

Monitoring and Oversight of General Obligation Bonds to Improve Broward County Schools:

*SMART Program Quarterly Report
Review for the Quarter Ended
December 31, 2021*

Presented to the Broward County Bond Oversight Committee
March 7, 2022

Q2
2021-22





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Senator George S. LeMieux
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Dominic M. Calabro
President & Chief Executive Officer

Dear fellow taxpayer,

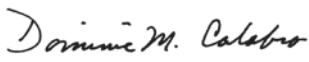
The end of the 2021 calendar year marks the mid-point of Year 8 of the SMART Program. This is significant in that the planned facilities construction projects at Broward public schools were to have been completed by the end of Year 7. We now know that it is likely to be late 2025 or early 2026 before the planned renovations are completed.

The District begins the second half of Year 8 with a new Superintendent and new members of the Superintendent's leadership team. Florida TaxWatch congratulates Dr. Vickie L. Cartwright on her appointment! Superintendent Cartwright and her leadership team will have to address the recurring schedule delays, the ever-increasing SMART Program costs, and the expectations of the Broward County School Board and Broward County taxpayers. It is critical to maintain oversight and transparency, as well as effective communications, to ensure public trust and support.

Higher rates of inflation, higher roofing and mechanical/electrical/fire protection costs, and items that were excluded from the original scopes of work will undoubtedly continue to increase project costs. Florida TaxWatch considers controlling project costs and mitigating the additional financial risk to be the greatest challenge facing the District at this point as SMART Program implementation moves forward.

I am pleased to present the following report, which includes the Florida TaxWatch review of the District's Bond Oversight Committee Quarterly Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2021. Florida TaxWatch staff will be available to present our findings and recommendations at the Committee's upcoming March 7, 2022, meeting.

Sincerely,


Dominic M. Calabro
President & CEO

INTRODUCTION

On February 19, 2022, Florida TaxWatch received the *Bond Oversight Committee Quarterly Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2021* (“Quarterly Report”). This report provides updated information on the implementation of the District’s SMART Program and the use of general obligation bond funds to purchase and install technology upgrades, purchase music and arts equipment, improve school safety, upgrade athletic facilities, and renovate educational facilities.

The Quarterly Report consists of an Introduction and the following eight sections:

- Section 1 ---Technology School Board Broward County (SBBC) Schools;
- Section 2 --- Technology Charter Schools;
- Section 3 --- Music, Art, and Theater Equipment;
- Section 4 --- Athletics;
- Section 5 --- Facilities;
- Section 6 --- Budget Activity;
- Section 7 --- Supplier Diversity Outreach Program; and
- Section 8 --- Communications.

The SBBC has provided guidance to the Bond Oversight Committee (“Committee”) in Section 4 of Resolution 15-106 (as amended). In reviewing quarterly reports prepared by District staff, the Committee is charged with:

- Verifying the effective use of bond proceeds and compliance with the purposes set forth in the bond programs as approved by the SBBC;
- Ensuring that bond revenues are expended for the purpose set forth in the bond programs as approved by the SBBC;
- Ensuring that any deferred proposals or changes of plans are executed after appropriate approval of the SBBC;
- Validating that no bond funds are used for any teacher or administrative salaries or other school operating expense; and
- Reviewing efforts by District staff to maximize bond revenues by balancing best value, quality, and efficiency in meeting the bond programs as approved by the SBBC.

To encourage greater accountability, transparency, public support, and confidence in the use of the general obligation bond funds, and to hold the District accountable for spending decisions, Florida TaxWatch has reviewed the District’s Quarterly Report against the most recent SMART Program schedule and budget and is pleased to present the following report and recommendations.

SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY

The tragic and senseless shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February 2018 focused attention on school safety and security. A statewide grand jury was impaneled and tasked with examining and reviewing: (1) school safety measures in Broward County and across the state; and (2) the responses of public entities to laws designed to protect schools (such as the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act).

After the shootings, the SBBC accelerated the release of funds so all remaining Single Point-of-Entry projects could be initiated ahead of schedule. All remaining Single Point-of-Entry projects were complete and operational before students returned to school in the Fall of 2019, bringing the total number of Single Point of Entry projects to 238. Additional safety improvements include such things as fire sprinklers, fire alarms, emergency exit signage/lighting improvements, fencing, and door hardware. In many cases, these improvements are bundled together as part of planned Primary Renovations projects. The District's Quarterly Report (reference page 38) identifies the status of 189 fire alarm and fire sprinkler projects (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY

	Planning	Design	Hire Contractor	Construction	Complete/ Closeout	Total
Fire Alarms	0	10	26	60	4	100
Fire Sprinklers	1	13	21	47	7	89

Florida TaxWatch reviewed the School Spotlights (reference pages 72 through 342) for each school to determine the status of Primary Renovations projects that included additional safety and security projects as part of the overall scope of work. Florida TaxWatch identified 126 such projects. Their completion is tied to the schedule for the Primary Renovations into which they are bundled.

The current SMART Program budget for school safety and security improvements is \$161.5 million. A summary of school safety and security budget activity through December 31, 2021, is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2. SMART PROGRAM SAFETY & SECURITY PROJECT BUDGET ACTIVITY
(THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021)

	Original Budget	Current Budget	Prior Year Expenditures	Commitments	Current Year Expenditures	Balance
Financially Active						
GOB Funds	\$88,849,473	\$89,606,015	\$31,903,662	\$18,716,440	\$6,564,955	\$32,420,958
Non-GOB Funds	\$17,107,387	\$52,668,182	\$19,544,993	\$15,838,335	\$6,358,106	\$10,926,748
Completed/Meets Standards						
GOB Funds	\$17,917,592	\$15,008,245	\$13,989,620	\$92,900	\$109,114	\$816,611
Non-GOB Funds	\$1,679,673	\$4,245,785	\$3,591,506	\$237,579	\$83,666	\$333,034

MUSIC, ART, AND THEATER EQUIPMENT

The Music, Art, and Theater spend portion of the SMART Program is complete. Overall, more than 60,000 pieces of musical equipment have been ordered and delivered. A summary of the music equipment purchased through the SMART Program is provided in Table 3.

TABLE 3. MUSIC EQUIPMENT ORDERED AND DELIVERED
(Q2 2021-22)

	Ordered	Delivered
Elementary	47,342	47,342
Middle	3,847	3,847
High	8,303	8,303
Center	584	584
Total	60,076	60,076

The District reports that all 136 kilns have been purchased and delivered to the schools. Installation of two kilns (at the same site) awaits design approval to relocate the kilns. All planned theater upgrades have been completed at all 40 schools with full or part-time theater programs.

The current SMART Program budget for music, art, and theater equipment is \$46.2 million. A summary of SMART Program budget activity through December 31, 2021, is provided in Table 4.

