

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

February 19, 2008

The Board of Education of Howard County held Public Work Session III on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2009 Operating Budget on Tuesday, February 19, 2008, at 1:00 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
Barbara Bowers, Recording Secretary

Chairman Frank Aquino called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and Mrs. French led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Operating Budget Review Committee (OBRC) Presentation

Mr. Michael Klatzkin, OBRC Chairman, presented a report to the Board on activities of the committee. The report contained information to assist the Board in completing the budget approval. The committee intends to develop a set of recommendations regarding the budget and budget process to present to the Board within the next two months. Mr. Klatzkin expressed appreciation to staff for their help with the committee.

Mr. Klatzkin provided information on OBRC recommendations for the following items contained in the FY 2009 Proposed Operating Budget:

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Mid-Level Administration:

- ◇ Leadership Interns
- ◇ LD/ADHD Effort
- ◇ Residency Investigative Services
- Instruction:
 - ◇ High School Staffing Ratio
 - ◇ Middle School Technology Teachers
- Special Education:
 - ◇ Student Assistants in favor of Temporary Employees
- Administration:
 - ◇ Communications Audit
 - ◇ Help Desk Personnel
- Health:
 - ◇ Fulfillment of the Cluster Nurse (1 for every 2 schools) Initiative
- Pupil Personnel:
 - ◇ Staffing Increase Due to Changing Demographics
- Community Services:
 - ◇ Support Two Interns Added in Student Services
- Technology:
 - ◇ Support Funding Requests for Technology in Programs 1201, 2701, 7201, 7701, 9713, 9714, and 7201.

Items for Special Consideration:

Life Cycle Replacement – Supported the adherence to a policy of life cycle replacement that will increase effectiveness of capital and operating resources while limiting unexpected costs.

Technology – Encouraged continuation of the increased implementation of replacement and maintenance cycles for technology.

Building and Plant Maintenance – Supported the significant increase in this area, which reflects a long overdue allocation of funding to offset years of reductions and deferrals necessitated by the need for student seats.

Audiovisual (Instruction Program 1501) – Applauded the move toward replacement cycle funding for audiovisual equipment and maintenance contracts.

Board members expressed appreciation to the members of the OBRC and encouraged the committee to present testimony to the County Council and County Executive in support of the budget.

Mr. Aquino recognized the OBRC Committee Members and thanked them for their time in performing this valuable service for the school system.

OBRC Committee Members

Mr. Jay Blackman
Ms. Ann DeLacy
Mr. Ron Ferguson
Mr. Ron Giles
Mr. Michael Goins
Ms. Mary Jane Grauso
Mr. Thomas Grobicki
Mr. James Hackett
Mr. Ken Jennings
Ms. Jackie Klamerus
Mr. Michael Klatzkin
Mr. Ted Mallo
Ms. Jackie McNamara
Mr. Dennis Miller
Ms. Feli Sola-Carter
Mr. Larry Walker
Mr. Richard Wilson

Pupil Personnel

Program 6101 – Pupil Personnel Services

- Through new teacher orientation, staff is provided child abuse neglect training, and training is also provided for bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, and any other employees who interact with children.
- Pupil Personnel Workers (PPWs) are involved with school attendance committees to help with efforts to decrease truancy.
- The addition of two PPWs will be utilized to help schools with high needs.
- The designation of homeless status of students is determined under provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act, and staff follows through to ensure that records are current.
- Enrollment is increasing in all categories, which should be reviewed to determine that necessary resources are being provided.
- Home and Hospital Services helps keep students on track and provides direction and support to children and their families.

Program 6102 – Student Accounting Services

No Discussion

Program 6103 - Teenage Parenting and Childcare

- A fee of approximately \$50 per month is paid by enrolled mothers to cover everyday consumable supplies for the babies. These funds are used to supplement money included in the budget for supplies and materials.
- Occasionally there is a waiting list for teenage parents to participate in the program at Wilde Lake HS, but all efforts are made to provide services to anyone in need.
- Some students are serviced through outreach programs, and there does not appear to be a need for an additional facility on the east side of the county at this time.
- Much of the outreach efforts are directed at pregnant students rather than parenting students.
- Approximately 95 to 97 percent of students who participate in the program at Wilde Lake earn their high school diplomas.
- Information will be provided to the Board regarding the percentage of students who graduate without participating in the Wilde Lake program.

Health

Program 6401 – Health Services

- A recent recommendation would add one nurse and two health assistants.
- Nursing treatments are assigned to nurses by the Board of Nursing and can be delegated to health assistants with proper training.
- Last year, 33,431 nursing treatments were administered. Treatments are growing by over 2,000 per year.
- All nurses are trained to provide CPR and AED (automated external defibrillator) training, and at least two classes per year are offered for school staff.

Special Education

Program 3320 – Countywide Services

- Most staff positions are school based, but approximately 34 positions are allocated to the County Diagnostic Center.
- Fluctuations in funds for textbooks are due to year-end spending to provide and expand additional resources.

