

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

January 29, 2008

The Board of Education of Howard County held Public Work Session I on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget on January 10, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Department of Education, located at 10910 Route 108, Ellicott City, Maryland. The following were present:

Frank J. Aquino, Chairman
Ellen Flynn Giles, Vice Chairman
Lawrence H. Cohen
Sandra H. French
Patricia S. Gordon
Diane B. Mikulis
Janet Siddiqui, M.D.

Sydney L. Cousin, Superintendent, Secretary/Treasurer
Sandra Erickson, Deputy Superintendent
Patti Caplan, Director, Public Relations
Florence Jackson, Recording Secretary

Chairman Frank Aquino called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., and Mr. Cohen let the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Revenues

- Increase in revenue projections for state funding for FY 2009 of \$8.1 million.
- Recommended budget additions/changes in priority order have been developed in response to this increase.
- Increased enrollment in summer school results in a decrease in revenue due to the number of students receiving scholarships or subsidies to attend programs.
- Non-resident tuition is highly variable revenue and has been projected conservatively.
- Staff is confident with the \$1.4 million projected investment revenue indicated for FY 2009, which may increase to between \$1.5 million and \$1.7 million.
- The Fund Balance/Transportation carryover amount includes \$797,000 for transportation, which is unencumbered against expenses.

Approved – February 21, 2008

- Bank of America is the primary funding source for investments, which are made in short-term overnight funds. Government-backed investments are very safe and liquid investments that could be used to cover a particular payroll if necessary.
- The wide range of HCPSS academic interventions would not be possible without additional funds provided by the Thornton legislation.
- Thornton money is provided based on a formula, which has just recently changed, and staff has checks and balances to determine if the correct funding is being received.
- Gate receipts are projected by the Athletics office, which estimates a substantial increase in FY 2009.
- Conservative estimates are used to determine Miscellaneous Revenues, which include closed purchase orders, funds that were encumbered but not spent, etc.

Instruction

- Staff provided information on the history of teacher headcounts and staffing.
- Mrs. French suggested a way to show staffing on budget category pages to better indicate allocations.
- Travel reimbursement mileage has been moved to Program 32 for more efficient and effective oversight.

Program 0601 – Art

- Funds for substitute teachers provide the opportunity for art teachers to take students on field trips as part of the essential curriculum.
- Reductions in supplies and materials are a result of decreased projections in enrollment at the high school level for particular art courses.
- Consulting fees are used for college staff to provide feedback on high school students' art work, which is then selected for the Senior Art Show.
- Decreases in projected enrollment for art classes is a result of more accurate accounting.

Program 0701 – Elementary Programs

- Program area includes resources to support many intervention activities.
- Local support has been increased for intervention programs.
- Staff has an additional recommendation to move three elementary staff positions from elementary staffing to this program for additional math support teachers.
- Funding request includes projected growth in the number of schools participating in the Simulated Congressional Hearings. Additional funds may be requested in FY 2010 to accommodate every elementary school program.

Program 0801 – Business & Computer Management Systems

- Decrease in projected enrollment is due to Software Applications I no longer being calculated as a technology education graduation requirement.

Program 0901 – Language Arts

- Amount of \$30,480 for middle school students performing below grade level will support pay for teachers to actually work with students.
- Funds to support instruction in plagiarism prevention to high school students provide a resource to help students with writing research and other types of papers. Students receive instruction on how to use the program.
- If the recommended high school staffing formula is approved, 12 positions will be moved from this program to high school staffing. Co-teaching positions will remain in this program.
- The co-teaching model is expanding but does not always require additional positions.

Program 1001 – World Languages

- Most students who enroll in a foreign language in middle school continue instruction from seventh to eighth grade. Some students choose a different language at the high school level.
- HCPSS is working with Howard Community College (HCC) to identify ways in which HCPSS and HCC staff can work collaboratively in the high schools to provide opportunities to participate in more programs.
- Demand appears to be growing for the variety of world languages offered by HCPSS.
- The school system has been successful in finding and retaining foreign language teachers, although a challenge area is finding teachers who can provide instruction in both French and Spanish.

- A successful sign language program is also taught at Howard HS.
- Staff has developed a scheduling model to help ensure that students in middle school taking foreign language classes would also have opportunities to take related arts classes.
- Some students are also picking up second or third languages in high school, which will influence enrollment figures for Level One classes.

