

important to the facilitation of school and community participation. Better involvement of more school and community individuals, groups, and associations will help ensure more consistent support and commitment to the district.

BPS does not have a formal process for involving community members and district employees in the budget development process. Interviews indicate the school staff is not involved or consulted for input with the budget process. As such, the budget is developed in isolation and has little support from these stakeholders. Involving these groups in budget development would help to ensure an understanding of and support for the adopted budget.

A public hearing is not held prior to approving the budget. The practice has been that the School Board adopts the budget at a regular board meeting or at a special board meeting called for that purpose.

BPS has an opportunity to strengthen its standing in the local community. Greater visibility would encourage more universal support for district initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

Establish a budgetary process that is timely, easily understood, and communicated throughout the district.

The superintendent and School Board should adopt and publish an annual budget calendar and create a budgetary advisory committee. The budgetary process and timeline should be communicated throughout the district in order to create a sense of openness and transparency. Budget discussions for the upcoming school year should begin early in the spring semester at the latest. Budget discussions should include opportunities for input from district and community stakeholders. Posting the budgetary process, timeline, and documents in public places and newsletters will also facilitate better communication, understanding, and support of the adopted budget. A sample budget calendar, developed from one in use by a district of similar size to BPS, is provided in **Exhibit 3-17**. Each year, the district adjusts these dates by one or two days to match the new work calendar, but the process typically follows this schedule.