

Title: Resource Allocation Advisory Committee Meeting

Date/Time: November 29, 2018 – 4:00 PM

Location: Hattie Mae White Building -- Room 2E02

I. Welcome — Dr. Kenneth Davis, Assistant Superintendent, Equity & Outreach

◇We're going to move forward with the recommendations that you're going to solidify for us, so we can get that that firmed up for the superintendent for December 10th. There's also a survey that we will need you to complete today before you leave. So that we can discuss a couple of touch points that we wanted to make sure we add in the paper based on that survey. We wanted to get your input today and if there were any questions that you may have, we could answer it before you complete the survey.

◇We have discussed, when the board presentation happens, who among yourselves is the best-suited to articulate all of the context and hard work you've done since August. To formulate these qualitative, quantitative, long-term and short-term goals for our funding model. That's something that we want you to think about. Even though we'll have the cabinet presentation from staff to staff on December 10, in January when the board meets, we do need someone from RAAC who can articulate what you all have done and what you've accomplished.

II. Final RAAC Recommendations Survey

—HISD must redistribute existing funds, which will result in winners and losers at the campus level.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** I wanted to throw out a couple of red flags about question 3. The way that it's written feels more like a push/pull question and I don't know if we will get the answers we're looking for, the way that it is put together.
- **RAAC Staff Member Comment:** A little bit of context on how the survey questions were crafted. It was done to be aligned with the white paper's narrative, around the priorities you all gave to us to be brought forward to the board and cabinet. We don't have much time. So, what we were trying to do is get you all to come to an agreement on the key buckets or categories and analyze your attitudinal responses to each of those issues.
- **RAAC Member Question:** Is it the must word?
- **RAAC Member Response:** It's the "which will result". HISD must redistribute existing funds, despite the fact that we understand there may be winners and losers at the campus level. I think acknowledging that there's likely to be winners and losers based on the scenario, the fact that there needs to be a redistribution of existing funds gets lost with this piece.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** I think that one thing is, you have a "should" in question 1 and 2, then a "must" in question 3. Must is stronger than should. Then modify the second part because it makes it seem like that's the end goal and it's not.
- **RAAC Member Question:** How should we re-word it?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** HISD should redistribute existing funds, despite the likelihood of winners and losers at the campus level.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** That gets a lot closer to acknowledging that there's going to be winners and losers no matter what plan you come up with. We're going to do the best that we can to be equitable, but there should be some level of fund redistribution.

—The District should fund essential services, such as academic and mental health counselors and maintain existing supports (interventions, wrap-around services and nurses).

- **RAAC Member Comment:** For question 4, when we ask the question the way that we asked it, it presupposes a centralized funding model. I wonder if it should be,

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schools should provide essential services, such as academic and mental health counselors and maintain existing supports or hold schools accountable for providing those services.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** I think that also presupposing that schools have the funds to do it.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Then schools should provide those services. If we say, schools should provide, then we're taking the question of "who finds it?" out but referencing to the value of the service.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** It depends on the answer that you're trying to get from that question.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** I get what you're saying, but we actually have district funded essential services right now, even though we're in a PUA model. I wouldn't just say it would suppose or propose one way or the other. The wraparound service providers are being provided at the district level.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** The district is offering some services but not to all schools. Some schools are providing for themselves. I think there are too many complexities when you start with "The district should fund".
- **RAAC Member Comment:** So, maybe it should be that the district should provide or guarantee that these essential services are available.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** What it doesn't say in that question is, maintain existing support for every campus. I think that also has a very distinct difference and brought us to this work.
- **RAAC Staff Member Comment:** To take us back to that conversation when we talked about the essential services and staff. When we talked about the dollar and how much each campus would need to fund it, that's when we started to back away from that conversation because the district funds those three already. Nurse, counselor and librarian. Right? When we started looking at what else in terms of special services that the campus would need, we looked at how much more it would cost for each campus to have that. That's when we started to say, okay maybe we can't afford it or maybe every campus doesn't need that, but it should be something more centralized so that they would be able to get to those campuses that need those services. So, it's more of what can we actually say as a recommendation about what we can afford to do. I think we all understood it to say we need more revenue. We need new revenue sources to come into the district to be able to provide some of these additional services for the campus. In the event that does not happen, what can we do with what we have right now? That's when we started to move away from that.