TABLE 4. SMART PROGRAM MUSIC & ARTS PROJECT BUDGET ACTIVITY
(THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021)

	Original Budget	Current Budget	Prior Year Expenditures	Commitments	Current Year Expenditures	Balance
Financially Active						
GOB Funds	\$12,833,000	\$13,127,052	\$3,844,840	\$22,829,413	\$1,322,459	\$5,130,340
Non-GOB Funds	\$3,055,000	\$8,265,196	\$1,724,066	\$2,284,453	\$845,314	\$3,411,363
Completed/Meets Standards						
GOB Funds	\$4,659,000	\$4,659,000	\$4,171,183	\$37,814	\$39,999	\$410,004
Non-GOB Funds	\$20,518,000	\$20,106,601	\$19,523,637	\$44,311	\$36,851	\$501,802

ATHLETICS

The Athletics spend portion of the SMART Program is complete. The 15 planned track resurfacing projects at the three middle schools and 12 high schools have been completed, as of September 30, 2018, and the 30 planned weight room upgrades have been completed as of March 31, 2021.

The current SMART Program budget for Athletics is \$7.6 million. A summary of SMART Program expenditures through June 30, 2021, is provided in Table 5.

TABLE 5. SMART PROGRAM ATHLETICS PROJECT BUDGET ACTIVITY
(THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021)

	Original Budget	Current Budget	Prior Year Expenditures	Commitments	Current Year Expenditures	Balance
Financially Active						
GOB Funds	\$40,360	\$40,360	\$17,449	\$18,399	\$1,758	\$2,754
Non-GOB Funds	\$5,640	\$33,664	\$10,747	\$10,131	\$6,794	\$5,992
Completed/Meets Standards						
GOB Funds	\$7,333,000	\$7,333,000	\$6,438,765	\$122,322	\$7,653	\$764,260
Non-GOB Funds	\$121,000	\$211,362	\$180,073	\$301	\$563	\$30,425

RENOVATIONS

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE RESET

The most recent (Schedule 2020) revision to the construction schedule acknowledges that nearly all projects have been flagged and deemed at risk of schedule delays with potential budget impacts and reflects completion of most planned facility construction projects in late 2025, with remaining projects completed in Spring 2026 (a delay of an additional three years).

Figure 1, which overlays the 2020 Schedule with the previous (2018) schedule, shows that the 2020 Schedule will flatten and extend the facilities construction schedule, extending the completion dates for more than 140 planned Primary Renovations projects by more than two years.

PRIMARY RENOVATIONS PROJECT STATUS

The District reports that 265 Primary Renovations projects are either underway or complete at Broward County schools.¹ Actual project construction has begun or has been completed at 169 schools. The status of the Primary Renovations projects over the past four quarters is shown in Figure 2.

When compared to Q1 2021-22, Figure 2 shows a decrease in the number of active Primary Renovations Projects in the Design Phase (42 to 33); an increase in the number of active Primary Renovations Projects in the Hire Contractor/Vendor Phase (54 to 55); and an increase in the number of active Primary Renovations Projects in the Project Construction Phase (124 to 137). Florida TaxWatch considers this to be a good sign since project delays have occurred most frequently in the Design phase. In addition, the number of Primary Renovations projects in the Construction Closeout Phase has

FIG. 1 - 2020 SCHEDULE WILL FLATTEN AND EXTEND THE FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

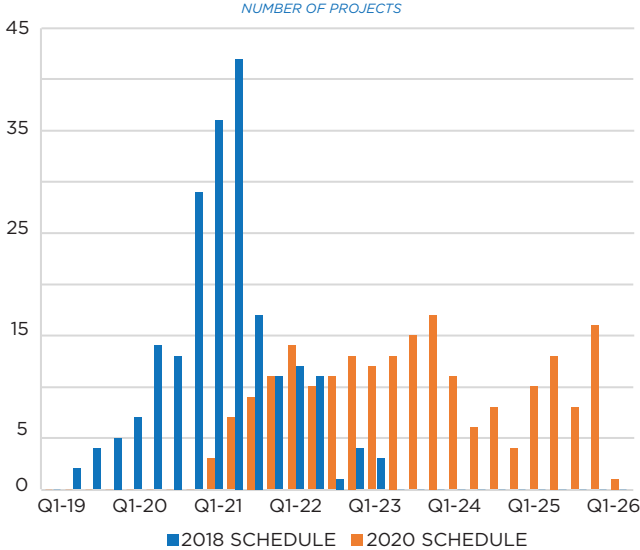
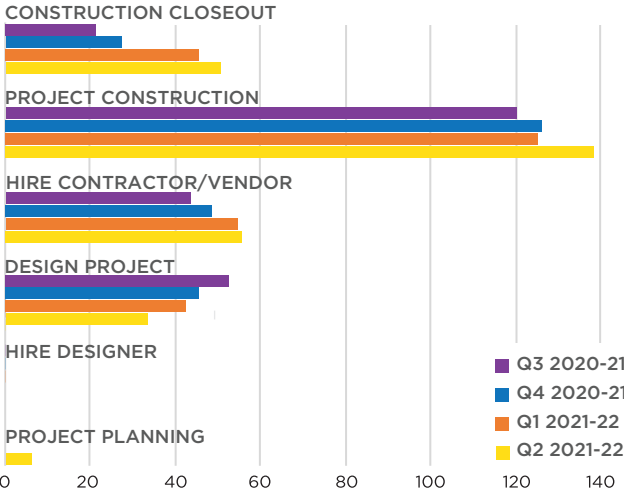


FIG. 2 - MORE PRIMARY RENOVATIONS PROJECTS ARE MOVING INTO THE CONSTRUCTION AND COMPLETION PHASES



¹ Some schools have more than one Primary Renovations project, which may be in different phases.

increased from 45 to 50. After more than one year with no projects in the Project Planning Phase, the Q2 2021-22 Report now shows six projects being replanned.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Florida TaxWatch recommends District staff brief the Committee at its March 7, 2022, meeting on the six new projects in the Planning Phase.

SCHEDULE-RELATED ISSUES

Schedule issues reflect a risk of or inability to meet the planned milestone date for progressing to the next phase in the process. Schedule flags are removed once the project has regained the time and is back on its planned schedule. With the adoption of the 2020 Schedule, the list of projects flagged for schedule-related issues (i.e., delays) was effectively “wiped clean.”

Despite resetting the facilities construction schedule, the District identified 26 projects (reference page 47) that, at the end of the reporting period, are experiencing schedule “variances.” Of this number, 25 projects are experiencing delays and the schedule for one project was advanced. Seventeen (17) of the delayed projects are 95 percent or more completed. The District offers several reasons for these delays:

- 14 projects are substantially complete; however, the District has required additional work;
- 3 projects are experiencing delays due to errors and omissions;
- 7 projects are experiencing delays due to contractor delays; and
- 1 projects are experiencing delays due to “unforeseen circumstances.”