Program 1002 – English for Speakers of Other Languages

- Increase of 10.5 teaching positions is related directly to projected enrollment.
- A Federal Title III grant also provides positions, but continued funding does not look particularly favorable at this point. Staff is continuing to check with the state regarding this issue.

Program 1101 – Health Education

- Budget for this program continues the current level of service in FY 2009.

Program 1201 – Technology Education

- Budget includes funds for additional classes needed to meet new technology education requirements.

Program 1301 – Kindergarten/Prekindergarten

- The Judith P. Hoyer grant will no longer fund staffing for prekindergarten.
- Reduction in staff is directly related to projected FY 2009 enrollment for full-day kindergarten.

Program 1401 – Mathematics

- Two additional MIST (math instructional support teachers) positions will be allocated to Bonnie Branch and Dunloggin middle schools.
- Staff is also recommending the addition of a MIST position for Patapsco MS.
- The reduction of 12 teaching positions in this program will be added to the high school staffing page, if the Board approves the new high school staffing formula.

Program 1501 – Media and Educational Technology

- Regarding the new audiovisual equipment replacement cycle, a standard equipment inventory has been developed, which will determine priorities.
- Funds are included for one additional elementary technology teacher position for enrollment growth.

- Staff is recommending an additional increase of \$100,000 for replacement of AV equipment.
- Staff is also recommending ten additional positions for technology teachers at the middle school level, with the goal of providing one technology teacher per middle school in the future.

Program 1601 – Music

- Staff is working on the development of a replacement cycle for musical equipment for the FY 2010 budget.
- Currently, funds are included in supplies and repair of equipment to address replacements of musical instruments on an as-needed basis.
- A three-year cycle was developed last year that will provide data on the sufficiency of replacement funds.

Program 1701 – Physical Education and Dance

- Contracted services are used for inspection of weight-training equipment.
- Athletics handles training and certification for coaches. Physical education provides a type of certification program for new teachers based on the weight-training curriculum and best practices.

Program 1801 – Reading

- Contracted labor provides teacher training for the SpellRead intervention program as well as Junior Great Books training. Training takes place over the summer months.
- The success of the Reading Recovery Program warrants expansion when budget funds are available.
- Staff recommends that three reading support teachers be moved into this program from elementary school staffing.

Program 1901 – Science

- Students enrolled in two science classes in one year are counted twice in the enrollment figures.

Program 2001 – Social Studies

- Funds in the Transportation Category are used to transport students back and forth to academic events and competitions.
- Funds are included in this budget for workshop wages for teachers to provide services to students after school for those who fail high school assessments.

Program 2201 – Theater

- Equipment funds are used specifically for theater sound equipment.
- Groups renting auditoriums pay a usage fee, and student technicians provide technical services.
- Budget includes funds to replace theater equipment at Long Reach, Mt. Hebron, and Reservoir high schools in FY 2009, as part of a replacement cycle in the high schools.
- Funds for contracted services help pay for consultants and professionals who work with students on the Howard County Student Theater Festival.

Program 2301 – Gifted and Talented

- The GT program officially starts in elementary school at the second-grade level. Some students receive curriculum extension units in first grade, depending on the school and the needs of the school and students.
- HCPSS is number one in the nation in terms of number of students enrolled in AP programs and also the success of students on AP exams.
- The number of AP classes offered varies from school to school but exceeds the requirement of four classes at each high school.
- AP enrollment in the last few years has typically increased as much as 200 students per year.
- Staff recommends that 24 high school teaching positions be moved from this program to the general high school staffing budget without any reduction to the full complement of gifted and talented program courses.
- Budget includes funding to cover approximately 2,150 textbooks for students. One textbook is selected for the county for students who participate in fourth- and fifth-grade GT math. Additionally, approximately 120 teacher editions would be allocated for that textbook series.
- Increased staffing for GT programs at smaller elementary schools has been very effective, and more diverse students are now enrolled and participating at the middle school level.

Program 2401 – Summer School

- No decline in services is planned. Funding for summer programs is also included in Program 3501 – Academic Intervention.

Program 3010 – Elementary Staffing

- Staff is recommending that six positions be moved to other programs (reading and math) due to projected enrollment figures.

Program 3020 – Middle School Staffing

- No changes are recommended for the middle school staffing formula, and 51 positions are allocated in the staffing pool to cover increases in enrollment that are not projected.

Program 3030 – High School Staffing

- Staff is recommending a change to the high school staffing formula and will provide updated information to the Board based on a 27:1 staffing ratio.

