

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

February 15, 2007

The Board of Education of Howard County held Public Work Session III on the Superintendent's Proposed Operating Budget on Thursday, February 15, 2007, at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Department of Education, located at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland. The following were present:

Diane Mikulis, Chairman
Frank Aquino, Vice Chairman
Lawrence Cohen
Sandra French
Ellen Giles
Patricia Gordon

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent
Raymond Brown, Chief Operating Officer

Mrs. Mikulis called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Program 6101 – Pupil Personnel Services

- Statistics on truancy went down, but other areas went up which shows the school system is dealing with more issues.
- An additional pupil personnel worker for high-needs schools is requested.

Program 6103 – Teenage Parenting & Child Care – Pupil Personnel

- Wilde Lake HS is the only school with this program.
- Maryland State Department of Social Services discontinued funding for this program.

Program 6401 – Health Services

- Nurses and health assistants cannot make a diagnosis, but they can bring a health concern to a parent or guardian and suggest outside medical interventions.
- Schools have plans in place to address the situation of dispensing medication when a health assistant is absent.
- There are substitute, float pool, and permanent nurses available to substitute.
 - Staff members can be trained to administer medications, but there are treatments that cannot be delegated to an assistant. A nurse must travel to schools to do those when there is an absence.

Approved – April 12, 2007

Program 3320 – Countywide Services Special Education

- A coordinator position for Learning Disabled and Attention Deficit/Hyper Activity Disorder is needed.
- A committee is looking to focus on early identification of students with learning disabilities and AD/HD.
 - The committee will identify tools, delivery of services, and strategies for general and special education educators to use.
- The Special Education budget is 12.2% but this does not include federal and state grants.
- Thirty to forty students use expensive functional communication devices.

Program 3321 – Special Education School-Based Services

- The salary for student assistants is \$13,800 per year.
- Ten percent of the school system's enrollment uses special education services.

Program 3322 – Cedar Lane Program

- The Cedar Lane program has exceeded everyone's expectations in terms of inclusion.
 - It is a model for the nation, and the results speak for themselves.

Program 3323 – Bridges Program at Homewood

- Students go in and out of the program throughout the year, but the number, in the course of the year, is 65.
- A large number of students have gone beyond the Bridges program to outside placement.

Program 3324 – Regional Early Childhood Services

- A new program will be opening up at Veterans ES.
- Services have been provided since 2001, and the program continues to expand.
- Children in this program have individual education plans.
- Some parents prefer their child be in an environment where there are more general education students.
- There are a full range of preschool options available to parents, including the PALS program where the parents choose the preschool and services are provided there by HCPSS staff.
- There are more costs associated with providing more services and expansion of the program.
- Staff will provide information on the number of children who have received Applied Behavior Analysis services over the years.

- Depending on the need, children in the Multiple Intense Needs classes (MINC) are provided one-on-one service.

Program 3325 – Speech, Language, and Hearing Services

- The program continues to grow along with the need for speech and language teachers.
- Human Resources office is looking at options.
 - Agencies are also used.
- Bilingual evaluators are used to help students with language problems and also assess their overall abilities.

Program 3326 - Special Education Summer Services

- Consultants are used over the summer for continuity of services when they have worked with the student during the school year.

Program 3328 - Nonpublic and Community Intervention

- Examples are programs for the mentally retarded, hearing impaired, speech and language, visually impaired, orthopedically impaired, learning disabled, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, and autism.
 - The highest number in schools is children with autism.
 - The fees associated with these services range from over \$156,000 per student to as low as \$25,000. The average cost is \$33,165 per student, and a specialized program averages \$50,000 per student.
- Funding from the state and federal government is limited.

Program 3330 - Special Education Central Office

- Support staff is provided in schools to ensure that children diagnosed with LD/ADHD receive the same services, and there is consistency across the county.
- Identification of students with LD/ADHD is being addressed.
- Focus is on resources and interventions in the schools.
- Contact person needed for parents to address a particular issue or question.
- Goal is to use a problem-solving team to address a variety of student needs.

Program 3390 - Home and Hospital

- One-hundred-thirty-seven students are being serviced on home and hospital, and twelve referrals are currently being worked on.
- They are reviewed every 30 days, and by state law they need to be verified by a physician. The average range of time a student is in the program is anywhere from three weeks to three months but it can be more.
- Sixty-four teachers are currently on the roster.

Program 8001 - Fixed charges

- This program funds employee benefits and other operating costs.
- \$2.4 million is payment for workers compensation.
- Nothing was spent in 2005 and 2006 from the Board's contingency fund.

Mrs. Mikulis noted that the Board will hold a public work session on February 20, 2007, and adoption of the Superintendent's proposed budget will be February 27, 2007, at 9 a.m.

Adjournment: The Chairman adjourned the work session at 7:24 p.m.