

Portland Public Schools

CBRC 05.28.2020

28 May 2020 / 6:00 PM / ROOM: Virtual Hangout (Meets)

CBRC MEMBERS PRESENT

Thomas Lannom (Co-Chair), Sara Kerr (Co-Chair), Roger Kirchner, Brad Nelson, Irina Phillips, Christine Pitts, Betsy Salter, Jennifer Samuels, Judah McAuley, Parker Myrus (Student Representative).

CBRC MEMBERS ABSENT

Tastonga Davis, Jeff Lewis, Krystine McCants, Leesha Posey, Judith Solomon (Student Representative).

PPS STAFF PRESENT

Eilidh Lowery (Board Director - Liaison), Guadalupe Guerrero (Superintendent), Claire Hertz (Deputy Superintendent), Cynthia Le (Chief Financial Officer), Nicole Bassen (Budget Manager), Yasury Valdez (Confidential Executive Assistant), David Stone (Fiscal Services Assoc III) , Stacey Hoang (Senior Budget Analyst), Terry Proctor (Multimedia Services Manager), Janise Hansen (Senior Internal Board Auditor).

OTHERS PRESENT

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Roll Call: 6:00 p.m. - **Sara Kerr & Thomas Lannom**
2. Approval of the minutes from May 21, 2020 meeting: 6:02 p.m. - **Thomas Lannom**
3. Work to complete the annual CBRC Report to the Board of Education: 6:05 p.m. - **Sara Kerr & Thomas Lannom**
4. Closing and next steps: 7:50 p.m. - **Thomas Lannom**

1. Welcome & Roll Call

Due to technical difficulties in which several members were unable to log in to the Google Meet room, Thomas didn't call the meeting to order until 6:14 p.m. Roll call was taken and as there was a quorum, the meeting commenced.

2. Approval of the minutes from May 21, 2020 meeting

Thomas confirmed everyone got a copy of the meeting minutes. Roger had the following edits:

1. Page 3, question 3. The word “legislator” is replaced with “legislature”.
2. Page 3, question 6. The abbreviation “PP’s” was replaced with “PPS’s”.

The meeting minutes were approved with the aforementioned edits.

3. Work to complete the annual CBRC Report to the Board of Education

Co-Chair Thomas stated that the majority of this meeting would be spent on discussing the budget as it relates to the 4 board goals, but wanted to hear other members’ impression of the board meeting that took place on Tuesday, May 26, 2020. Co-Chair Sara asked members to focus on the top 1 or 2 observations or major remaining questions they had from the meeting so that all members can be heard.

Roger - The Superintendent’s message was very thorough, and his quote on Page 9 of the Superintendent’s Budget Message should be recognized in CBRC’s report.

Judah - The overall message was very good, and the historical context and the identified strategy were helpful. The biggest concern is that any cuts will not be a one time cut, but an ongoing one that will have significant changes.

Sara - Appreciated the message, but did not hear enough about how kids will be served and how the budget would map to that. Also heard about ongoing curriculum investments, but does not know how that will support teachers in the short term and prepare them to serve kids.

Thomas - Liked the message and the historical context, but disappointed in the lack of detail about allocations to specific areas. Also did not hear much about the 4 board goals. Applaud PPS’s positivity, but concerned that in a resource constrained environment, the district is not being clear that there is not enough resources to do what is needed, even pre-COVID.

Brad – Have concerns with the 4 adopted board goals and how to quantify how those goals will be met. Have reached out several times with these concerns, but have not received any responses. The district needs to quantify how they are going to achieve those goals such as \$X is being used to do Y. Also concerned about what is in store for next year as the district has not provided any plans.

Irina – Happy with the positivity, but would like to know what priorities from pre-COVID are being kept and what is being cut. It would be important to reflect that in a ledger or description.

Christine – Applaud the focus on race and equity, the historical perspective, the system shifts and the long-term outlook on the budget. Liked the ideal of a digital district, but would have been nice to learn more about what that might look like. To reiterate the 4 board goals, it would be good to know where in the budget book it could be found or how the budget addresses those

goals - a separate memo would suffice. It would provide clarity as to whether the budget pivots from the strategic plan due to changes/needs and what barriers might be removed. With this information, CBRC may be able to suggest removing some of the barriers in its report.