A review of the School Spotlights for each school by Florida TaxWatch, however, identified the following 27 Primary Renovations projects that were “flagged” for schedule issues:

- Atlantic Technical College Arthur Ashe Jr. Campus (owner delays);
- Bayview Elementary School (contractor delays);
- Castle Hill Elementary School (owner delays);
- Colbert Museum Magnet School (owner delays);
- Embassy Creek Elementary School (contractor delays);
- Everglades Elementary School (owner delays);
- Forest Glen Middle School (owner delays/errors and omissions);
- Gator Run Elementary School (owner delays);
- Gator Run Elementary School (owner delays);
- Griffin Elementary School (owner delays);
- Hawkes Bluff Elementary School (owner delays);
- Lauderdale Lakes Middle School (owner delays);
- Maplewood Elementary School (owner delays/consultant delays);
- Margate Elementary School (contractor delays);
- Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (owner delays);
- Norcrest Elementary School (errors and omissions);

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- Pioneer Middle School (owner delays);
 - Pompano Beach Elementary School (owner delays);
 - Quiet Waters Elementary School (contractor delays);
 - Ramblewood Elementary School (contractor delays);
 - Rock Island Elementary School (owner delays);
 - Sea Castle Elementary School (contractor delays);
 - Seagull Alternative High School (contractor delays);
 - Sunland Park Academy (owner delays);
 - Tamarac Elementary School (errors and omissions);
 - West Hollywood Elementary School (owner delays); and
 - Westchester Elementary School (owner delays).

RECOMMENDATION 2

Florida TaxWatch recommends the District reconcile the apparent discrepancies between the number of delayed projects identified on page 50 of the District Report and the number of projects flagged for schedule delays on the *School Spotlights*.

The *School Spotlight* forms have been revised to include an additional indicator of risk. Fashioned after a traffic signal, each *School Spotlight* includes the following assessments of risk:

- Red --- reflects a high level of risk and requires further analysis to be performed to determine whether additional redesign or other changes are required;
- Yellow --- reflects a medium level of risk and may require additional redesign or other changes; and
- Green --- reflects a low level of risk with additional actions unnecessary.

A review of the *School Spotlight* for each school identified 12 Primary Renovations projects that have been assigned a high level (red) of risk and three Primary Renovations that had been assigned a medium level (yellow) of risk.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Florida TaxWatch recommends District staff brief the Committee at its March 7, 2022, meeting on high-risk Primary Renovations at the following schools, including efforts to mitigate the high risk:

- **Atlantic Technical College Arthur Ashe, Jr, Campus;**
- **Bayview Elementary School;**
- **Castle Hill Elementary School;**
- **Forest Glen Middle School;**
- **Hawkes Bluff Elementary School;**
- **Maplewood Elementary School;**

-
- **Pompano Beach Elementary School;**
 - **Quiet Waters Elementary School;**
 - **Ramblewood Elementary School;**
 - **Rock Island Elementary School;**
 - **West Hollywood Elementary School; and**
 - **Westchester Elementary School.**

RECOMMENDATION 4

Florida TaxWatch recommends District staff brief the Committee at its March 7, 2022, meeting on medium-risk Primary Renovations at the following schools, including efforts to mitigate the medium risk:

- **Embassy Creek Elementary School;**
- **Gator Run Elementary School; and**
- **Seagull Alternative High School.**

Concerns remain that, after resetting the facilities construction schedule last year, projects are already being flagged for schedule delays. The March 8, 2021, Committee meeting included a lengthy discussion as to why District construction projects experience such frequent and lengthy delays. Several reasons were offered, including: (1) the average amount of time required to approve change orders; and (2) the average number of times design documents go back-and-forth to the Building Department before they are approved.

CHANGE ORDERS

It has been explained to the Committee that the average time required to navigate the change order process is 192 days. Change orders undergo review by the Change Order Review Process (CORP) to make sure they are fair and reasonable and to identify the reasons for the changes. Several rounds through CORP may be necessary to gain the necessary approvals. Once CORP approves a change order, it then goes to the SBBC for approval.

It was explained to the Committee that the SBBC has a policy that permits the Superintendent to approve change orders up to \$25,000; however, the SBBC has ostensibly given “verbal direction” to the Superintendent not to approve any change orders. It should be noted that, according to District staff, approximately 85 percent of all change orders are below the \$25,000 threshold.

As projects move from the Design Phase to the Construction Phase, the District tracks change orders as they occur and reports their relative impact. The District reports 77 change orders (reference pages 39-46) were approved by the SBBC during Q2 2021-22 (see Table 6). Of these change orders, ten either involved no net increase or decrease in funds or involved a credit (e.g., tax credits, de-scoping a project, etc.) The remaining 67 change orders involved the approval of additional funds by the SBBC.

TABLE 6. CHANGE ORDERS Q2 2021-22

	Ordered	Delivered
Owner Request	24	31.2%
Consultant Omission	19	24.7%
Unforeseen Conditions	11	14.3%
Consultant Error	23	29.9%
Tax Savings	0	0.0%
Total	77	100%

For those 67 change orders requiring additional funding, the amounts ranged from \$439 to \$139,014. Of these, 52 (77 percent) were less than \$25,000, the threshold below which the SBBC could delegate authority to approve change orders, thereby speeding up the process. In previous reports, Florida TaxWatch has recommended the SBBC exercise its delegation of authority to permit the Superintendent or other senior staff member to approve change orders below the \$25,000 threshold. Both District staff and the Committee have urged the SBBC at workshops to delegate authority for change order approval as a means to speed up the review process; however, the SBBC has shown little or no appetite to delegate authority to approve change orders.

Florida TaxWatch considers the SBBC’s unwillingness to delegate authority to approve change orders that are less than \$25,000 to be an inefficient use of limited staff, time, and other resources. At the Committee’s December 13, 2021, meeting, Ms. Langan (AECOM) mentioned that a proposal had been prepared for consideration by the SBBC that would permit the SBBC to delegate authority to approve change orders that are less than \$15,000. Had this policy been in effect, 45 of the 67 change orders requiring additional funding would have been below the proposed \$15,000 threshold.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Florida TaxWatch recommends the SBBC delegate authority to approve change orders to the Superintendent or other senior official.

Most change orders are the result of unforeseen conditions; however, only 11 of the 77 change orders approved during Q2 2021-22 were due to unforeseen conditions. It is important to note that more than one-half (55 percent) of the change orders approved during Q2 2021-22 were due to either an omission or error by the consultant. The additional cost to the District is more than \$715,000. Over the past two reporting periods, change orders approved by the SBBC that were due to errors or omissions by consultants totaled more than \$1.3 million. At the September 27, 2021, meeting, Committee members made clear their expectations that any misspent funds be recovered by the District.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Florida TaxWatch recommends District staff brief the Committee at its March 7, 2022, meeting on efforts to recover change order funds that are the result of consultant omissions or consultant errors.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT DELAYS

Much has been written about the delays experienced in the Design Phase, which Florida TaxWatch has previously referred to as the “pig in the python.” At the September 27, 2021, Committee meeting, Ms. Langan (AECOM) explained that the 2018 schedule (shown in orange in Figure 1) was based on the assumption that design documents would be reviewed twice by the Building Department before approval. The actual number of building department reviews of design documents was trending at nine or ten reviews, which would have pushed back the completion of the planned renovations back into 2027. The 2020 Schedule, which envisions the completion of the planned renovations in late 2025 or early 2026, assumes five building department reviews. Committee members have expressed and reiterated their opposition to the 2020 Schedule reset and any subsequent resets because “that obscures how far behind some of these projects really are.”

