

APPROVED
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Rockville, Maryland
January 27, 1998

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in a special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Tuesday, January 27, 1998, at 7:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL Present: Mrs. Nancy J. King, President
 in the Chair
 Dr. Alan Cheung
 Mr. Blair G. Ewing
 Mr. Reginald M. Felton
 Mrs. Beatrice B. Gordon
 Ms. Ana Sol Gutiérrez
 Ms. Mona M. Signer
 Ms. Debra Wheat
 Dr. Paul L. Vance, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: None

Re: **WORKSESSION ON THE FY 1999 OPERATING
 BUDGET**

The Board members asked the following questions during the worksession:

K-12 Instruction, Elementary Schools

1. Mr. Ewing asked the Superintendent to provide the Board with the estimated costs of starting the all-day kindergarten initiative in FY 99 at the same level as proposed FY 00. He wanted to know, given the past emphasis on all-day kindergarten initiative and relationship with assisting students with reading readiness, why MCPS should not move forward with this in FY 99. When the Council made the reduction in schools with all-day kindergarten six years ago, they justified it by saying that the remaining schools are where there was a concentration of low-income students where benefits would be greater, i.e., equating all-day kindergarten to a welfare program. Mr. Ewing asked if that rationale was extended from that time to the present, what was the estimate of the number of schools that would today be eligible for all-day kindergarten.
2. Mr. Felton was concerned that the school system was restricting what is offered in all-day kindergarten. He asked if there were some other alternatives to all-day kindergarten in every school that would offer options pending the initiative of all-day kindergarten in all schools.

3. Ms. Gutiérrez asked for the criteria for the initiative for implementing class size reductions and reading. What schools will be targeted first for these initiatives? After Mrs. Gemberling explained some of the criteria, Ms. Gutiérrez asked for a summary of those items as well as any guidelines that have been formulated.
4. Dr. Cheung asked about the number of assistant principals and trainees, and he wanted to know if the school system had enough of them to plan for succession of leadership. How many more trainees do we need, and what would be the cost?
5. Mr. Ewing noted there have been steady reductions in art and music over the years. He asked what it would cost to return to the ratio of art and music teachers that existed in 1991, and how many positions would that involve. How far is MCPS from the national standards recently published for the arts?
6. Mr. Ewing stated that in staff development there is a \$500,000 increase for training, substantially for reading in the elementary school. What part is that of the total?
7. Regarding texts and materials of instruction, Mr. Ewing noted there were some increases in the budget, but there has been a decrease over the years, especially for the amount adjusted for inflation. If staff goes back six years and looks at the numbers, what would there be for texts and materials of instruction for all levels if that same amount were to be available this year adjusted for inflation.
8. Mr. Ewing commented that there was a guideline in the budget that says elementary schools receive an assistant principal when the enrollment exceeds 600 students. What would the result be in terms of additional assistant principals if that were changed to 500 students?
9. Ms. Gutiérrez asked about the 6 percent inflation rate for textbooks and media center materials. Is that the inflation factor for other materials as well? She asked for information on the inflation rates for instructional materials and the inflation rates.
10. Ms. Gutiérrez pointed out the user support specialist in the elementary schools, and asked where and when that was put into the school's budgets versus the Global Access budget, and what were the criteria for that decision? She also asked for what has been done in the past.
11. Ms. Gutiérrez pointed out the chart on Page 7, and commented that the chart raises more questions than it answers, and it begs for footnotes. When the school system has a continuing salary increase, what parameter did staff use for the increase? In the enrollment growth, she wanted a further breakdown of that data.