—Re-imaging and marketing efforts are needed at HISD to improve enrollment in under-enrolled campuses.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** For question number six, is that assuming that you're going to start with understanding why students are leaving, or should you add that in? I think that work needs to start with a better understanding of the many reasons that students are leaving and identifying from that.
- **RAAC Member Question:** How should we re-word that?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** HISD should seek to understand causes for decreasing enrollment and accordingly tailor re-imaging and marketing efforts as needed to improve enrollment in under-enrolled campuses.

—Under-enrolled or low performing schools that could trigger state sanctions should be closed, consolidated and facilities repurposed. Closing and consolidating schools is a long-term proposal/last resort and should not be instituted in the 2018-19 school year, planning and thorough review should begin immediately.

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- **RAAC Member Question:** For question seven. The way that it reads now, particularly for the under enrollment, you have to study why they're being under-enrolled, figure out what's happening and come up with a plan to guarantee for the community before it's kind of ripped out. If you added the words under-enrolled in sentence two, closing and consolidating under-enrolled schools is a long-term proposal. Did we mean to include both of those separate categories and long-term proposal?
- **RAAC Member Response:** I think there are some neighborhood complexities that have to be considered here. There are often issues related to safety for children when you consolidate schools that have competing cultures and competing interests. They could put kids together that come from different neighborhoods and we see an escalation in gang violence. I do think that those are things that need to be considered. I don't know if we have an option of taking one under-enrolled school with another under-enrolled school and putting kids together in a safe way. I think that there should be some recommendation that offers an expectation, that some of the cultural issues within the school should be studied.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Following up on that, I feel like we lost track of part of what this conversation was about. Closing and consolidating weren't the only two options that we talked about. We talked about community revitalization and other things.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** It's a last resort. We are faced with a financial deficit. Although, I would love to see community revitalization, the question is, can we implement that in a timely manner when we have a budget deficit? I agree, we can't just arbitrarily combine two communities together.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** The reason I'm pushing that out is there are some serious decisions that must be made if we are saying in here, a long-term result should not be done in 2018-2019. I just want to make sure the committee is clear on the ramifications if we agree with this. Under-enrolled schools and these issues can't be done without a long-term proposal, strategic study and plan. The way that this question is written, if we strongly agree with that, then we are also saying to the board that you're taking off the table the closing of state sanctioned schools as an option as well. That's the reason I've got to bring it up so that we're clear about what we're communicating.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** One thing we may want to recommend, is a new demographic study to look at trends.
- **RAAC Staff Member Comment:** The question will state, "Under-enrolled schools should be closed, consolidated and/or facilities repurposed to increase enrollment. Closing and consolidating schools is a long-term proposal/last resort and should not be instituted in the 2018-19 school year. Planning (which includes demographic studies) and thorough review should begin immediately."

III. Group Discussion-RAAC White Paper

—Weaknesses

- ◇ *Funding formula does not adequately address campus programming (safety and academics).*
- ◇ *Economically disadvantaged funding inequalities/inequities for high need schools.*
 - **RAAC Member Comment:** The things noted under weaknesses could have been more specifically articulated. They leave room for misunderstanding. **The funding formula does not adequately address campus programming**, I think where the funding formula doesn't adequately address that is for small schools, which has resulted in the utilization of small subsidies. Could we clarify that? I don't think the current funding formula does not adequately address programming at all school levels. We know that when we have a critical mass, the funding formula is a good

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funding formula. Can you all share what your thoughts were about that?

- **RAAC Member Comment:** One weakness of our current formula is that, if we want to continue funding under-enrolled schools, the current formula requires us to patch them with special funds.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** The first bullet, as it stands, isn't really true either. It does in many schools. It's driven completely by enrollment, so it's limited. I don't feel like the first bullet is valid as worded.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** That's why I think it needs to say, "for small schools". I mean I think we should modify that somehow.
- **RAAC Staff Member Comment:** If the money follows the child, then you're an under enrolled campus and you're already in an underserved neighborhood. It's a double whammy. So, the conversation was, does the current funding model have a weakness in that category? Is there a genuine problem with the PUA?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** We must recognize that there were certain of our schools with higher populations that come in with external supports, that many of our students do not have. Therefore, there needed to be more shifting in the weighted formula so that those certain schools didn't get a double whammy so much. The only way that we were going to be able to afford it, without completely wrecking other schools, is to create better efficiencies across the system. I think those are the two pieces where there is that little recognition. There must be higher rates for economically disadvantaged students if we're going to maintain a PUA model, so that the higher the concentration the more funding you actually receive. The only way we're going to make that sustainable is, people are going to have to give in some way with the current under enrolled schools.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Coming from a small school that has 4% at risk students and 96% economically disadvantaged students, money does make a difference. But it's also how you use it.
- **RAAC Staff Member Question:** How should we reword this bullet?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Funding formula does not adequately address campus programming for small school resulting in the utilization of small school's subsidies (safety and academics).
- **RAAC Member Question:** What is the language for the second bullet?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** There exists economically disadvantaged funding inequalities/inequities for high need schools.