Revisions to the School Spotlight for each school (reference pages 72 through 342) now permit the taxpayer to better visualize and understand the amount of time that any given Primary Renovations project spends in the Design Phase. Florida TaxWatch looked at the amount of time each Primary Renovations project either spent in, or is expected to spend in, the Design Phase. The amount of time each Primary Renovations project either spent in, or is expected to spend in, the Design Phase (as identified on each school’s School Spotlight) ranges from one quarter to 23 quarters, or from three months to more than five years. TaxWatch calculated a median value of 9.0 quarters, or 27 months. This means that 50 percent of the Primary Renovations projects spent more (or less) than 27 months in the Design Phase.

In response to a recommendation by Florida TaxWatch that District staff brief the Committee on steps taken to reduce the frequency and length of construction delays, the District’s Q1 2021-22 Report and Q2 2021-22 Report identify steps taken; however, it is unclear how much of an effect these actions have had on the frequency and length of construction delays. This is critical since the 2020 Schedule is based upon the assumption that there will be five Building Department reviews instead of nine to ten reviews (current trend).

BUDGET-RELATED ISSUES

Budget issues reflect a need for School Board approval of an increase in funding based on bid and/or change order results. When the School Board approves the necessary budget increase, the Budget flags are removed from the school’s School Spotlight.

Florida TaxWatch reviewed each School Spotlight and identified the following 18 Primary Renovations projects that have been flagged for budget-related reasons.

- Annabel C. Perry PreK-8 (budget adjustment);
- Bair Middle School (budget adjustment);
- Castle Hill Elementary School (budget adjustment);
- Coral Glades High School (budget adjustment);
- Crystal Lake Middle School (budget adjustment);
- Hallandale Magnet High School (budget adjustment);
- Lauderdale Lakes Middle School (budget adjustment);
- Lauderdale 6-12 STEM-MED Magnet School (budget adjustment);
- Lauderdale 6-12 STEM-MED Magnet School (budget adjustment);
- Miramar High School (budget adjustment);
- Nova Blanche Forman Elementary School (budget adjustment);
- Oriole Elementary School (budget adjustment);
- Park Ridge Elementary School (budget adjustment);
- Parkway Middle School (budget adjustment);
- Plantation Park Elementary School (budget adjustment);
- Ramblewood Elementary School (budget adjustment);
- Stranahan High School (budget adjustment); and
- Wilton Manners Elementary School (budget adjustment)

HOLDING VENDORS ACCOUNTABLE

Florida TaxWatch has included recommendations in previous reports to the Bond Oversight Committee that the District identify actions taken to enforce the terms and conditions of contracts with design firms, vendors, and contractors. The Q2 2021-22 Facilities Report includes a “running list” of financial penalties that have been collected from firms for delays (reference page 48). The District reports that it has recovered \$731,650 in penalties from an unspecified number of architects/engineers who experienced delays in the Design Phase.

THE “BIG 3” SCHOOLS

As previously recommended by Florida TaxWatch, the District has provided a more balanced and accurate “snapshot” of the status of facilities renovation projects at the Big 3 schools. The status of the Primary Renovations and other projects is identified, and key milestones and their target completion dates are identified:

- **Blanche Ely High School** --- the District reports that the Primary Renovations are nearing completion, with final inspections in progress. Substantial completion is scheduled for Q2 of Calendar year 2022 and final completion is scheduled for Q3 of calendar year 2022. The School Spotlight suggests that activities are on schedule and the risk is low. Completed work includes the media center; outdoor dining structure; chiller plant replacement; Building 1 roofing repairs, water piping, air handling unit replacement, and ceiling installation; Building 2 STEM Lab, restroom, roofing, HVAC and fire sprinklers; Building 4 HVAC chiller; Building 14

ADA restroom, HVAC, and ADA lift; Building 15 HVAC duct heater; Building 17 exterior ADA improvements and HVAC; Building 18 roofing repairs and STEM lab; and Building 26 STEM lab.

- **Northeast High School** --- the District reports that Phase 1 of the Primary Renovations project is scheduled for substantial completion in Q1 of calendar year 2023 and final completion in Q2 of calendar year 2023 (reference page 34). Completed work includes the weight room renovations; Building 1 science labs; Building 3 restroom, electrical and ceiling tile installation; and Building 12 fire alarm and roofing. In the District’s Q1 2021-22 Report, substantial completion of Phase 2 (new classroom addition) was scheduled for Q3 of calendar year 2023. The Q2 2021-22 Report, however, pushes this date back to Q4 of calendar year 2023, a delay of one quarter. No final completion date is identified. The District offers no reason for this delay, and there is no schedule flag on the School Spotlight.
- **Stranahan High School** --- the District reports that the Primary Renovations (Phase 1) is scheduled for substantial completion in Q1 of calendar year 2022 and final completion in Q2 of calendar year 2022. Completed work includes Building 1 HVAC and roofing; Building 4 Media Center, HVAC, and roofing; Building 5 roofing, restrooms, and HVAC; Building 6 STEM Lab, HVAC, and roofing; Building 7 roofing, interior work, and HVAC; Building 9 restrooms, fire protection, and HVAC; Building 15 HVAC; and Building 23 STEM Lab. Roofing repairs remain ongoing.

RECOMMENDATION 7

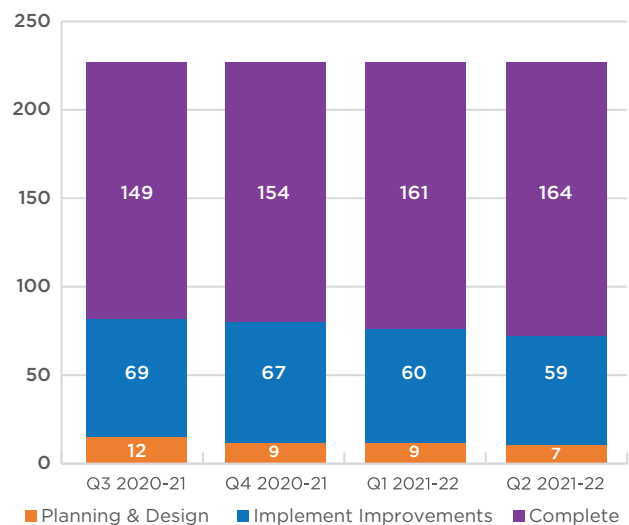
Florida TaxWatch recommends District staff brief the Committee on the additional delay in completing Phase 2 of the Primary Renovations project at Northeast High School and include in the “Big 3 Schools Update” section of the Q3 2021-22 Report a final completion date for Phase 2 (new classroom addition).