Program 3201 – Other Regular Programs

- The staffing pool consists of 51 positions reserved for use as enrollments fluctuate through the school year.
- No salary increases are recommended for substitute teachers. Increases were included in the FY 2008 budget.
- Funding in Travel-Conferences is designated for teachers as part of the HCEA (Howard County Educators Association) contract. Individual schools determine how to spend their allocations.
- This budget adds funds to begin a replacement cycle for school equipment and furniture in the following areas: classroom, administrative, appliances, cafetorium, media center, gymnasium, and athletic fields.
- Staff is recommending an additional \$300,000 for equipment replacement.

Recess: The meeting was recessed by the Chairman at 9:15 p.m. and reconvened at 9:25 p.m.

Program 3205 – Junior Reserve Officers Training (ROTC)

- Although additional schools have requested JROTC programs, the program is federally funded in part, and the government is diverting money to other areas.
- HCPSS subsidizes salaries for staff and transportation for students to attend competitions.
- Any movement of a program from one school to another would have to be requested by the administration and approved by the federal government.
- Statistics on the number of out-of-district students enrolled in JROTC programs are kept by staff in the Student Reassignment office.

Program 3401 – Saturday/Evening School

- Enrollment numbers are declining partly due to efforts to limit extended suspensions.

- Evening school consists of two components: one for students serving long-term suspensions and one where students can now enroll in original credit courses that are taken in the evening.
- Some students are taking one additional credit class in the evening, in addition to their regular school day, in order to graduate in a more timely fashion.

Program 3401 – Homewood Center

- Enrollment figures represent an estimate of the number of students who attend school in any of the Homewood Center programs at any time during the school year.
- Contracted services in the amount of \$60,000 was added to the FY 2008 budget to support the community counseling program, which allows staff at Homewood to bring in counselors who work in community agencies and deliver services to students on site. Funds for counseling services were previously provided by the Children's Board.
- The Homewood Center employs social services staff, psychologists, and psychiatrists. Funding for psychiatric services is included in the Special Education budget.

Program 3403 – Alternative In-School Programs

- The school system has 30 schools with alternative in-school programs (12 elementary, 10 middle, and 8 high schools).
- Redistricting sometimes affects the consistency and equity of programs in cluster schools.

Program 3501 – Academic Intervention Services

- Transition assistants are full-time staff placed in middle and high schools who work with a caseload of about 15 to 20 students.
- Academic mentors work at the elementary level and are contracted hourly positions.

Program 3701 – Career Connections

- At the elementary level, this program operates through the guidance office.

Program 3801 – Centralized Career Academies

- Several programs are offered at the ARL (Applications Research Laboratory). These programs prepare students both for college and the world of work.

Program 4401 – Family and Consumer Sciences

- Some funds are being moved from supplies to support equipment needs of the Culinary Academy.

Program 5601 – School Counseling

- Counselors are being added for enrollment growth at Howard and Marriotts Ridge high schools.

Program 5701 – Psychological Services

- Each high school has at least one part-time psychologist.
- Some schools have additional positions due to specialized programs.
- Contracted labor provides three full-time interns each year, and approximately 80 percent are retained as staff members.

Program 8601 – Interscholastic Athletics

- Gate receipt revenues are expected to increase by approximately \$50,000.
- Uniforms are provided on a rotating basis for all students.
- Funding to support the Athletic Program is also included in Program 8601 - Health Services.

Program 8601 – Health Services

- Budget provides funding for 12 certified athletic trainers, who work approximately 20 to 25 hours per week.
- The Athletics office is working with other staff to comply with new COMAR regulations regarding defibrillator training.
- The goal of staff is to train ten percent of personnel at every school in CPR.

Program 8701 - Intramurals

- Intramural programs at the middle school level are coordinated by either the principal, assistant principal, or a volunteer teacher.
- No stipend is provided for coordination of the intramural program.
- On average, each school has a 50-percent participation rate.
- Schools are creative in meeting the needs of their various populations and have not indicated this area as a priority for additional financial support at this point.
- Some schools are also offering academic intervention and other programs in addition to intramurals.

Program 8801 - Cocurricular Activities

No discussion.

Budget Schedule

Public Work Session II on the FY 2009 Proposed Operating Budget is scheduled for Tuesday, February 5, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. Categories to be reviewed are Operation of Plant, Maintenance, Community Services, Transportation, Administration, Mid-Level Administration, Capital Outlay, Fixed Charges, and Restricted Funds.

Budget information is also available on the school system's website at www.hcpss.org.

Adjournment: - The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 10:10 p.m.