

Title: Resource Allocation Advisory Committee Meeting

Date/Time: September 6, 2018 – 4:00 PM

Location: HISD Board Auditorium

I. Welcome-Glenn Reed, Officer of Budget & Financial Planning

- Committee Member Introduction
- Recap of items discussed during the last meeting on August 23, 2018.

II. Presentation

- **SWOT Analysis**
 - What does it do?
 - Helps us build and take advantage of our strengths
 - Helps us to reverse and mitigate our weaknesses
 - Helps us identify and take advantage of our opportunities
 - Helps us to identify and overcome our threats
- **Strengths**
 - Enable us to succeed.
 - What do we do well?
 - What is positive about our current model?
 - What advantages does the model have?
- **Weaknesses**
 - Can debilitate our end goal and create distrust if we don't identify them early on.
 - Where do we need improvement in our current model?
 - What does our model not address?
 - What distracts us from changes to the model? We've talked about the FTE model earlier in the year, changes in prior years to this model and nothing's happened.
 - What stops us from making changes?
- **Opportunities**
 - Leveraging existing resources that can help us succeed.
 - What opportunities do we have in changing our model?
 - Students
 - Human Capital
 - Organizations
 - Parents
- **Threats**
 - Can prevent us from succeeding, many times are out of our control.
 - What is beyond our control?
 - What prevents or inhibits change?
 - Are there any factors beyond our control?

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- **Handouts that we will use for our discussions**
 - “Who Pays for What”-It’s an exhaustive list of things that schools pay for and what departments pay for.
 - It gives you an idea of who is really funding what pieces of things we do in the district.
 - Title I is listed since it is the biggest amount of money that all schools receive as far as grants. Other than Title III funds which is \$30 per student, there are no other grants that every school gets.
 - RAAC Member Question: Can you differentiate between what Title I is and what Title III is?
 - Answer: Title I part a is for supplemental services to support economically disadvantaged students. Title three is for supporting those in Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students in the district.
 - “Participation Form for Sports Packages”- Pricing menus for middle school athletics, high school athletics, and UIL packages. It’s a flat cost by level.
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** If our school pays for UIL, other schools in our area can register under our school zone. For example, at Austin high school, we pay the athletic package but any specialty school in our attendance zone can participate in our athletic program. We cover the cost of the athletic package for any school in our area.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Specialty Schools participate to their zoned school because if those schools participate in athletics, they are automatically put in the higher tier for athletics. **Strengths:**
 - **Keeps spending closest to schools.**
 - **Spurs greater creativity on how to efficiently use money (States have flexibility with federal money.**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** This system gives the community a chance of better input and the principal has a better chance to meet the needs of the community on a very tight budget.
 - **Invests in Advocates to support the work.**
 - **Use of money for interventions for schools.**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** All schools are so different, to have a formula for the positions at the school makes it tough. For example, kids at our campus don’t speak English very well so we make sacrifices in our funds to make sure we have those intervention teachers to get them caught up.
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** We’re a very diverse city. The ability to try and tailor programs and the needs of the community can be very different from across the city.
 - **Transparency of money to the community.**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** Effective use of your SDMC is critical.
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** If you have that transparency with the community, people will understand why you are making the decisions that you make.

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- **Autonomy at the campus level to meet the needs of the community (building academic programs).**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** From the perspective of a Campus where PTO has not been able to step in and support any cause because of lack of funding. For me, the ability to have autonomy and make those sites based decisions work with your SDMC allowed us to over a period of years to really build our technology program. To whereas, as a campus of over 900 students we're almost one to one with devices. It goes back to projections. I typically projected with caution and looking forward to any excess we may have in November. We're putting all our money into technology and now we have a solid technology program.
 - It's your ability to respond to the needs of your individual community. This is not one size fits all city.
 - **RAAC Member Question/Comment:** Mr. McSwain, you say that we're not a one size fits all city and the needs may be different. I think it's important for our committee to talk about specifics because lots of different methods might sound good or rhetoric. Can you give me an example of where different schools may need specifically different things?
 - **RAAC Member Answer:** You have a campus with a lot of Non-English-speaking kids and putting more of your resources into those people that are interventionists or hourly workers used to specifically help those kids would be one example. You may have things like the arts, you can have what appeals to kids. So, What kind of music? What kind of band are we going to offer? You want to teach kids music but there is a whole variety of different things that you can teach. Again, depending on the population of your students then you want to try and tailor services for those students. For example, you may want to say each school gets x number of interventionists. Well one school may not need that many interventionist and may need something else. Whereas another school does need a significant number of interventionists.
- **Efforts to maximize expenditures between the school and district column.**
- **PUA (Per pupil unit allocation) funding support by schools need designation.**
- **Weaknesses:**
 - **ADA funding inequities (Discussion: Is there a "floor" level to restructure).**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** One of the critical pieces for principals to be able to communicate with their community is the budgeting process. For example, if I make a projection in the spring and the numbers are off, come October, I either must pay that money back or have extra money based on what I projected. That needs to be looked at. Not sure if it's a possibility to keep the money if your numbers are slightly off because we've already planned what we're going to do with those funds and hopefully we're not having to pay back a certain amount of money because we over projected. That sometimes causes a little bit of