SCHOOL CHOICE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The District reports that School Choice Enhancement Program (SCEP) projects are underway or complete at 230 schools. SCEP projects are budgeted at \$100,000, and the scope of the capital project (e.g., electronic marquees, shade structures, playgrounds, etc.) is determined by a vote of the teachers, staff, and parents of students at the school.

As of December 31, 2021, the number of SCEP projects in the Planning Phase decreased from nine to seven. The second phase (Implementation) includes selection and procurement. There are currently 59 schools in the second phase, down from 60 in Q1 2020-21. The third phase (Completion) occurs when

FIG. 3 - THE DISTRICT CONTINUES TO MAKE PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING SCEP PROJECTS
NUMBER OF PROJECTS



all items have been delivered and installed. There are 164 schools with completed SCEP projects, up from 161 in Q1 2021-22. As shown in Figure 3, the number of SCEP projects that are in the Planning and Design Phase has decreased over the past four quarters and the number of Completed projects has increased.

The current SMART Program budget for facility renovations is \$1.132 billion. A summary of SMART Program expenditures for facility renovation through December 31, 2021 is provided in Table 7.

TABLE 7. SMART PROGRAM RENOVATIONS PROJECTS BUDGET ACTIVITY
(THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021)

	Original Budget	Current Budget	Prior Year Expenditures	Commitments	Current Year Expenditures	Balance
Financially Active						
GOB Funds	\$543,482,875	\$547,297,928	\$209,758,604	\$137,844,352	\$42,788,204	\$156,906,768
Non-GOB Funds	\$67,038,969	\$372,745,661	\$122,083,114	\$110,123,270	\$39,788,488	\$100,750,789
Completed/Meets Standards						
GOB Funds	\$86,095,700	\$85,802,862	\$75,209,785	\$2,094,407	\$2,492,664	\$6,006,006
Non-GOB Funds	\$35,077,867	\$88,955,905	\$73,662,517	\$2,207,082	\$3,276,970	\$9,809,336

TECHNOLOGY

The Technology spend portion of the SMART Program has been completed. As of June 30, 2018, the planned SMART technology deployment has been fully completed for all 230 SBBC schools. The planned charter school SMART Program technology projects were completed as of March 31, 2017. The District reports that all SBBC schools now comply with the District’s standard of 1 computer for every 3.5 students. With the additional computers purchased with SMART Program funds, the District-wide average ratio of students to computers is now 2:1. A summary of SMART Program Technology purchases for traditional SBBC and charter schools is provided in Table 8.

TABLE 8. SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY PURCHASES

Items	SBBC Schools	Charter Schools	Total
Student Laptops	64,455	5,086	69,541
Teacher Laptops	13,333	1,417	14,750
Desktops	5,051	1,712	6,763
Tablets	523	3,099	3,622
Computer Carts Trays	1,066	316	1,382
Wireless Access Points	13,166	0	13,166
Category 6 Cable Drops	12,738	0	12,738
Digital Classrooms	0	1,347	1,347
Accessories & Peripherals	0	3,394	3,394

With the replacement of Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) devices and computer batteries, the following TSSC infrastructure upgrades (to support upgrades for school networks and computer expansion) have been completed:

- Implement a new “Next Generation Firewall” at the District’s Internet perimeter;
- Improve the speed and capacity of the systems that manage and balance the Internet traffic pattern and load distribution;
- Upgrade the application-specific load balancing system;
- Improve the reliability of critical network services and systems;
- Improve the speed and capacity of the core network;
- Replace the out-of-service tape back-up system with a virtual back-up tape solution;
- Replace the existing automatic call distribution system with one that will be integrated into the District’s current voice application system;
- Relocate and build storage for offsite disaster recovery;
- Replace disk storage that supports the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system;
- Implement enhanced content filters;
- Build firewall internet capacity;
- Update data network infrastructure;
- Address the immediate need for additional storage space;
- Upgrade systems that support the Student Information System and Data Warehouse;
- Provide additional capacity to support Internet growth and security requirements;
- Replace/upgrade back-up to an enterprise solution;
- Provide additional hardware to support centralized management tools Local Area Network endpoints (laptops/desktops); and
- Replace UPS devices and computer batteries at all schools and District sites as needed.

A January 2021 independent audit of the SBBC’s compliance with its purchasing policies and requirements related to the purchase of technology devices concluded that, although the purchase of technology devices comports with the Technical Advisory Committee’s recommendations and specifications and meets budgetary requirements, the reliability of the equipment purchased was called into question.

“The SBBC purchase of Lenovo equipment (laptops and tablets) ultimately prove not to hold their initial quality several months after actual usage by students and teachers... The evidence of over 10,000 support tickets adds more credence to the notion of SBBC procuring more robust equipment going forward.”²

The current SMART Program budget allocates \$68.5 million to purchase computer devices and hardware for SBBC schools and charter schools, and to fund upgrades at the Technology and Support Service Center (TSSC) necessary to support the additional computer devices and hardware.

² HCT Certified Public Accountants and Consultants, LLC, “The School Board of Broward County, Florida, Bid #16-059E – IT Technology Devices Agreed-Upon Procedures Report,” January 22, 2021.

The current SMART Program budget for technology upgrades is \$68.5 million. A summary of SMART Program budget activity through December 31, 2021, is provided in Table 9.

TABLE 9. SMART PROGRAM TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS BUDGET ACTIVITY
(THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021)

	Original Budget	Current Budget	Prior Year Expenditures	Commitments	Current Year Expenditures	Balance
Financially Active						
GOB Funds	\$11,000,000	\$11,000,000	\$10,933,757	\$59,326	\$5,880	\$1,037
Non-GOB Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Completed/Meets Standards						
GOB Funds	\$27,489,000	\$25,825,538	\$25,825,538	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-GOB Funds	\$42,343,000	\$37,900,084	\$37,898,472	\$0	\$0	\$1,612

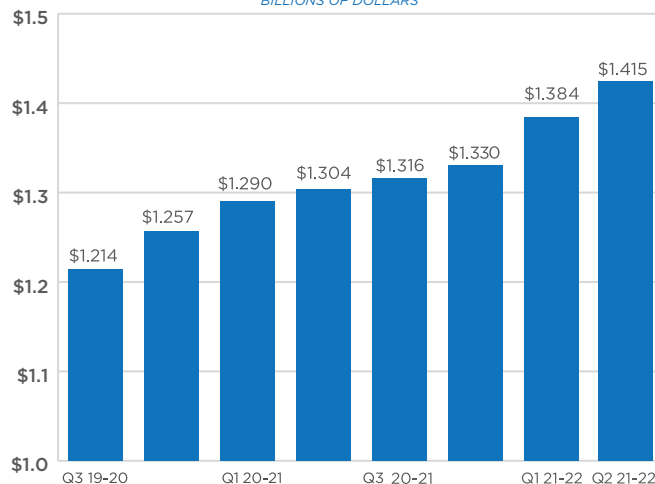
BUDGET ACTIVITY

BUDGET

The District Quarterly Report provides expenditure information for financially active projects as well as projects that have been completed. The 2020 Schedule includes SMART Program activity through the end of calendar year 2025 and possibly into 2026, which necessitates a longer financial outlook. As previously recommended by Florida TaxWatch, the District has included in the Q2 2021-22 Report SMART Program budget allocations for years 9 (FY 2022-23) through 11 (FY 2024-25).