Betsy – Had connectivity issues so was only able to listen to part of the meeting. Agree with all the issues that have been addressed thus far. It would be good to know to what extent the administration is working with PAT on how best to budget and maximize teaching and learning for the coming school year.

Jennifer – Liked the message, particularly around improving the situation for students of color. It is great news that the district will not be short next year, but would appreciate some connection that details the 4 goals and how the budget investment aligns with realizing those goals. As a first time budget committee member, it is hard to reconcile a budget and provide feedback on a budget without knowing what are the cuts and how it impacts the goals.

Parker - Agree with others that it is hard to report on a budget that will be changed. What CBRC can do is try to provide meaningful feedback to what the budget is as presented now, but without knowing what numbers are being shifted in or out and what model of schooling will transpire in the fall, it will be difficult to provide any constructive or quality feedback to the budget.

End of feedback regarding the Tuesday, May 26, 2020 Board of Education Meeting.

Q1 - What are the district's plans for the fall and when shall we expect to see the plans?

A1 - A clarification on the budget is that even though there are shortfalls in all funds, the proactive reductions (limiting purchases, hiring freezes, furloughs), along with the CARES Act and SIA funds (FY2020-21 will be the first year it will be funded), puts the district ahead in terms of revenues by about \$7 million. As for the plans, district staff had 1.5 days between the release of the Oregon Department of Education's (ODE) revenue forecast and the school board meeting to prepare for the budget message. Currently, staff are working in different areas planning various scenarios for the fall. More information will be available during the June 8th town hall as staff and programs will have been informed. Plans for the school year will not be until after ODE releases its guidance for fall as it would be unwise to release premature data that may have to change. Draft guidelines for the fall should be available in mid July.

Unfortunately, the timeline of when the plans and guidelines will be released does not align with CBRC's timeline of when the report to the board is due. The difficulty is that timelines are different and it seems that CBRC is not necessarily reporting on a budget that will be actually implemented in the fall. It would be good for CBRC to be able to react a little bit more specifically to the anticipated cuts.

Q2 - The broader question is how decisions are being applied to the goals. The budget message provides a great framework of ideals, but there are no direct or obvious connections between the ideals and decisions being made. For each of the budget cuts implemented (i.e., furloughs, hiring freezes), were there detailed analyses as to how the decisions were made? What were the lenses that were applied? What were the other options considered? And why were what was eventually selected the best choices?

A2 - Everything that could be done to save dollars in FY 2019-20 to carry forward to FY 2020-21 was done (i.e., reducing the contracts for student transportation). On the other hand, resources were shifted or additional resources were allocated to address current needs - in-house bus drivers delivered meals and curriculum materials, custodial staff performed deep cleaning of schools, staff purchased additional cleaning supplies, IT purchased 20,000 Chromebooks to ensure that every student will have a device for the fall, etc. Along with those, planning for the fall has commenced and various situations and scenarios are being considered along the way. Some of the scenarios being considered should schools open include the following:

- If 20% of families decide to keep their kids at home, the district must be ready to deliver that education model to those families;
- If social distancing is required, what will the classroom schedule be like taking into consideration that a group of students and cohorts should be kept together to minimize movement and deep cleaning needs;
- What is the protocol that will need to take place to make it a safe place (i.e., temperature checks, hand washing).

There have been reductions in some areas and increases to others, but overall, the savings are all one-time savings. The next few years will require more adjustments as the state economist expects it will take 4 years for the economy to recover.

Q3 - Are there any instances in which faculty members have expressed their discomfort about returning to schools?

A3 - That is one of the things that is being discussed as part of planning for the fall.

Q4 - We appreciate the complexity of all the planning and tight deadlines being worked out during this time. What are the different pieces of the puzzle that are being considered in making decisions - such as the criteria being used and the lenses being considered?

