

Documenters

POWERED BY CITY BUREAU & SIGNAL CLEVELAND

CMSD Board Meeting

Documenter name: Chardon Black

Agency: Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD)

Date: Feb. 13, 2024

[See more about this meeting at Documenters.org](#)

This meeting was Documented by a Cleveland Metropolitan School District [Civics 2.0 participant](#).

Summary

- Significant changes will be made to the school district budget to account for a deficit of more than \$140 million.
- The changes will be made in two phases, first focused on central office employees and then office staff.
- The changes affect school calendar, technology usage, out-of-school time, summer learning and more

Follow-Up Questions

- How will teachers be impacted by the remaining deficit amount?
- Should community members anticipate layoffs?
- Should community members anticipate school closings/combinations?

Notes

- Seven members present
- Minutes of previous meeting approved
- School spotlight: **The School of One - Maryum Sims, principal**
 - Founded 12 years ago - School motto "We meet students where they are and take them where they need to be."
 - Digital online educational experience
 - Nine sites:

- East Side locations: East Technical H.S., Collinwood H.S., John Adams H.S., and MAGNET.
 - West Side locations: Bard H.S., Rhodes H.S., City Life Center, LGBT Center, and The Foundry/MCPC STAD
- The curriculum is designed specifically for the needs and interests of that student.
 - Wraparound services, career shadowing services, field experiences.
 - Demographics: 281 students, three graduations classes a year, 28 staff members, 8% English language learner , Special education 15%,
 - Students - 58% Black, 23% Hispanic, 17% white
 - Staff - 52% white, 41% Black, 3% multicultural, 4% Asian
- Ohio standardized testing results
 - ALG 30.4% to 33.3%, 100 ELA 45.9 to 47% 5L GOV 53.5% to 41.5% OS Biology 19.4% to 14.3% 5C HIS 64.3% to 59% GEO 8.0% to 7.7%.
- Conditions for learning responses
 - Safe and respectful climate - 98%
 - Challenge - 97%
 - Student support - 96%
 - Social and emotional learning 88%
- Affirmative Action Program Goals
 - ELA: Quizlet, Achieve3000 Boost, Quill, etc. PEAK-FUELED, Achieve3000.
 - Math: Support student learning. Staff-focused math sessions to support adult implementation in the classroom.
- AAP Focus Areas
 - Quarterly student and family engagement social-emotional learning (SEL) initiatives and college and career activities.
 - Communication to support the school community (website, social media, and family/community/staff newsletter).
 - Incentive field experiences.
- Bright spots
 - From the 2021-2022 school year to the 2022-2023 school year, Algebra I scores increased from 15.4% to 33.3% on the OST, and schoolwide both math and English language arts are growing together.
 - Student and family engagement has increased by 15% over the last few years as a result of social emotional learning

- Every year we successfully graduate students at record high numbers.
- CEO Warren Morgan said he is impressed with the diversity within the school as well as with scores on state tests.
 - Principal attributes performance to collaboration among teachers as well as an online sourcing program
- Graduation rates - 79% counting graduates after a 5th year of high school

Morgan presents his CEO report:

- Resolution 4.02 - Approving and submitting a deficit reduction plan
 - Approving the School districts deficit reduction plan and submitting to the Ohio Department of Education
 - Strategy for reducing deficits over the next three years
 - The board needs to vote at the Feb. 27 meeting on the deficit reduction plan, which must be submitted to the state by the end of the month.
- Board Member Sara Elaquad highlights the importance of voting and implementing the resolution among the board members

Morgan and Chief Financial Officer Kevin Stockdale:

- If the forecast shows a negative cash balance in either the current year or two future fiscal years, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) requires a deficit reduction plan
- Since FY 2020-21, the American Rescue Plan/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency has been funding initiatives
- Relief Fund (ARP/ESSER) has funded a total of \$465 million in temporary CMSD expenditures
- With 2024 ARP/ESSER ending and an assumption that 100% of ARP/ESSER expenditures will be picked up by the district's general fund, Nov. 2023 forecast projects a two-year negative cash balance of \$168 million. Unencumbered fund cash balance must be positive
- Must submit a plan to get the deficit positive.

Change in assumptions

- **Preserving school-based budgets** - Annual 2% increases in school-based budgets, won't change for the next two years, saving \$21.1 million
- Principals received their budgets today

- **Health insurance plans** - Revised assumption: temporarily reduce employer premiums paid into the fund while maintaining a reserve of at least 75 days of claims, per guidance from the plan administrator, with no impact on employee benefits or employee share of premiums, saves \$15 million

Revenue enhancements

- The plan asks the district to identify any known future revenue enhancements that would improve the forecasted cash balance
- No revenue enhancements have been identified or included in the plan
- We remain open to exploring additional revenue sources with private partners

MacKenzie Scott gift:

- The district received an unrestricted \$20 million gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott in 2022-23
- Because the gift was unrestricted, it was deposited into the general fund, increasing the cash balance and reducing the deficit by \$20 million (\$4 million of the money was previously allocated.)
- The cash deposit was reflected in the November 2023 budget forecast
- Any future expenditure against the gift occurring outside of the regular budget process would increase the forecast deficit and require offsetting savings to be identified in the state plan

The **drafted plan** must be approved by the board

- Listen and Learn Tour served as a key guide:
 - Improve safety across CMSD schools
 - Strengthen SEL and academic support to students and improve academic performance and attendance
 - Create more opportunities for active community feedback and collaboration
 - Strengthen transparent communication from central office leadership
 - Enrich and enhance the academic and extracurricular experience, including expansion of CTE programs
 - Increase access to rigorous instruction
 - Concerns with the current K-8 model

Communication objectives

- Board, scholars, impacted staff, teachers union, clergy, parents, teachers' union

- Transparent, clear, future plans, compassion, employee assistance
- Starting in 2021, a budget deficit was projected for the upcoming school year

Guiding principles

- Central office reductions and school budget pools are held flat; align investments with core values; only do things that the district can fully commit to
- No school closures, and no additional funds at this time.

