

BUDGET BRIEF

Montgomery County Public Schools Strengthening Middle Schools

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 strengthening teaching and learning in middle schools to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and individualized support they need for success.

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. Over the past two years (FY 2014 and FY 2015), MCPS has made significant investments in efforts to strengthen middle schools, including—

- » The addition of 30 middle school focus teachers in English and math to lower class sizes and provide more individualized instruction in high-need schools;
- » 10.5 English language development teachers to improve instruction and support for middle school English language learners;
- » 22.8 positions to restore middle school staff development teachers to full time in order to provide job-embedded professional development to middle school teachers; and
- » 8.2 teacher positions as part of a multiyear effort to enhance middle school teacher leadership.

INVESTING TO STRENGTHEN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Among the FY 2016 investments Dr. Starr is recommending to further strengthen middle schools are—

- » \$504,477 and 5.8 positions to continue the multiyear effort to enhance middle school teacher leadership. The positions will allow nine middle schools to implement a leadership model with separate grade-specific team leaders and subject-area content leaders as separate positions, allowing for more specialized services and support. With this allocation, 32 middle schools will have implemented this leadership model, with the remaining six expected to implement the model in FY 2017; and
- » \$500,555, including 1 coordinator position, to continue implementation of a districtwide Middle School Improvement Strategy. The strategy is designed to align the work in middle schools to the Strategic Planning Framework, capitalize on the strengths in each school, and focus on areas for improvement. This investment builds on a pilot program that began in five schools in FY 2015.

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.