are all averages. We are the only district that have ES schools in the very bottom and the very top. MS is not as extreme of difference and HS even less extreme. We are a unique school district in the state. The 4 lowest performing ES school and the top performing school in the state are all APS schools.
- Opportunity Gaps (slide 19-22) There are many ways to decrease gaps. We want to narrow the gap by the lower performing group increasing at a faster pace than higher performing group, while the higher performing group continues to grow.
  - o Turn and Talk Activity Share Out:
    - More parents identify as multi race. How does that factor in to the data?

- - Rubye explained that we chose the predominant 3 subgroups. There is an identification for multi-race-on the tests and we could add this if we need to.
  - I noticed that the economically disadvantaged (ED) are really struggling and need our help. I never would have guessed that Hispanic students would have outperformed black students in every area. How can we be performing so poorly with our base constituency? What can we learn from Hispanic households?
  - Rubye explained that we did look at within race performance for each subgroup. The widest gap is between ED white vs. ED black, while within race comparisons for our black and Hispanic students track very closely.
  - Going forward in the new testing system how will we be able to track our progress? Rubye explained that we do have some indication from the state about what the cut is. We just built a dashboard for ES only. We expect to see a decline state wide in % proficiency. If we are not having more open ended questions in the instruction at APS we predict a larger decline.
- Slide 24-25 (NEAP data) We volunteered to be a TUDA we have state and other urban city data for comparison. In math we are progressing faster than other cities. Although 8th math and reading is considered a strength for APS we are still at the bottom.
- Slide 26-27 (Schools above the line of regression)-Which schools are beating the odds? Schools above the line of regression are beating the odds. They are outperforming the trend based on their poverty rate. What are these schools doing? What can we learn?
- Slide 28 (Equity: NEAP Math Grade 8) We received a 1400 pages audit that aligns with this data. The audit shows how our decisions look in outcomes. We are perpetuating systemic inequities.
- Slide 29-30 (Graduation and Beyond) Michael Nettles has partnered with APS to contextualize our data.
  - 59% of APS students graduated high school in four years.
  - Nationally, 56 percent for African American high school graduates (70 percent for white high school graduates and 61 percent for Latino high school graduates) enroll in college.
  - After going to college, the national college graduation rate for African American men is 33%compared to 45% for African American women (U.S. Department of Education).
  - But, new research at Stanford University and the University of Texas shows that we can dramatically improve these statistics

Georgia Department of Education
- Choices are about what is the best way to improve academic achievement. Flexibility options get a whole bunch of waivers for 5 years. Why? They save you money and you can do things you otherwise wouldn't be able to do. IE2 waivers of the big 4 Charter System waivers of everything.
- IE2 district promises to raise student achievement and state provides waivers.
  - Q: Why isn't there an application for status quo?
  - A: There will be a form to show that you have had the public hearing.
- Flexibility bargain-freedom from state and local controls for performance accountability.
- Waivers enable innovations which improve student performance.
- Charter System (CS) application makes you list innovations that you want to put into place.
- IE2 is a performance contract with target and waivers. Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) sets the targets for each school and every subject/level. The penalty for individual school schools that fail to hit targets for 3 of 5 years will be loss of system governance. These schools can become charter school, go to another school district, or be governed by a private provider.
- CS option is a performance contract with targets set by the district and broad waivers. No federal rules, regulations, or policy is allowed to be waived.
  - Q: Can we get to the federal level of Title 1 interpretation? The state has much stricter guidelines than the federal government.
  - A: Technically no, but if we hear from enough districts about Title 1 rules we may be able to change them

- CS do get a little bit of extra money from 80 to 110 per student.
  - o Q: If a lot of systems move to charter will the state increase the budget or will the amount go down?
  - o A: The state has appropriate extra money to keep up with the request for special money. There are limits on what the money can be used for such as innovations or training of school governance teams.
- The CS contract lists innovations which are system level commitments.
- Local School Governance Teams (LSGT) determine how the budget is prioritized at each local school.
  - o Q: We have Local School Counsels (LSC) how do you transition to SLGT?
  - o A: You will tell us how APS would want to do that in your contract.
  - o Q: What is the ability to phase in the LSGT?
  - o A: Fulton County Schools (FCS) proposed a 7 yr phase in plan. The state said no it has to be a 3 year phase in plan.
- The superintendent's authority is being shared with the LSGT however; the Board of Education (BOE) still has the same authority. The school board won't have any problems if they stick to their business and stay out of the superintendent's business.
  - o Q: Do LSGT evaluate the principal?
  - o A: It depends on how you write your charter. It the principal is evaluated by a LSGT member they will need to be trained on LKES.
- Status quo option requires public hearing to be held. Then a resolution is sent to the state board. There will be no flexibility granted. There will be no extra money. The system will have to follow all rules and laws.
  - o Q: How does GOSA decide what targets should be set? What is their expertise? It is giving a lot of information to people that seem unaccountable?
  - o A: The state is moving toward a set matrix of waivers. Targets are set by the waivers requested. It would be more standardized.
- An overwhelming number of school systems choose to become a charter system as opposed to an IE2 system. The IE2 system requires you to negotiate targets for every subject, grade, and school. Also the school systems do not like the consequences if schools fail to meet their targets.
- CS is chosen because it is not IE2.
  - o Q: If a system chooses to go CS who would decide the schools that are phased in first?
  - o A: The school district makes that decision.
  - o Q: Is there data to give us a comparison between systems so that we can see the impacts of CS and IE2?
  - o A: There is not enough CCRPI data to do that analysis. There is some data for the first 4 CS schools. 3 schools improved quicker and got better. The 4th started off on a downward slide. It leveled off and then went up. There is no data for IE2 yet.

Transition to Community Input

- Ed Johnson-- Rubye shared a lot of data with us. We were asked what the data tells you about the students. The right questions is what does the data tell you about the system? There are two systems a black and a white system. Soon there will be 3 systems- a black, a white, and a Hispanic system. The issue is the challenge of improving public education. You don't need flexibility. You need to understand how the system works.
- Tammy Dixon—The timing of this decision concerns me. We have a lot to consider and only 5 meetings to share. Not all of the schools in APS are the same. A lot of challenges that are wide spread. What is the best option for all students? We need to think this through. We have only 45 days to make a recommendation to superintendent Carstarphen. There are so many complex issues we need to address in a short time.

Questions/Discussion

- Timeline the district was on a slow timeline. There was no work done around flexibility and this decision was postponed until stable a leadership on the board and a new superintendent was hired. Also there was confusion around the decision. Systems thought they could wait until June 2015. Leadership made a proposal to start to have the conversation around this topic. The state put a date of 11/1/2014 for a decision for charter system. Let's backward map to make sure that we can submit something to have a path forward. Hence the timeline we are on.

We want to make sure the system has all the options available and not just one or two because of the timeline. We did make some adjustments to the timeline to make sure that we could hear from the community. We also changed the letter of intent decision from September to October. If we turn in a letter of intent by 6/2015 can we still get waivers for the 2015-2016 school year. However, there will be leadership changes at the state and the plans of the current leaders at DOE may not be the plans under the new leadership.

5. Tasks/Action Items Assigned

Task/Action Items	Who will do it?	By When?

6. NEW Issues (I) or Risks (R) *(link)* Identified