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instability for principals if we are not able to count on those funds. There is no way to project how many kids we are going to lose.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** The state does ADA at a district level because they are worried about students moving around throughout the year. They don't want to over cap population of students
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Strength: The reason we use ADA is that it holds schools accountable to ensure kids are in their seats. For example, if a school has a thousand students, the school is going to get paid for those students. As a principal, you now have an incentive to ensure those kids are in their seats.
- **RAAC Member Response/Comment:** I'd have to disagree. Focus on attendance is a weakness. When Kashmere has an 88% attendance rate versus Carnegie that has a 90% attendance rate, it's as if some communities choose not to go to school. Incentivizing the principals is how we get a ridiculously inaccurate letter that goes home to parents threatening fines after a kid has a couple of unexcused absences. It's an automated letter that is clearly meant to be used for high school truancy and it has now become a common practice for principals throughout the district.
- **Economically disadvantaged funding inequalities/inequities for high need schools.**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** I did a regression analysis on attendance rates and a number of other factors to keep track of in schools. About 2/3 of variability of attendance at high schools in HISD can be predicted by the percentage of economically disadvantaged kids and at-risk kids that you have. What I found was we are getting Title I money for the more at-risk kids that you have in these schools and are getting penalized for the more at-risk kids that you have. I found that every \$1 we get from Title I funding, they were taking away a \$1.50 in what I call the attendance discount. If you go across the entire district, the attendance discount in total for all campuses does not equal the total amount of Title I funding that we are getting in schools. That is a serious equity problem in our funding formula.
- **Incentivizing school funding w/out damaging school programs families and school's performance.**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** The policies may not necessarily be bad or good, they're policies. It's the culture that they're embedded in. The culture in HISD can be extensively corrosive. You find out consistently that the issue most of our troubled schools face because it's a penalty that goes onto them that shifts dollars back that can then go to those specialty schools and everything else. I used to fight the district because our schools with kids attending private school or private insurance were getting all our Medicaid dollars. These things add up consistently, it's a debt by a thousand bucks. All of us are not to be in the biggest suit under the sun in the state of Texas, not because of how well we are doing in our

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specialty schools but how not so well we are doing in our schools with our kids that needs us the most.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** There are much better ways to be able to incentivize individual schools wanting to maximize attendance. Not to the point where sick kids are dragging to school because of penalties but other ways we can go through with it and doesn't force people to compromise their safety.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** There are much better ways to incentivize without having to send sick kids to schools
- **State weights (inequities for various school groups (GT, ED, SPED, ELL) (Racially motivated)).**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** The state limits the percentage of students enrolled. Regular students get funded 1%, GT students gets funded 1.12% and the states says you should only have about 5% of your population GT. So, we will give you 1.12% per GT kids until you reach 5% of your population. Our resource allocation says we're going to give you 1.12% for unlimited amount of students. We did research 3 years ago and found that there was discrimination in our GT programs such that white students are being identified at a three times greater rate as there was actual discrimination to black males in our GT application program.
- **Chronic absenteeism for school (Root causes & how to support these campuses).**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** The majority of low SES students don't have attendance issues, but you may have students with chronic absenteeism. You want to think of what's the source of that. I am thinking about a student who we are struggling with that hasn't been in school since January. His parents say that he's always been like this and doesn't want to go to school but he's in the fifth grade. Sometimes it can be the community or your location. When you look at apartment complexes and the cost of living in those areas, there may be campuses where the result would be that you would have a high enough concentration of students with chronic absenteeism that you fall below the bar. When you look at our primary goals and our funding formula, I don't see equity in it. It takes me back to our focus now on SEL and how we really want to get to the
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** Rule of chronic absenteeism and why these students are absent. What are the needs that these families have so we can improve the ADA overall?
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** When we provide the resources to these schools that they need, their attendance goes up, academics goes up, their engagement goes up and their discipline goes down. Schools that have lower attendance are the schools that have higher needs.
 - If we could get buses when it's raining that would increase attendance rate.

