

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HOWARD COUNTY

February 5, 2009

The Board of Education of Howard County held Public Work Session I on the Superintendent's Proposed FY 2010 Operating Budget on Thursday, February 5, 2009, 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, Esq., Chairman
Ellen Flynn Giles, Vice Chairman
Lawrence H. Cohen
Allen Dyer, Esq.
Sandra H. French (arrived at 7:28 p.m.)
Patricia S. Gordon
Janet Siddiqui, M.D.

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

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

Work Session I

Revenues:

Mr. Ray Brown, Chief Financial Officer, explained that the Superintendent's recommended budget is modest in terms of a 0.3 percent increase and was based on the assumption that an additional \$3.5 million would be received in state revenue. When the Governor's budget was announced, changes were made in the formula grants, also known as Bridge to Excellence (BTE) Act or Thornton. Mr. Brown further explained how those changes will impact the school system's budget proposal, and due to these changes, there is a \$4.5 million shortfall of anticipated revenue in the Superintendent's budget proposal to the Board. It is unknown at this time whether or not HCPSS will receive funds from a potential federal stimulus package.

Instruction:Program 0601 - Art

- Slight increases are reflected in Materials of Instruction, which are critical to the classroom.

Program 0701 – Elementary Programs

- The Resource Teacher who has been upgraded now functions as an Instructional Facilitator.
- Class sets of publications refers to items such as Weekly Readers for the students.

Program 0801 – Business & Computer Management Systems

- The Computer Science I course involves instruction in robotics as well as computer science and is well received by both students and parents.

Program 0901 – Language Arts

- Efforts continue to provide appropriate assistance to students who fail required high school assessments (HSAs).
- Funds are included for MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education) online course fees, which were not required in the past.
- Online courses are used as an intervention in English mastery classes.
- Plagiarism prevention instruction is provided to all high school students, and staff has received positive feedback from the program.

Program 1001 – World Languages

- Approximately 60 students are enrolled in the sign language offering at Howard HS.
- Interest was expressed by some Board members in expanding World Languages to the elementary level in the future, and information was requested on plans regarding this possibility.

Program 1002 – English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

- This program has consistently been experiencing a steady increase of approximately 12 percent (15 percent last year).

Program 1101 – Health Education

- Funds are included to support required child abuse prevention curriculum training for elementary team leaders.

Program 1201 – Technology Education

- COMAR requirements have been met regarding the number of technology labs, teacher certification, and changes in courses offered.

Program 1301 – Kindergarten/Prekindergarten

- Staff anticipates approximately 20 requests for early admission to these programs in FY 2010, which is fewer than in past years.

Program 1401 – Mathematics

- Budget includes funds to provide appropriate assistance to students in the class of 2010 and beyond who fail required high school assessments.

Program 1501 – Media and Educational Technology

- A portion of funds in this budget will be used to update media materials at Wilde Lake MS.
- Funds are also included for the audiovisual replacement schedule.
- Students are provided instruction regarding a variety of online resources and their uses.
- New shelving and furnishings will be provided for Mt. Hebron HS and one elementary school that has not yet been identified.

Program 1601 – Music

- Funds are included for costs associated with replacement and maintenance of aging equipment.

Program 1701 – Physical Education

- The high school dance program has been moved from this budget to Program 2201 – Theater and Dance because the essential dance curriculum at the high school level is considered a Fine Art.
- Approximately 40 percent of students take an additional PE course after ninth grade.
- Staff was asked to determine if data could easily and accurately be obtained regarding the number of students who do not participate in athletic activities (in-school as well as outside activities). Staff will report back to the Board on the feasibility of this request.

Program 1801 – Reading

- All middle school students are required to take reading at each grade level.
- The high school reading program, RAP (Reading Acceleration Program), is an intervention program. Staff is currently evaluating

the program to determine its effectiveness and whether or not to expand the program to all high schools.

Program 1901 – Science

- Funds are included to support a new two-year sequence of instruction in the biological sciences for students coming out of middle school who need extra services for success on the Biology HSA.

Program 2001 – Social Studies

- Students study public policy as part of the high school course in Government. A Political Science course is also offered where students examine contemporary and public issues.
- Supplemental materials allow teachers and students to keep abreast of current social studies information and related events.

Program 2201 – Theater and Dance

- Funding is provided for additional equipment in the auditoriums for sound and lighting systems.
- Funds have also been transferred from Physical Education to Theater and Dance to support the program.
- Additional funds have been added so that students are not charged for supplies and materials related to the Theater and Dance programs.

Program 2301 – Gifted and Talented (GT)

- Additional teachers have been provided for the GT program at the elementary level. Approximately 43 percent of students at the elementary level participate in one or more GT program options.
- Funds have been transferred to the temporary help category to cover the cost of additional Advanced Placement (AP) exams given each year. Trend data indicates that approximately 600 more exams are given by AP coordinators, who are paid as temporary help.
- This program funds speakers who work with the Parent Academies.

Program 2401 – Summer School

- There has been a steady increase in students attending summer school over the past few years.
- The school system is looking at reducing the number of summer school locations (31) due to costs and the impact on summer custodial and maintenance projects in those facilities.