The SMART Program total budget has increased from \$1.384 billion in Q1 2021-22 to \$1.415 billion in Q2 2021-22, a net increase of \$31.0 million (see Figure 4). This includes the \$800 million in general obligation bond (GOB) funding and \$535.0 million in non-GOB capital project funding (capital millage and impact fees). This represents an increase of about \$427.6 million over the original budget of \$987.4 million (\$800 million GOB funds plus \$187.4 million in existing capital resources).

FIG. 4 - SMART PROGRAM BUDGET CONTINUES TO INCREASE
BILLIONS OF DOLLARS



EXPENDITURES

SMART Program expenditures increased from \$715,408,081 in Q1 2021-22 to \$764,041,766 in Q2 2021-22, an increase of about \$48.6 million. The District reports a SMART Program balance (current budget minus commitments and expenditures) of \$358,701,959 at the end of Q1 2021-22.

Over the past two years, the District has spent \$423.5 million, which equates to approximately \$52.9 million per quarter or \$17.7 million per month. With an unspent balance (current budget minus expenditures) of \$651.3 million, if the District continues to spend at the current rate of \$17.7 million per month, the District will exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds in about 37 months, or in the early stages of Q1 of calendar year 2025.

This is of concern because the 2020 Schedule does not envision the completion of most of the Primary Renovations projects until the end of calendar year 2025. The possibility exists that, at the current spend/burn rate, the District may exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds well before the planned facilities construction projects have been completed. If the spend rate increases, the District may exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds sooner.

In its Q2 2020-21 report, Florida TaxWatch raised this issue and recommended that the District calculate the lifespan of remaining unexpended SMART Program funds and evaluate the possibility that the District may exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds before the planned facilities construction projects have been completed.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Florida TaxWatch reiterates its previous recommendation that District staff calculate the lifespan of remaining unexpended SMART Program funds and evaluate the possibility that the District may exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds before the planned facilities construction projects have been completed.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Florida TaxWatch reiterates its previous recommendation that, if it appears that the District may exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds before the planned facilities construction projects have been completed, District staff should be prepared to present to the Committee at its March 7, 2022, meeting the plan to make up the shortfall.

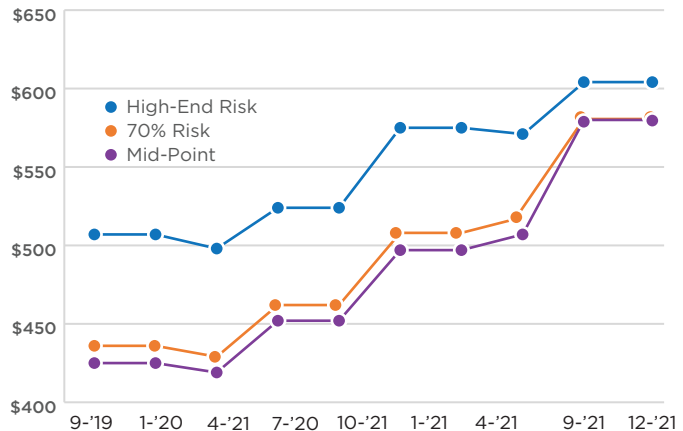
During Q2 2021-22, the SBBC approved 15 SMART Program budget amendments totaling \$31.2 million. Since inception of the SMART Program, the SBBC has approved 260 SMART Program budget amendments with a net increase of \$427.96 million.

ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL RISK

It has been previously understood that higher rates of inflation, higher roofing and mechanical/electrical/fire protection costs, and items that were excluded from the original scopes of work would increase the costs of SMART Program construction projects. The most recent (December 2021) assessment of financial risk prepared by Atkins reflects the continued escalation of financial risk.

As shown in Figure 5, the potential risk outcomes are unchanged from the September 2021 risk assessment, ranging from a low (mid-point risk) of \$580 million to a high (high end risk) of \$603 million, with a most likely estimate (70 percent risk) near \$584 million. With 71 percent of the SMART projects under contract, Atkins believes its running construction budget (RCB) base represents a more accurate risk assessment.

FIG. 5 - SMART PROGRAM FINANCIAL RISK EXCEEDS \$600 MILLION
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS



RESERVE FUNDING

Florida TaxWatch considers the issue of financial risk to be the greatest concern and controlling project costs and mitigating the additional financial risk to be the greatest challenge facing the District as SMART project implementation moves forward. The District originally set aside \$225 million (reserve) to mitigate potential funding risks in the SMART Program. In March 2020, the District authorized the issuance of \$250 million in Certificates of Participation to provide supplemental funding for SMART Program risk, \$211 million of which was placed into the SMART Program reserve. In July 2020, the SBBC approved a new SMART Program PMOR contract which had a budget impact of \$47.2 million. This amount was added to the District's reserve, increasing the total SMART Program reserve to \$483.2 million.

In September 2021, the SBBC placed in reserve an additional \$29 million to replace Building 1 at Markham Elementary School and \$46 million to cover expected SMART Program increases in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25, bringing the total amount of funds in reserve to \$558 million, which should meet only the low-end risk scenario (\$580 million) for potential SMART Program risk. The District reports a current balance of reserve funds in the amount of \$62.5 million. The SMART Program budget (reference page 345) reflects an additional \$130 million in reserve funds that will likely be needed in years 8 (current year) through 11 (FY 2024-25).

HARD COSTS VERSUS SOFT COSTS

Bond Oversight Committee members have, on more than one occasion, requested a breakdown of "hard costs" versus "soft costs" of SMART projects. "Hard costs" include tangible expenses that are directly related to the physical construction or implementation of the project's scope, and include such costs as materials, equipment, labor and supervision, etc., and typically make up about 65-75 percent of total budget. "Soft costs" include expenses that are indirectly related to the physical construction or implementation of the project's scope, and include such costs as architect and engineering fees, program management fees, furniture and fixtures, general and administrative costs, etc., and typically make up 30-35 percent of total budget.

