

FY 2010 QUESTION NUMBER: 5

QUESTION:

Provide a detailed explanation of the reorganization in the Department of Student Services.

BUDGET PAGE REFERENCE: 5-63

ANSWER:

The reorganization of the Department of Student Services (DSS) for FY 2010 will reduce administrative expenses while allowing for all functions to continue with no impact on the services provided to students, their families, and schools. The changes will streamline administrative oversight of service delivery, will improve customer service, and will allow for some department processes to be completed with reduced staff involvement.

The three student services field offices will close. This will eliminate 12 staff positions—3.0 director I (P) positions, 3.0 (B-D) instructional specialist positions, 3.0 administrative secretary (Grade 14) positions, and 3.0 secretary (Grade 12) positions. The duties and responsibilities of the field office unit will be reassigned to other student services units. The school psychologists and pupil personnel workers currently housed in those three offices will transition to school-based offices. Sixteen schools have been identified as having available long-term space to house these staff. Housing school psychologists and PPWs in schools will result in increased visibility and greater opportunities for interactions with school staff as well as with students. Additionally, scheduling staff assignments without the constraint of three separate field office service areas will create greater flexibility and efficiency in assigning school psychologists and PPWs to schools.

In the current DSS organizational structure, there is a supervisor for the psychological services unit and a supervisor for the pupil personnel services unit who provide professional development to school psychologists and pupil personnel workers. Each of these supervisors is supported by a secretary (Grade 12) position. In the reorganization, these four positions will be eliminated, and 2.0 new director I (P) positions and 2.0 administrative secretary (Grade 14) positions will be created. The new director of psychological services and the new director of pupil personnel services will be responsible for specific student services programs including professional development and the scheduling, supervision, and evaluation of staff.

A new Student Services Appeals Unit is being created. This unit will be staffed by a 1.0 supervisor (O) position, 2.0 coordinator (N) positions, and 2.0 secretary (Grade 12) positions. This unit will be responsible for hearing suspension cases with a request for expulsion and suspension appeals. Any staff assigned to this unit can hear any case that is brought forward. This will speed up the scheduling of hearings. This unit also will handle change of school assignment (COSA) requests. There will be greater efficiency due to the fact that only this unit, rather than multiple units, will be involved in processing the requests.

In the school counseling unit, 2.0 counseling specialist positions are being eliminated and a new 1.0 K–12 (B-D) counseling specialist position is being created. This will result in the school counseling unit consisting of one supervisor (O) position, one specialist (B-D) position, and one secretary (Grade12) position. The counseling unit is responsible for providing the professional development and support needed to school counselors to ensure the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) approved school counseling program is implemented in every school.

A student services specialist (B-D) position is being created to bring enhanced support to the increasing number of schools working with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Forty-eight schools and four alternative program sites are working with PBIS this school year. Of these schools, approximately 15 schools that are in at least their third year of implementation, will move to the self-sustaining level of implementation and will require no financial support. This will allow for up to an additional 15 schools to begin implementation of PBIS in FY 2010 with no additional funding required.

The changes listed above account for a net reduction of 6.0 positions and a savings of \$633,676, including employee benefit costs.

There are several additional changes to DSS included in the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2010 Operating Budget that also will provide savings. Two vacant positions, an assessor in the bilingual assessment unit and an office assistant IV in the alternative programs unit, have been vacant since last school year and will be eliminated in FY 2010. The elimination of these two positions yields a savings of \$127,330, including employee benefit costs.

The collocation of the alternative programs high school programs to the Mark Twain facility will result in a net reduction of 1.5 positions and a savings of \$132,507.

In summary, the reorganization of DSS results in a net reduction of 9.5 positions in DSS and other non-position savings for a total of \$898,439.

The amount of the reduction in the budget resulting from the reorganization of DSS and the elimination of the three field offices does not include additional savings that may result by making the three field office spaces available for other MCPS offices that currently occupy leased space.