—Added Weaknesses

- **RAAC Member Comment:** I'm looking at a Per Pupil Expenditure from a couple of years ago. Jones HS is funded at twenty-two thousand dollars per child, Westside HS five thousand dollars per child, Yates HS sixty-six hundred dollars per child. I think what changes that is the low enrollment. Jones enrollment, according to this data, was 353 students, Westside 2,920 students and Yates 927 students. I think that's where that sliding scale comes in, with the cost for pupil. If there could be a range in which a school can be more economically sound based on a minimum enrollment. Throwing more money after very low enrolled schools, is going to be a significant drain on the whole system.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** I don't disagree with that. There are two ends, that's where the give and take must be. But the flip side of that question, they got into that position and they kept losing kids because there was not enough recognition of the work that they were having to do, and the little resources were going into that community into that neighborhood. They had to pick up and do more that the city wasn't doing because they were flooding, the sewers were overcome, and people were moving out of the neighborhood. So, how do you give that give and take in there to recognize that some of our schools and colleagues are dealing with far more

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issues. We must emphasize that concentration at a much higher level, at the same time, recognizing that we're not going to make it sustainable without grappling with that economies of scale issue. We need to put that in there as a weakness, but that's not a formula issue or a funding issue. That's a will issue. That's a community will, political will, board member will, and leadership will. Jones is the example of the economies of scale. You have schools like Benavides who are the answer to the fact that we do not have the weighting formulas right. They have lots of students, it's not an issue of being enrolled, it's an issue of extreme need that they have to flip into miracles to stay off the IR (Improvement Required) list and meet the goals that every other schools that has those resources are able to meet. Could they benefit significantly from actually having the weight of what they're dealing with recognized in our funding formula? Those are the two changes that need to be done.

- **RAAC Member Comment:** Make two bullet points of that then. Those are the two things that we add here. That the funding formula is dependent upon economies of scale and the weighted formulas may not be adequate for high-need schools.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** We should be addressing that it's pupil, since the money follows the child.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** It should be, the set points of the weighted formula may not adequately provide resources for high need students (SES) on all campuses.
- **RAAC Member:** There is not an adequate tool to monitor the effective use of funds used in their proper allocation designation.

—Opportunities

◇ *Schools receive the needed resources and technology at every campus.*

◇ *Adequately funds all schools and making the tough decisions to be equitable.*

- **RAAC Member Comment:** Is the first bullet more about site-based or being able to make decisions that meet the individual or specialized needs of a campus or region of the district?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** That makes a lot of sense. That fits in opportunities a little better.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Schools receive the needed resources to meet their unique needs. Site based allocation of resources. Right?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Yes.
- **RAAC Member Comment:** For opportunities, it wasn't until I went to a conference and helped present with some district level staff, that how HISD is looked upon as an extremely innovative district and a lot of that comes from the PUA model. In certain areas or campuses can make strategic decisions. Especially when we talk about attracting students to our district and being able to have that level of autonomy. Continuing this idea that HISD could be viewed in a greater light as being an innovative district. Where one size does not fit all, all the time.
- **RAAC Staff Member Question:** What should we put here?
- **RAAC Member Comment:** Expand/Enhance the perception of district innovation and autonomy for campus planning that responds to the needs of individual communities. Establishes a culture of autonomy, flexibility, adaptability, and innovation in comparison to other school districts.

—Vision Statement

◇ *Priority: HISD must improve the overall student and parent experience across the district. Schools must be safe and welcoming environments that provide quick and accurate information to parents. Central office must provide the necessary supports for schools and their individual communities with understanding and timely responses.*

- **RAAC Member Comment:** Can we go back to the Vision Statement, last priority. Can we add schools must be safe, conducive for learning (facilities)? I think that needs to be somewhere in the vision. If the building is falling apart, we can't properly

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serve or teach a child.