

## LLESD Budget Advisory Committee

### 5/12/25 Meeting Minutes

#### BAC Role, Mandate, Process & Norms

Committee members walked through the history of the BAC thus far:

- BAC was created in early 2025 out of an interest by the community to support greater transparency and communication in the district budget process, and to be a balance to the Superintendent and the Board.
- Many members joined out of concerns over financial oversight, lack of transparency, and mistrust of the administration and Board.
- At the time, Board members and the administration expressed vocal public support for the BAC and asked the BAC to help solve the deficit issue.
- In response, the BAC developed a unanimous recommendation (shared publicly at the March 5 Board meeting) to cut the budget deficit by 50% this year.
- The Board also asked the BAC to weigh in on the question of pink slips on March 15. The BAC was not comfortable taking on this role, but proceeded in order to help resolve the budget deficit. The BAC presented its recommendations on this issue at the March 11 Board meeting: to keep the option open of pink slips to management only, allowing the District time to develop a more coherent plan to address the deficit.
- The Board did not take any action on the BAC's recommendation.
- On May 1, Superintendent Burmeister started in his role.
- Committee members discussed what role should the BAC play going forward? BAC members expressed support for continuing to play a helpful role to rebuild trust and support an informed approach to the budget deficit.
- Committee members discussed the following options for a potential BAC role going forward:
  - (1) **Limited view:** Verify accuracy of finances in the audit. Do not weigh in on broader issues. Not an independent body.
  - (2) **Supportive Role:** Verify accuracy of numbers, support community outreach on finances, provide creative ideas to the Board and administration, and propose options for addressing the budget deficit. Unclear if this entails a public voice to the community.
  - (3) **Arms-Length Independent Entity:** Above two items, plus serve as an arms-length body that can provide non-partisan budget options in a

public space, independent of Board and/or Superintendent prior review. In this model, the BAC would have a more public role and would be allowed to comment and provide options at Board meetings and/or other public spaces.

- **Independence:** Committee members discussed the extent to which the committee should have independence in terms of what it can say and/or present as options, with members recognizing that an expanded role would require greater independence from the Board and administration.
- Members discussed expectations from the community regarding BAC independence and the BAC's role in restoring trust in the District's fiscal leadership.

A proposal to have two separate committees was discussed:

- 1) Finance and Audit - reports to Board, reviews accuracy of numbers in the audit.
- 2) Budget Advisory - reports to Superintendent, provides input and ideas to Superintendent.

There was broad support for considering two separate groups, with one member raising that the main goal needs to be solving the budget deficit. Another member raised that we should consider - and avoid - overlap with the current Board standing Finance committee. BAC members agreed that the ultimate structure is a decision for the Board and the Superintendent, not the committee.

### **2025/2026 Budget Preview**

CBO Mei Chan presented a short overview of the draft 25/26 budget, identifying savings planned.

### **Finance Follow-up & Taskings**

This item was not discussed due to time.

### **Next Steps:**

Superintendent Burmeister supported presenting this proposal to the Board for decision at the June 9 Board meeting.

BAC Communication leads (L. Ramanan, E. Kravitz) agreed to put together a communication plan for dissolution of current BAC and formation of new groups once the Board/Superintendent proposal is ready.