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- **Efficacy around policy decision making to support school finance (competition over collaboration).**
- **Decentralization of funding sources instead of centralization to increase equity throughout HISD.**
- **Inequities created by PTO's and other organization/agencies.**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** PTO and PTA are a weakness in our model, not a weakness as themselves. With the budget cuts they've become more important. In the district, less than half the schools have PTO's and PTA's. About 10 percent of schools can have a budgetary level impact where they are raising a \$100,000 or more. Every month the Board of Education has to accept all the donations every month. Two months ago, a school received \$50,000 in a named donation for it to be spent on security. At a time when we're concerned about the security of all of our kids, a school with a PTO that can raise six figures can essentially afford a security guard. If HISD has 87% economically disadvantaged students relying on PTO and reliable SDMC to create equitable decisions across the district, I just don't see how that could end up a reality.
- **Campus principal & leadership team training, budget, policies, etc.**
- **Collaborative plan w/ school support (district focus) on small schools and funding structure (not just adding money to the budget).**
- **Funding formula does not adequately address campus programming (safety and academics).**
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** There are some existing disparities amongst campuses that you can never meet those needs from your budget. Those things that are centralized, are not part of my budget. As creative as we can be, it's difficult and sometimes impossible to be creative that you can impact your campus in some areas. When you've been from campus to campus where one building is new versus an older building, there are some big ticket items, repairs and needs that you're not able to address from your campus budget.
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** What are the standards? When I was as a principal at Kelso, we were listed number two as a school in need in terms of safety. One thing I would argue about is why do we have these disparities? It's the same district, this school over here has it, why are we in this building? We need help from central office as it relates to those things in establishing a set of standards for schools.
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** For someone who is here month to month, we could have lived a long time without having these monitors replaced, when we still walk in schools where they need ceilings replaced and holes on the floors.

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- **Governance of the system as a whole to reevaluate the financial structures to adequately fund HISD schools... decades of the same similar structures.**

RAAC Member Comment: We're piked into the status quo because it's so hard. To me this entire formula should be thrown out. A funding formula where we just say look, we're going to figure out what's fair and give everybody the same. At the end of the day what it comes down to is, rather than us having a standard starting with what's the most important thing, school safety. I can't say with all these things but when my kids were going to Garden Oaks Montessori where all the classrooms had a teaching assistant, I know that my kids right to that teaching assistant did not come before some autistic kid kids Montessori where all the classr to education. To me this committee will never get to equitable allocation of resources that we're forced into like moving along the rate of a formula. We have to list out kind of what Zeph was just saying about small schools. What's the basic thing that we need?

Why isn't it the same for a small school or a big school? I doubt it's in the purview of this committee to consolidate schools. Right. Do we or do we not need a counselor, librarian, nurse, music teacher or a PE teacher in a lot of these schools? Before that, do we not need a gate that locks, do we not need doors, do we not need ceilings? It's really hard to talk about things that are rhetorical when we're trying to come up with some policy for every possible scenario in the future. Which is why people come up with formulas. To me we're not doing the hard work of just listing off everybody needs this before anybody gets the next thing on the list. With a couple hundred people working in this building, we should be able to have a prioritization of those things what they cost and how much does it add up until we get to two billion dollars. Then the problem is that people living in certain neighborhoods want their formulas because I don't want to have to pay for somebody else's stuff first. My kid's special. Which is how you get back to the bond issue. You guys are talking about a 60-year-old school, meanwhile HPVA's new school costs 230% per seat of the average of every other high school being built by the bond program. So those 900 kids get a brand-new chair that cost 2 1/2 times more than the brand-new chair for any other school. You guys don't even get brand new chairs.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** Reason I bring up the question of what is our scope is because what you're talking about is governance. This is not a well governed institution. Once you have strong governance, then these issues can get resolved. We're trying to push bottom up to hold to force the leadership to do things. How are we going to create the right governance structure to make sure the hard decisions are made, regardless of the political power structure that has preserved this structure for so long? When we write recommendations that are right and equitable, that power structure that is still in place is going to say no we

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like the older model better. So, I'm struggling a little bit. Do we stay in our lane or do we really have to think large about this recognizing that they are both likely to create some very bad outcomes?

- **RAAC Member Comment:** I just want to make sure that we have this context in place as well because that same conversation is happening day in and day out for the quite some time around our community. What consistently gets forgotten in our conversations is these policies.
- These practices have been embedded in place for multiple years going on decades. Governance whether it's a structure or the current governance place has gotten us to a spot where we can have a meeting where stakeholder people can talk about it. That has not happened before. So, I just want to make sure that we put that out there so that when we talk about that in the community, that this is big stuff and is not going to be resolved overnight. I think that's part of what we've seen in our governance structure, is this clash of what has been and what people are looking for now that is really really messy. People make mistakes and it's not that easy. I just want people to remember that.
- **Opportunities:**
 - **Schools getting the needed resources and technology at every campus.**
 - **Adequately funding all schools and making the tough decisions to be equitable.**
- **Threats:**
 - **Governance and noncompilable as a system**
 - **Non-HISD schools leaving for charter and private schools due to programming etc.**
 - **Inefficiencies with funding to educate a school in a building**
 - **RECAPTURE**