



Bridgeport Generation Now <together@bptgennow.com>

Community Conversations on BPS Budget

Weldon, John R. <jweldon@bridgeportedu.net>

Thu, Feb 7, 2019 at 11:31 AM

To: Bridgeport Generation Now <together@bptgennow.com>

Cc: Gemeem Davis <gemeem@bptgennow.org>, Francis Nuñez <francis@faithactsedu.org>, Alison Martinez <alison.martinez@maketheroadct.org>, "The Rev. Cass L. Shaw" <cassshaw@ccgb.org>, George Mintz <geomin@att.net>, "Fvillegas@bpef.org" <Fvillegas@bpef.org>, Vanessa Liles <liles.m.vanessa@gmail.com>, "Johnson, Aresta" <ajohnson1@bridgeportedu.net>

Hello Ms. Heilmann,

Thank you for taking the time to write about the Community Conversations. To begin, our objective in holding the Community Conversations was to inform the public of the budgetary issues we face in the coming year, while simultaneously engaging City Council members on a District-by-District basis, so that they could come to understand the importance of funding our projected deficit from the perspective of their constituents.

Over recent weeks some Board members expressed concern to me with respect to the consistency of the message we were trying to communicate at the four Community Conversations held thus far, as well as with that message having certain undertones of negativity and hostility toward the Mayor, the City Council and even the Superintendent herself, instead of that message being one of collaboration and partnership. When that happens, it's time to have a candid discussion about what we really want to accomplish, which is why we called a Special Meeting on the topic. In having that discussion at the meeting, which included weighing the Superintendent's views (which included her concurrence that the forums had somehow developed a negative undercurrent with an inconsistent message) a majority of the Board determined to not continue advocating for increased funding in this manner. That does not mean it won't be done in another way that continues to engage the public – We don't want to deny anyone a platform, we just want the message to be clear, consistent, even-toned and, above all, positive. Over the coming weeks, we will try to find a way to accomplish that objective.

Thank you again for reaching out. I appreciate the interest you have in transparency and civic engagement. Please keep in touch and feel free to share the above with any of your partner organizations.

Regards,

John

John R. Weldon, Chairman

Bridgeport Board of Education

jweldon@bridgeportedu.net

From: Bridgeport Generation Now <together@bptgennow.com>

Sent: Wednesday, February 6, 2019 10:43 AM

To: Weldon, John R.

Cc: Gemeem Davis; Francis Nuñez; Alison Martinez; The Rev. Cass L. Shaw; George Mintz; Fvillegas@bpef.org; Vanessa Liles; Johnson, Aresta

Subject: Re: Community Conversations on BPS Budget

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