

2018 Recommended Operating Budget

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Superintendent Jack R. Smith is recommending a \$2.52 billion Operating Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 that will allow the district to manage significant enrollment growth and build the foundation and structure that is needed to ensure that all MCPS students are able to achieve at higher levels.

Dr. Smith is proposing a \$2.52 billion budget for FY 2018, which is a \$62.37 million increase over FY 2017—about 2.5 percent—and is 1.5 percent over the minimum county funding level. “My operating budget recommendation builds on investments the district has made over the years and reflects our core values of learning, relationships, respect, excellence and equity,” Superintendent Smith said. “This budget defines a clear path to improved achievement for all and instills confidence that MCPS will fulfill its core purpose of preparing all students to thrive in the future.”

Most of the \$62.37 million spending increase will be used to provide the same level of services to a growing number of students; fund ongoing salaries and benefits; and manage increasing operational costs. The recommendation includes \$10.21 million in strategic priority accelerators that are focused on improving student performance while narrowing achievement gaps.

Dr. Smith’s recommendation reflects the Board of Education’s budget interests and significant input from a broad array of stakeholders. This included staff, parents, students and community members who were a part of several budget teams and provided input on specific areas of need. The recommended budget also was built in partnership with representatives from the MCPS employee associations, the Budget Steering Committee and several district and community groups.

Dr. Smith presented his budget to the Board of Education during its Dec. 13 business meeting. Michael Durso, president of the Board of Education encouraged the public to get informed and become involved in the budget process.

“We appreciate the hard work and collaboration that went into creating this budget recommendation,” Mr. Durso said. “We look forward to hearing from the public on Dr. Smith’s

recommendation, as we seek to build a budget that will help us meet the needs of our growing student population, staff and community.”

In summary, Dr. Smith’s recommended budget includes—

Enrollment/Growth	\$17.63 million
New School/New Grade	\$5.24 million
Employee Benefits & Insurance	\$16.65 million
Strategic Accelerators	\$10.21 million
Inflation, rate changes and other increases	\$4.41 million
Continuing Salaries	\$32.20 million
Grants/Enterprise/Other Changes	\$2.16 million
Non-Recurring Costs	(\$1.45) million
Changes/Realignments	(\$24.68) million

Highlights of Dr. Smith’s Recommendation

Managing Growth

Enrollment in MCPS this school year is 159,010 students, an increase of more than 2,500 students compared with last year and more than 21,000 students since 2007. By 2022, enrollment is expected to reach 168,480.

The percentage of students needing services to ensure their success—such as Free and Reduced-price Meals (FARMS) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services—continues to grow as well. Currently, 34.5 percent of students receive FARMS and 14.2 percent of students participate in ESOL.

In order to manage the projected growth in FY 2018, Dr. Smith’s budget recommendation adds more than 226 positions, including 120 general elementary/secondary positions, 64.8 positions

for special education services, 29.9 positions for ESOL instruction, and 35.5 positions for student transportation, school plant operations and food services.

The recommendation also includes \$32.20 million for continuing salary costs and \$16.65 million to pay for benefits for current and retired employees. There are \$24.68 million in efficiencies and reductions in the budget, including further cuts to central services and the elimination of instructional data analyst positions.

Strategic Priorities

Dr. Smith's recommendation includes \$10.21 million in strategic accelerators, including 22.0 positions. These resources will help intensify efforts to close persistent opportunity gaps and improve academic excellence for all.

“If achievement and opportunity gaps can be closed anywhere, I believe they can be closed here and we must act now to create a school system where academic success is not predictable by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language or disability,” Dr. Smith said. “Our commitment to equity in no way lessens our commitment to excellence. Our commitment is to raise to excellence those students who have not yet achieved at their highest potential.”

The strategic accelerators are grouped in the following five key areas: improve teaching and learning; focus on learning, accountability and results; focus on human capital; focus on community partnerships and engagement; and focus on operational excellence. Among the recommended investments in these five areas:

Improve Teaching and Learning

- Increase opportunities for students to participate in rigorous coursework, programs, and co-curricular activities including in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) areas
- Expand achievement-focused extracurricular programs to all middle schools to increase outcomes and opportunities for students
- Expand home-school model special education programs
- Ensure effective mathematics instruction through robust materials, focused support and approaches to scheduling

Focus on Learning, Accountability and Results

- Improve understanding of data through implementation of comprehensive data systems

- Provide assessment opportunities for all students who want to take the SAT, ACT, or other career certification assessments
- Implement climate surveys for staff and students
- Implement systems that result in comprehensive and systemic college/career planning efforts

Focus on Human Capital

- Implement required professional learning for teachers and paraeducators to include cultural competency, implicit bias and restorative practice
- Provide focused training for teachers on effective practices and content knowledge
- Develop comprehensive pathway programs for supporting services staff who want to become teachers
- Expand equity and excellence hiring efforts

Focus on Community Partnerships and Engagement

- Build pipelines from elementary schools to improve engagement and opportunities in arts, sciences and mathematics programs
- Expand partnership with Montgomery College and the Universities at Shady Grove to increase number of schools in the ACES program
- Develop and communicate resources and materials to provide parents and partners with information on available opportunities and improving outcomes for students

Focus on Operational Excellence

- Create efficiencies and ensure effective operations through updating and enhancing business systems
- Enhance air quality, maintenance support and prevention programs