K-12 Instruction - Middle Schools

12. Ms. Signer asked about the formula used on E-2 as it relates to middle and high schools. There is an average class size for middle schools of 24.9, but the formula that was utilized uses an average class size of 28.9 times five periods. For high schools, it shows an average class size of 25.5, but the formula uses 31.5. Why the difference? This needs clarification.
13. Mr. Felton referred to the budget costs for the repair of musical instruments, and to what extent did that money meet the demands and needs of individual schools? Is there also information relating to the repair of science equipment?
14. Mr. Ewing asked about the net decrease of startup costs for new middle schools. How can we add money, but have a net decrease in that account?
15. Mr. Ewing asked about the student enrollment (actual and projected) figures for special education in Intensities 4 and 5. He wanted to know exactly how it was that staff arrived at those figures for 1998 and 1999.
16. Mr. Ewing pointed to Pages 17 and 35 about middle school staffing next fall. The narrative needs to be explained.
17. Mr. Ewing asked about security assistants and how 43 positions are assigned to 33 middle schools. What are the criteria used?
18. Mr. Ewing asked staff if MCPS had the number of students who would be transferring to MCPS from Prince Georges' County due to the unification of Takoma Park.
19. Dr. Cheung asked why the student support specialists are a Grade N and the assistant principals are at Grade M? Are the student support specialists selected from the assistant principal pool of candidates?
20. Ms. Gutiérrez questioned enrollment growth on Page 16 showing an increase of 891 students. There are also 96 Intensity 4 and 5 students. How do we arrive at those numbers? MCPS needs evidence that it staffs differently.
21. Ms. Gutiérrez noted the continuing salary line in the table on Page 15. Although there was an increase from FY99 to FY00; there was a decrease in salaries of over \$500,000. How did staff arrive at that? There needs to be an asterisk to explain that decrease.

K-12 Instruction - High Schools

22. Mr. Felton stated that the issue of repairs to musical instruments and science equipment also applies to middle and high schools.
23. Ms. Signer asked for information on the number of positions, additional funds, total funding, and students served in a comparison of all signature and magnet programs.
24. Dr. Cheung requested information on the cost per student at Thomas Jefferson High School in Fairfax as compared with the average cost per student in Fairfax County. He asked for the average number of students at the other high schools and Thomas Jefferson High School.
25. On Page 24, Mr. Ewing noted that under student enrollment there was a line for special education Intensities 4 and 5. The projected figures are for this year and next year, and it shows a reduction of 32 students. How did MCPS arrive at those figures, especially the figure for FY99?
26. In the testimony, there were proposals made about the restoration of reductions made for teacher time in the Blair, Richard Montgomery, Takoma Middle, and Eastern Middle. Mr. Ewing asked what the costs would be to restore that function.
27. Mr. Ewing asked what the impact would be and how an additional position in the Visual Arts Center at Einstein would be used?
28. Ms. Gutiérrez spoke to ESOL transition teachers. She would like to know what the costs would be if MCPS provided an additional number of ESOL transition teachers targeted to serve former ESOL students as they take courses outside the ESOL courses. She wanted the numbers of placing three positions where the ESOL population was average or above average and expand the number of centers that receive transition support.

Office of the Deputy Superintendent

29. For all three sections, Ms. Gutiérrez asked for what the savings of instructional materials would be at a 5 percent and 4 percent inflation rate. What would be the total savings?
30. Mr. Ewing requested selected information about the actual inflation rates for purchasing textbooks and other materials.

Department of Educational Accountability

31. Ms. Signer asked what the difference was between the coordinator of student assessment and the coordinator of testing.
32. Regarding continuing salaries throughout the budget, Ms. Signer asked what the relationship was between continuing salaries costs and the number and types of positions.
33. Ms. Gutiérrez noted there was a description of the Department of Educational Accountability (DEA) losing professional staff since the early 90s. What would be the cost of restoring staffing of DEA to the early 90s levels before the department was reduced?
34. Mr. Ewing asked for a proposal from DEA staff to rectify the high turnover and mobility rate, and what the impact would be on assessing the investment in class size and reading initiatives?
35. Mr. Ewing suggested that the business community might be interested in supporting the assessment of the impact of Board's initiatives.
36. Mr. Ewing hoped that there would be an exhibit in the budget on the reading improvement initiative.
37. Mr. Ewing noted there was very little narrative about the social studies curriculum.
38. Mrs. Gordon pointed out that the description on the Maryland High School Assessment Program had been overstated since the decision has not been made that students must pass 12 tests, and she hoped that would be corrected. She asked for assurance that there was funding in the budget to align the MCPS curriculum with the Maryland High School Assessment Program and incorporating the Core Learning Goals and Skills for Success. Are there funds to validate MCPS assessments, and where are those funds?
39. Ms. Gutiérrez requested information that would be a basis for an estimate if she wanted to target funds for curriculum development efforts for LEP integration into the regular curriculum (a basis that could be multiplied).