As previously recommended by Florida TaxWatch, the District's Q2 2021-22 Facilities Report includes a breakdown of hard and soft costs for 27 schools at which construction activities had reached substantial/final completion. Although hard costs typically make up 65-70 percent of a project's total budget, the hard costs for the 27 schools identified (reference page 58) range from 62 percent (West Broward High School) to 88 percent (Cypress Run Education Center). Although soft costs typically make up 30-35 percent of a project's total budget, the soft costs for the 27 schools identified range from 12 percent (Cypress Run Education Center) to 38 percent (West Broward High School).

In previous reports, Florida TaxWatch has questioned why the hard and soft costs for the schools at which construction activities had reached substantial/final completion are outside the identified cost percentage ranges. The District reports that while the project budgets were developed with approximately 30 percent of the costs being soft costs, funds that remain unspent at the project's completion are then swept back to the SMART Program Reserve, which lowers the soft cost percentage.

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY & OUTREACH

The Supplier Diversity Outreach Program Report includes data specific to the participation of, and committed funding to, Minority/Women Business Enterprises (M/WBE), ethnic-owned business enterprises (EBEs) and small business enterprises (SBEs). This permits the reporting of historically underutilized businesses, in addition to M/WBEs, as previously recommended by Florida TaxWatch.

The District reports an E/S/M/WBE commitment of \$13.9 million during Q2 2021-22. This represents almost one-half (48 percent) of the total \$28.7 million in contracts awarded during the quarter. Through December 31, 2021, the District has issued purchase orders to E/S/M/WBEs totaling \$327.0 million. This represents a cumulative E/S/M/WBE commitment of 32 percent of the \$1.037 billion total cumulative spend. Of this \$327.0 million E/S/M/WBE commitment:

- \$9.67\$9.67 million has been awarded to E/S/M/WBE firms for Safety projects;
- \$0 has been awarded to E/S/M/WBE firms for Music and Arts projects;
- \$12,699 has been awarded to E/S/M/WBE firms for Athletics projects;
- \$317.37 million has been awarded to E/S/M/WBE firms for Renovation projects; and
- \$0 has been awarded to E/S/M/WBE firms for Technology projects.

The District reports that, as of the end of Q2 2021-22, there were 526 active E/S/M/WBE certified companies that provide commodities (supplies), construction, professional services, and business services to District schools. The 526 E/S/M/WBE certified companies are evenly divided by gender, with 259 (49 percent) female-owned companies and 267 (51 percent) male-owned companies.

- Of these 526 active E/S/M/WBE certified companies:
 - 169 (32.1 percent) are African-American owned companies;
 - 191 (36.3 percent) are Hispanic-American owned companies;
 - 24 (4.6 percent) are Asian-American owned companies;
 - 67 (12.7 percent) are non-minority SBEs; and
 - 75 (14.3 percent) are women-owned WBEs.

Table 10 compares the cumulative SMART Program spend with E/S/M/WBE certified companies to the 2015 Disparity Study and the aspirational Target Goals outlined in the District’s Policy 3330. Table 10 shows close alignment between the District’s cumulative spend and the Disparity Study; however, the District is far short of meeting the aspirational Target Goals for African-American owned businesses outlined in the District’s Policy 3330.

TABLE 10. SUPPLIER DIVERSITY CUMULATIVE SPEND ANALYSIS

Ethnicity & Gender	Disparity Study	Target Goals	Cumulative Spend
African-American	7.54%	19.00%	6.06%
Hispanic-American	59.89%	54.00%	57.36%
Native-American	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Asian-Pacific American	2.40%	5.00%	0.27%
Women Business Enterprise	30.17%	17.00%	34.53%
Small Business Enterprise	0.00%	5.00%	1.77%

Table 11 shows the total cumulative spend by ethnicity and gender. African-American-owned companies make up almost one-third of the E/S/M/WBE certified companies, yet have been awarded only 8.0 percent of the contracts. Hispanic-American-owned companies make up just more than one-third of the E/S/M/WBE certified companies and have been awarded 78.0 percent of the contracts. (Caucasian) women-owned companies make up 14.3 percent of the E/S/M/WBE certified companies and have been awarded 8.0 percent of the contracts.

TABLE 11. E/S/M/WBE COMMITMENT BY ETHNICITY AND GENDER

Ethnicity & Gender	% of E/S/W/MBEs	% of Work Awarded
African-American	32.1%	8.0%
Hispanic-American	36.3%	78.0%
Native-American	0.0%	0.0%
Asian-Pacific American	4.6%	4.0%
Non-minority SBE	12.7%	2.0%
Women Business Enterprise	14.3%	8.0%

In its Q4 2020-21 Report, Florida TaxWatch recommended District staff brief the Committee on its plan to address the over-representation of Hispanic-American businesses and under-representation of African-American owned businesses. At the September 27, 2021, Committee meeting, Mr. Ballou acknowledged that, although the District is ahead of its goal to award 30 percent or more of SMART Program contracts to E/S/M/WBE certified companies, the District needs to increase awards to African-American owned businesses.

Mr. Ballou acknowledged that the District was “not a compelling place to do business” and, as a result, many African-American owned business owners do not attend pre-bid conferences. This is significant in that “if you don’t go to a pre-bid conference, you can’t bid.” During Q2 2021-22, the District conducted nine

pre-bid meetings. The District reports that, of the 27 unique M/WBE certified firms that attended these pre-bid meetings, African-American and Women-owned firms had ten and six attendees, respectively. This is an improvement over Q1 2021-22 where, of the 21 unique M/WBE certified firms that attended seven pre-bid meetings, African-American and Women-Owned firms each had six attendees.

COMMUNICATIONS

The District's Q2 2021-22 Report highlights continued efforts to promote the SMART Program. In response to previous concerns by Florida TaxWatch and Committee members that the District was not doing enough to communicate to the taxpayers the construction delays and the reasons for the delays, the District has ramped up its efforts to notify the public of the new schedule and projected completion dates for SMART Program construction projects in their communities. Information on the 2020 schedule is available on each individual School Spotlight and on dedicated project pages on the SMART Program website.

Launched in September 2021, the District's "What SMART Means to Me" campaign is designed to educate taxpayers on the impacts of the SMART Program on Broward County residents, businesses, community organizations, municipalities, students, teachers, and parents. So far, the District reports:

- 1,515 total views of the "Moving for Education" introductory video;
- 3,324 new users visited the SMART Program website after launch of the "Moving for Education" introductory video;
- 541 views of the of the "Moving for Education" introductory video on the SMART Program website; and
- 974 views of the of the "Moving for Education" introductory video across all social media platforms.

The District continues to use virtual meetings and presentations to keep taxpayers informed and held community outreach events at:

- James S. Rickards Middle School (to present replacement options);
- City of Oakland Park Commission (to discuss the status of SMART Program projects at schools within the city); and
- North Lauderdale PK-8 project update meeting (to discuss scope of work and status).