- Community-based preschools serve approximately 90 students throughout the county and has been increasing each year.
- A very successful pilot program was instituted in 2007 that included more students with more significant needs. Staff is looking at how to better provide services within community settings.

Program 3321 - Special Education School-Based Services

- A new proposal recommends adding two support teachers.
- Currently 24 high school students participate in the Howard Community College (HCC) Community Connections Program. Enrollment is expected to increase to 28 to 30 students next year.
- Last year, 52 students participated in programs at the ARL (43 students with IEP plans and 21 students with 504 plans).

Program 3322 – Cedar Lane Program

- This program is designed to accommodate up to 120 children to provide services that cannot be received at their home schools.
- HCPSS is unique in the state in providing a continuity of services for children over their lifetime in the school system and allowing students to stay in their homes and communities.
- Teachers are adapting materials and using computer programs to help students prepare for the Alternate Maryland School Assessment (state-mandated testing).

Program 3323 – Bridges Program at Homewood

- HCPSS still has students enrolled in the Strawbridge Program, which serves lower functioning students who need a combination of both instruction and vocational education. The Bridges Program has very limited vocational opportunities.
- Students who have emotional problems but are not considered educationally handicapped are served in either their home schools or through Home and Hospital teaching services.

Program 3324 - Regional Early Childhood Services

- RECC (Regional Early Childhood Centers) programs operate in 20 elementary schools.
- Currently there are approximately 20 MINC (multiple intensive needs classes) programs for preschoolers and 9 programs for toddlers. MINC classes operate through RECC programs.
- Last year an early learner pilot program was added to six RECC programs and is primarily focused on ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis).
- Consulting fees are used to provide ABA training to teachers.

- The population of autistic children continues to grow, and new screening methods are resulting in earlier diagnoses.

Program 3325 – Speech, Language, and Hearing Services

- Contracted labor has been reduced over the years through Human Resources efforts by offering stipends and part-time positions for speech pathologists.
- Yearly stipends are available for speech pathologists who have a Certificate of Clinical Competence.
- Speech-language pathology assistants work under the direction of certified speech pathologists.

Program 3326 – Special Education Summer Services

- Contracted labor pays for ESY (extended school year) services that cannot be provided through HCPSS.
- Approximately 1,000 students participate in ESY programs over the summer months.

Program 3328 – Nonpublic and Community Intervention

- There are approximately 28 different sites where students can receive services that cannot be implemented in public school settings.
- Students generally spend a couple years in nonpublic placements, and reviews are conducted throughout the year to determine when students can return to HCPSS.
- Funds are included in this program for students placed in the Strawbridge program.
- Increased legal fees are related to the absorption of 504 hearings.
- An analysis of programs for children with autism revealed that it costs more to provide some of the services in the county as opposed to sending children out of Howard County for services.
- Staff was asked to provide a written explanation to the Board on the state funding formula for this category.

Program 3320 - Special Education Central Office

- A computer trainer provides training to all staff in the use of the new IEP system that was recently implemented.

Program 3390 - Home and Hospital

- Approximately 40 to 50 students are referred to this program for emotional reasons.
- Staff was asked to provide data on the number of emotionally fragile students being served who are not also special education

students, as well as the number of special education students who are out of school for emotional reasons.

- Home and Hospital teachers receive salary and mileage reimbursement but do not receive benefits.
- Board members asked that information be included on the number of students served and the number of personnel providing services.

Recess: The meeting was recessed by the Chairman at 2:50 p.m. and reconvened at 3:00 p.m.

Capital Outlay

Program 0202 - School Construction

- Staff will present a report on various alternatives related to the use of the old Cedar Lane School in the near future.
- Discussions with county officials are still taking place regarding the status of a maintenance/warehouse facility for joint use. Currently no site has been identified.
- Schematic design documents for the Mt. Hebron HS renovation will be presented to the Board in April, and the FY 2010 budget can be changed to reflect actual costs if necessary.

Other Issues

Transportation

Staff provided an explanation of the addition of four bus drivers in the transportation budget to address needs for substitute drivers. At this time, there is no long-term commitment for the school system to own a fleet of buses and provide drivers to operate the buses. This issue requires additional study. Excess funds from last year's transportation budget could be used to purchase two buses for the school system if the four positions for bus drivers are approved by the Board. These buses and drivers would allow for flexibility in addressing transportation issues as needed.

High School Staffing

Board members suggested adding information to the high school staffing page to explain the recommendation to change the staffing ratio and how it affects the budget.

Middle School Technology Teachers

Staff intends to provide a technology teacher in every school, but it is necessary to study how middle school staffing is being used right now in order to develop a plan similar to high school staffing.

Alternative In-School Programs

No additional alternative learning programs have been added for any schools in FY 2009 because staff feels that many needs can be met through other programs such as PBIS (positive behavior intervention and supports).

Adjustment of Technology Chargeback

A new position for technology increases the cost of the technology fund, which is then charged back to various categories.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 3:35 p.m.