

BUDGET BRIEF

Montgomery County Public Schools Increasing Support to Students with Disabilities

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Superintendent Joshua P. Starr has recommended a \$2.4 billion operating budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, which includes \$103.6 million in additional spending. Most of this increase will simply allow MCPS to provide the same services to a growing number of students and fund ongoing salaries, benefits, and operational costs. Dr. Starr is recommending \$8.2 million in strategic investments aimed at closing the achievement gap and preparing students for success in the 21st century.

One of the areas of focus in Dr. Starr's budget is improving services and supports to students with disabilities.

A MULTIYEAR STRATEGY

This is the third year of a multiyear budgeting strategy that makes specific investments in areas that will allow MCPS to manage its continued growth; narrow, and ultimately close, achievement gaps; and foster innovation to prepare students for the future. Among the investments made to better serve students with disabilities over the past two years (FY 2014 and FY 2015) are—

- » The addition of 175 positions to meet the needs of a growing number of students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs);
- » The full implementation of hours-based staffing in middle schools; and
- » Funds for an external review of special education programs and services, which is currently being conducted.

INCREASING INVESTMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Among the FY 2016 investments Dr. Starr is recommending to increase support to students with disabilities are—

- » More than 96 positions to serve a growing number of students and provide the services outlined in their IEPs;
- » \$356,490 (4.5 positions) to increase Learning and Academic Disabilities services at 18 elementary schools;
- » \$570,654 (6.4 positions) to expand the Home School Model in 10 elementary schools. This model allows for services to be provided to students in their neighborhood elementary schools and is based on the specific services outlined in each child's IEP; and
- » \$72,478 (1 position) for the High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) team, which coordinates the efficient delivery of support to schools, students, and parents, specifically around Universal Design for Learning and the use of technology in the classroom.

GET INFORMED, STAY ENGAGED

You can learn more about the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2016 Operating Budget and how you can participate in the budget process by visiting the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org.