At the end of each Committee meeting, the business portion of the meeting is temporarily suspended to conduct a public hearing. No members of the public spoke at the December 13, 2021, meeting; however, at the September 27, 2021 Committee meeting, members heard from the Chair and Vice Chair of the Facilities Task Force who expressed concerns that:

- The Committee was meeting too often at the District's administration building, and not "around the District;"
- The School Spotlight for Oakridge Elementary School is not transparent and fails to accurately convey the status of the Primary Renovations project;

-
- New Committee members could benefit from being brought to speed on how Maximo and e-Builder can better support the District's capital program;
 - Buildings other than Rickards Middle School and the four buildings with similar designs may have suffered structural damage;
 - The tracks that were resurfaced were six lanes instead of eight, which are required by the State Requirement for Educational Facilities to conduct regional track meets;
 - The projected shortfall in reserve funds; and
 - Some project scopes are questionable

Committee members requested to be provided copies of the District's response to public comments made at the September 27, 2021, Committee meeting and requested assurance that the District's response was made available to those who commented. In its Q2 2021-22 Report (reference page 52), the District responded to two of the public comments. In response to the concern that the School Spotlight for the Primary Renovations at Oakridge Elementary School is not transparent and fails to accurately convey the status of the Primary Renovations project, the District referred the commenter to the School Spotlight contained in the Q2 2021-22 Report. In response to the question whether any additional buildings had suffered structural damage, the District responded that the SBBC has directed the development of a Request for Proposals to procure a consultant.

It is unclear whether the District provided separate responses to the commenters and to Committee members. It is also unclear why the District chose to respond to only these two comments. Regardless, Florida TaxWatch considers the District's efforts to respond to the public comments to be both untimely and non-responsive.

RECOMMENDATION 10

Florida TaxWatch recommends that, in the event copies of the District's response to the public comments made at the September 27, 2021, Committee meeting have not been distributed to Committee members and those making the comments, District staff should provide the requested information at the March 7, 2022, Committee meeting.

In its Q1 2021-22 Report to the Committee, Florida TaxWatch made 14 recommendations, seven of which were addressed by the District (reference pages 49-52). Florida TaxWatch thinks the current practice of waiting two months or longer to respond to select TaxWatch recommendations, Committee member requests, and public comments is both untimely and non-responsive.

RECOMMENDATION 11

Florida TaxWatch recommends the District's response to TaxWatch recommendations, Committee member requests, and public comments be in writing and within a reasonable period of time (e.g., two weeks).

LOOKING AHEAD

The District continues to make progress in implementing the SMART Program. The Technology, Music and Arts, and Athletics spend portions of the SMART Program have been completed. More than 90,000 computing devices have been purchased, bringing the ratio of students-to-computers to 2:1, well below the adopted standard of 3.5 students per computer. Numerous “back office” upgrades to the Technology Support Services Center have been implemented to support these new devices. The District has upped its investment in the Arts, with the purchase of more than 60,000 pieces of musical equipment, more than 130 kilns, and theater program upgrades at 39 schools. Athletic tracks have been resurfaced at 15 schools and 30 high schools have received new weight rooms.

The District continues its efforts to ensure participation by Minority/Women Business Enterprises (M/WBE), ethnic-owned business enterprises (EBEs) and small business enterprises (SBEs) that provide commodities (supplies), construction, professional services, and business services to District schools. Hispanic-American owned businesses and Women-owned businesses are over-represented and African-American owned businesses are under-represented. Although effort has been made to increase attendance at and participation in pre-bid meetings by African-American owned firms, more effort will be required to address these inequities.

Despite this progress, the District will have to face several challenges going forward. The first challenge is controlling costs. Florida TaxWatch considers controlling project costs and mitigating the additional financial risk to be the greatest challenge facing the District as SMART Program implementation moves forward. When we talk about “financial risk” we are talking about the potential for increases to the SMART Program budget and projected costs.

The SMART Program budget has increased from \$987.4 million to \$1.415 billion, an increase of about \$428 million over the original budget. Every dollar above the \$987.4 million originally allocated to the SMART Program represents a dollar of additional risk, and comes from capital millage, impact fees, state funds (e.g., Public Education Capital Outlay), and other sources, which have specific restrictions and spending limitations, or which were intended to be spent on other projects.

After a period of relative stability, the potential financial risk has continued to increase, with outcomes ranging from a low (mid-point risk) of \$580 million to a high (high end risk) of \$603 million, with a most likely estimate (70 percent risk) near \$584 million. The District has set aside \$558 million in reserve to mitigate the SMART Program’s financial risk, which should meet only the low end risk scenario (\$580 million) for potential SMART Program risk. Should the financial risk continue to escalate, the District will be required to increase the amount of money placed into reserve. The SMART Program budget includes an additional \$130 million expected to be placed in reserve for years 8 (current year) through 11 (FY 2024-25).

There is also the question of whether the unexpended balance of the SMART Program funds is sufficient to permit the completion of the planned construction projects. If the District continues to spend at the current rate of about \$17.7 million per month, the District will exhaust the remaining unspent SMART Program funds about one year before the completion of most of the Primary Renovations projects.

The second challenge is maintaining the schedule and scopes of work. The 2020 Schedule reset reflects the completion of the planned facilities construction projects late in calendar year 2025 or early in calendar year 2026, approximately three years after the planned completion milestones in the 2018 schedule. The fact that 27 Primary Renovations projects have been flagged for schedule delays should give Broward taxpayers continued cause for concern. The District has identified 12 Primary Renovations projects as being at a “high level of risk” and requiring further analysis to be performed to determine whether additional redesign or other changes are required. Taxpayers should take comfort in the fact that 242 of the 281 Primary Renovations projects have passed out of the Design Phase, where past delays have been the most prevalent.

The reasons for these continued delays are well-documented. Florida TaxWatch thinks it is unrealistic to think the planned facilities construction projects will remain on schedule absent immediate actions by the SBBC to reduce the amount of time between contract award and authorization to proceed; reduce the multiple trips to the building department required before approval is received; and reduce the amount of time required to approve change orders.

A final challenge is resetting the expectations of Broward County taxpayers, who will now learn that, with the adoption of the 2020 Schedule, the completion dates for many of the Primary Renovations projects at schools where they work or where their children attend school will be pushed back several years. The District has acknowledged the need to communicate the 2020 Schedule to the public and to help them understand what has happened and to reset their expectations going forward.

In this report, Florida TaxWatch has offered recommendations to help guide the Bond Oversight Committee in its oversight of the implementation of the SMART Program, and to ensure that public’s right-to-know how the taxpayer-approved General Obligation Bond funds are being spent is well-served. Florida TaxWatch looks forward to presenting the results of its review to the Committee and the public, and to providing continued support and guidance as the Bond Oversight Committee continues its effective oversight of SMART Program implementation.

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As an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit taxpayer research institute and government watchdog, it is the mission of Florida TaxWatch to provide the citizens of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and analysis of issues related to state and local government taxation, expenditures, policies, and programs. Florida TaxWatch works to improve the productivity and accountability of Florida government. Its research recommends productivity enhancements and explains the statewide impact of fiscal and economic policies and practices on citizens and businesses.

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