A4 - No reductions to custodial services or in some maintenance areas were made as it does not make sense for these cuts during a pandemic. The district is planning for next year and how it starts may not be how it is going to end up. Things may shift depending on circumstances (positive COVID test) and plans will be changed. The district needs to be ready, but also flexible to be able to fluctuate among the 3 models of instruction (distance, in-person, blended).

Superintendent Guerrero joined the meeting to address CBRC and answer some of the questions:

Investments should be tied to the vision of the strategic plan, but given the situation, things will have to be scaled down. There is a lot of planning on how best to prepare for a nontraditional fall opening. The district is working closely with member districts and ODE to model different options that will afford the flexibility to do things in multiple ways. The district would like to model something as quickly as possible to solicit feedback from parents and other stakeholders, but there are too many uncertain variables to consider to provide a plan at this juncture.

Q5 - How are the district goals mapped to the budget, and how will the goals be achieved.

A5 - There should be shared accountability in moving the needle for students, especially those that have traditionally been underserved. One of the identified strategies - transformative curriculum and pedagogy - demand well-rounded education efforts which includes middle school redesign, test curriculum, ethnic studies, and early education, all of which makes a difference for students. Because of the various aspects that are required in educating students (i.e. teacher development for improved teaching strategies, or new curriculum and textbooks for updated learning), it is hard to provide one action step that will produce the improved outcome. A combination of coherent strategies is what will move the needle for kids across grade levels.

Q6 - What is the technology plan that is currently being considered and how will it be different from the distance learning that is taking place right now?

A6 - School districts all over the country were challenged to change their services and model. Some of PPS's first steps included acquiring the required devices and equitable level of connectivity; asking teachers to use a new tool and teaching platform, and training them on those tools; and acquiring licensed software. If some model of distance learning is to continue in the fall, the district is interested in raising the rigor of the distance learning experience for students and will need to continue to support and guide teachers in this area. There are many logistical issues that need to be worked out as some subjects such as band or chorus will pose challenges in a distance learning model.

CBRC appreciates the complexity and uncertainty the district is undertaking in planning the many different directions it will need to take in the fall. From CBRC's perspective, it is challenging for committee members to report and provide recommendations on a budget that will change. What will be helpful for CBRC on behalf of the community is how to translate the values into specific investments.

The focus of CBRC's report will be on the 4 board goals - 3rd grade reading, 5th grade mathematics, 8th grade graduate portrait, and post-secondary readiness and college and career. It has been frustrating to not see any of these goals being addressed in the budget. CBRC would like to see a more concrete connection between the 5 System Shifts and the board goals. It would also like to see examples of what is being invested and what is being moved. The focus of CBRC's report is the district's investment in the 4 core areas, but without the necessary data, it is difficult to make a strong recommendation to the board about those investments. CBRC is

requesting the district to provide information on how the proposed budget will help reach the 4 goals.

The Superintendent provided a number of examples of specific investments that can help in reaching the goals. One example was in prioritizing student engagement coaches as they are better informed as to the needs of particular students. Another example is that although there is a goal of improvement to 3rd grade reading level, the district does not want to wait until 3rd grade to assess that; instead, there should be indicators in 1st and 2nd grade..

CBRC thanked the Superintendent for the helpful examples. CBRC would like to have concrete examples for a sample school, what sort of investments in reading assistance looks like for that school, and what are the shifts in resources.

The Superintendent stated that PPS will list the strategies under each goal and footnote in the budget book where those resources appear.

Q7 - When might PPS be able to provide the additional information aforementioned by the Superintendent?

A7 - PPS will try to provide the information by Wednesday, June 3rd as it coincides with the current communications plan. Should that date change, so will PPS's delivery date to CBRC.

An additional CBRC meeting is to be scheduled for June 4th.

- Thomas and Sara will work together to add additional items to the report based on information that will be provided.
- CBRC members are asked to send Thomas and Sara items of concern and what items they would like to be reflected in the report.

CBRC's report deadline to the board is now due COB on June 8th (from June 4th). This will give the board at least two days to review the report before the board meeting on June 11th.

4. Closing and next steps

Thomas adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.