Office of Instruction and Program Development - Early Childhood

40. Ms. Signer wanted to know in the entire division which positions do not work directly with children, what those positions do, and the number of FTEs in those positions.

Office of Instruction and Program Development - EEEP

41. Mr. Ewing noted that this program was steady, and the state from time to time has indicated that it expects to expand the program. What is the nature of those changes and the potential for expansion?
42. Ms. Signer stated that the state has issued draft guidelines. What effect will it have on MCPS programs, the number of programs, the number of children in those programs, and the budget?

Office of Instruction and Program Development - ESEA

43. Mr. Ewing suggested clarification of the footnote to the chart on Page 26.
44. On Page 24, Ms. Signer pointed out there was an increase of \$313,000 in employee benefits. Given the fact that the number of staff was declining, why was there an increase and why was it in this budget as opposed to being Category 12?
45. Ms. Gutiérrez was concerned about keeping the program flat and requested information on increased federal funding.

Office of Instruction and Program Development - State Compensatory Education Project

46. On Page 29 there was a realignment shifting \$395,000 from federal revenue to state compensatory education funding. Ms. Signer asked why there was a realignment.

Office of Instruction and Program Development - Head Start

47. Ms. Gutiérrez observed there was a flat enrollment. Will this be part of the analysis?
48. On Page 38, Mr. Ewing noted that the reduction in the budget was due to a pilot project. Explain.

Office of Instruction and Program Development - State Aid

49. On Page 2-46, the budget shows an increase of revenue of \$213,000 for instruction equipment and \$464,000 for high schools. Ms. Signer asked what would that money be used for.

Office of Instruction and Program Development - ESOL

50. Ms. Gutiérrez will submit a spreadsheet to staff in order to develop innovative support for these students.
51. Dr. Cheung asked for clarification on the enrollment figures on Page 52. On Page 53, what are the projected trends for ESOL students?
52. Ms. Gutiérrez suggested that the information for Dr. Cheung be aggregated by age.

Office of Instruction and Program Development - Special Education

53. Ms. Gutiérrez was concerned about the table on Page 89 as it was misleading and it was not an appropriate place for the table.
54. Mr. Ewing was concerned about the text on special education since parents are uncertain about the direction, trends, and programs of this division. There was a sense that earlier decisions have been reversed or modified. There needs to be communication to the Board and parents as to the direction of the overall policy -- now and in the future.
55. Ms. Signer asked about the enrollment growth in Intensities 4 and 5. She wanted to know how the projection for next year compares to the actual enrollment for this year, and how the actual enrollment this year compared with the projection. What has the actual rate of growth in percent been over the past 10 years?
56. Mr. Felton pointed out that parents misunderstand the resources in the vision program and asked for an explanation about the increases on Page 94 and the decreases on Page 100.
57. Ms. Gutiérrez asked if the Board could have a copy of the draft document from the special education liaison committee and asked if it explained the special education programs? She also asked for specifics on the increases and decreases in the budget.

58. Ms. Signer requested a comparison of the legal fees in this budget with the projected year-end expenditures for legal fees for the current fiscal year. Where in the budget have funds been placed for the in-house attorney?
59. Ms. Signer asked what progress had been made in consolidating the special education advisory groups.
60. Mr. Ewing asked that legal fees be reported so that the Board knows where all the legal fees and costs are located in the various parts of the budget, and what the major categories of expenditures are so that it is clear where the major growth has been.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

PLV:gr