- Typing instruction is provided at the elementary level, and students receive computer-generated information regarding their speed and progress.
- Approximately 60 percent of students take review classes in summer school, 34 percent take original credit, and the remainder of students take enrichment classes.
- One administrator is assigned to K-8 programs.

Program 3010 – Elementary Staffing

- Current teacher staffing ratios are 19:1 in Grades 1-2 and 25:1 in Grades 3-5. These numbers should be considered a “range,” as some classes may slightly exceed the ratio on occasion.

Program 3020 – Middle School Staffing

- This budget includes the bulk of middle school staffing, which includes science, reading, math, social studies, and related arts teachers.
- Staff plans to review this program for better alignment and consistency with elementary and high school.
- The staffing pool may be used for any teaching position for which there is a shortage or where projections fall short.
- Projections currently indicate a reduction in middle school enrollment for next school year.

Program 3030 – High School Staffing

- The staffing formula has been changed in this program to reflect the reality that average class size is approximately 27-28 students.
- The new formula also adds a .4 position for every staff member for teacher planning, which was not included in the previous formula.
- Under the new formula, class sizes are actually smaller.
- It was noted that protection of the classroom is the most important consideration, and if funding reductions are necessary, a primary goal will be to protect teachers and classroom resources.

Program 3201 – Other Regular Programs

- The stipend for teachers attending New Teacher Orientation is approximately \$50 a day.
- With the new staffing formula and categories such as this, resources can be directed in the most effective way.
- 46 positions have been used from the staffing pool this year.
- \$100,000 included for Travel-Conferences is mandated by negotiated agreements.

Program 3205 – Junior Reserve Officers Training (ROTC)

- The current program provides Army training at Atholton and Howard high schools and Air Force training at Oakland Mills HS.

Program 3401 – Saturday/Evening School

- Some Evening School classes are being provided to students in the 18-20 year-old age group in order to provide the programs needed for graduation and allows them to attend school with members of their age group. There are approximately 50 students in this group receiving original credit courses, and the number increases each year.
- A credit recovery program that has been a pilot at the Homewood Center for the past two years will now be available to Evening School students to allow them to retake courses they have failed and to be able to meet requirements in a semester rather than a full school year.
- The pass rate for students enrolled in original credit courses over the past three years is approximately 90 – 95 percent.

Program 3402 – Homewood Center

- Between 200 and 250 students are enrolled at the school at any given time over the course of a year.
- Approximately 20 to 25 students are able to transition back to their regular school program each year. Transition plans are individualized and developed by each student's home school.
- Homewood also holds its own Senior Celebration each year, and all eligible students may graduate with their home schools if they choose.

Program 3403 – Alternative In-School Programs

- There are currently 30 Alternative In-School Programs (12 elementary, 10 middle, and 8 high schools).

Program 3501 – Academic Intervention Services

- Salaries for temporary help have been moved into workshop wages, which is the appropriate place for tax purposes.

Program 3701 – Career Connections

- No discussion.

Program 3801 – Centralized Career Academies

- Many students do not continue in this program after the first year due to scheduling conflicts or personal decisions to change courses.

- This program is designed to be flexible so that students may also consider the intern mentorship program, which involves college and/or work release.

Program 4401 – Family and Consumer Sciences

- Funds are included to support a new Culinary Academy at the Homewood Center.
- Instructors of this program are responsible for shopping for food and supplies during the course of the school year, which has been determined to be the most effective way of providing fresh foods.

Program 5601 – School Counseling

- Approximately 50 percent of funds in Consultant Fees are used for professional development that provides training to implement the Vision of Exemplary Teaching for Student Services Support to accelerate student achievement.
- The additional 50 percent of funds is for Contracted Labor and includes microfilming student records.

Program 5701 – Psychological Services

- Funds for Contracted Labor are now included in Wages-Temporary Help in this program, which pays for substitute psychologists. This move helps budget for the appropriate social security funds that the school systems pays these individuals.

Special Education

Program 3391 – Psychological Services

- This program provides services to children from birth to age 21, with particular attention at targeting student needs at an early age.

Instruction (continued)

Program 8601 – Interscholastic Athletics

- Uniform replacement is recommended every four years. The typical cycle in each school is approximately three years.
- The current budget could fund uniform replacement, but many parents and booster clubs provide money for uniforms so that students can retain them as keepsakes after they graduate.

Health Services

Program 8601 – Health Services – Athletics

- This budget funds Athletic Trainers, which has been extremely well received by the community and has provided a higher level of safety for athletes. . Students also learn much about maintaining their bodies as student athletes.
- In addition, Athletic Trainers also provide information to students on appropriate hydration, nutrition, conditioning, the importance of warm-up and cool-down exercises.

Instruction (continued)

Program 8701 – Intramurals

- Each middle school is provided funds for 10 athletic activities, and every middle school uses all 10 units.
- Many middle schools add to the 10 units with the assistance of their PTAs.

Program 8801 – Cocurricular Activities

- Each middle school makes use of the 10 academic activities that are provided with pay.

The next public work session will be held on Tuesday, February 10, 2009, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment: Mrs. Giles moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

*Under Section 3-701 of the Education Article of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, the Student Member may not vote on these matters. Passage of a motion by the Board on these matters requires the affirmative vote of four (4) Board members.