Reductions will come from Central Office budgets first

- Phase 1 reflects a conservative, quantifiable commitment to minimum savings for certain categories
- Phase 2 reflects the balance of savings that must be realized to meet certain targets by close of the budget process
- Reductions in travel and food
- Saved \$5.3 million

Summer learning:

- 4,225 average daily attendance
- 90 minutes of instructional time per day, with the balance of time spent on enrichment
- No mechanism for measuring the impact

Pending review of Summer Learning agreement with Cleveland Teachers Union plans for 2024 include:

- Capacity for 3,500 students
- Doubling the amount of instructional time to 180 minutes per day
- Introduce MAP testing at the beginning and end of summer learning to measure the program's impact
- Saves \$31.9 million

Out-of-school time (OST)

- This budget did not exist before ARP/ESSER.
- \$17 million in out-of-school programs in FY 23
- Created to temporarily support external partners with funding to address pandemic-related needs
- CMSD will continue offering extracurricular, athletic and other after-school programming

- With the loss of the funding source that made OST possible, return to the previous practice of supplemental providers securing their own funding
- Saves \$34.1 million
- Morgan wants to know how the district can keep these programs going

Aligning school calendars

- CMSD currently operates with a high degree of calendar variance across its portfolio
- Eight schools with year-round calendars (20 additional days)
- 13 schools with extended-year calendars (10 additional days)
- 24 schools with extra minutes (30 additional daily minutes)
- Schools with extended calendars receive disproportionately more resources while academic performance varies
- With limited exceptions, they propose to remove extra days and minutes beginning in 2024-25
- Currently reviewing impact and implementation specifics, with final details to be presented as part of the 2024-25 calendar resolution at the March 2024 board work session
- **Estimated two-year savings vs. forecast: \$13.7 million**

Student technology

- ARP/ESSER funds enabled CMSD to make devices and wireless hotspots for all students, approaching a 1:1 student-to-device ratio
- In the process of reviewing to ensure that we are investing responsibly while ensuring that all students have access to grade-appropriate technology
- Expected to include the elimination of free wireless hotspots and more shared technology in earlier grades
- Continue working with the city and external partners to find ways to help families with connectivity
- **Preliminary estimate of savings vs. forecast: \$6.4 million**

Phase 1 adjustments

- Reductions in expenditures described thus far save a total of \$91.4 million over two years.

Phase 2 savings will be realized in both personnel and non-personnel categories.

Proportions for categories are estimates only; officials said the district anticipates a greater proportion of savings from professional services contracts, which grew disproportionately during the ARP/ESSER era.

If the plan is approved, more work will have to be done, and there still will be a deficit in the coming years, \$143 million. And that number will grow.

- Morgan is optimistic about this proposal
- Board Member Nigamanth Sridhar requested a framework and metrics for how the cuts will be implemented and improved, stressing a need for clear and visible data. Encourages district to create mechanisms and data systems for proper assessment of student performance and student outcomes before interventions are implemented
- Board Vice Chair Leah Hudnall wants to highlight the community access to this proposal and opportunities for interaction
 - CEO Morgan committed to the accessibility of the proposal
 - Sridhar highlighted the necessity of directly outlining parent impact within websites
- Hudnall asked how parents and families will be supported by these cuts
 - Morgan said this plan looks at the end of simply financial support, but not program support
- Hudnall requested clarifications on technology
 - Morgan said direct data will be given out regarding connectivity and technology usage across CMSD. The Connect Center is utilized by staff, students and families.
- Board Member Robert Briggs compliments the clarity and comprehensiveness of the presentation.
- Board Chair Elaquad asked for device data before pandemic
 - Morgan said he can get that information
- Elaquad highlights out-of-school programs' ability to operate without district funding. Reducing capacity for summer learning—how is that decided who will participate?
- Sridhar highlights the idea of exceptions between exceptions on extra minutes/calendar changes for schools.
 - Morgan said that the model must be observed, with no specifics yet

- Heard asked about numbers and concerns surrounding the wording of personnel reductions.
 - Nonpersonnell refers to supplies, materials, any nonhuman expenditures
 - No direct projection of personnel cuts
 - Prioritizing 1111 CMSD Office and East Professional Center as cuts
 - Morgan said staff suggested considering moving out of the Eaton Tower CMSD office: He said the lease is \$2 million and was just renewed for five years, so buying out of the contract would be \$10 million
- Board Member Midori Lebrón said she appreciates the presentation, especially the alternative plans

If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at cleDOCUMENTERS@gmail.com with "Correction Request" in the subject line.