

Mrs. King congratulated the community throughout the budget process and said the clusters have been very cooperative working with the school system since they understood the economic downturn.

Ms. Cox hoped that the community had time to look at the realignments within the school system and note the efforts of the school system to be responsive to concerns related to specific populations to assure that the work is done collaboratively with shared accountability.

Mr. Burnett was particularly pleased with the time that staff had devoted to make the budget bearable based on the economic reality. The clusters and community have been very supportive. There are issues and concerns, but overall it is a good budget.

Mrs. O'Neill remarked that it will be a tight budget year, and she thanked the staff for realigning budget priorities to focus on the classroom. There may be some in the community who are disappointed that the Board is not adding to the budget, but all Board members realize that it would be very difficult to obtain the funds from the County Council.

Mr. Lange joined his colleagues in expressing thanks to staff for its work in putting together the budget. Over the past several weeks, the Board had heard testimony from many community members expressing their concerns for all children. The staff has worked hard to better align resources to meet the needs of children.

Mr. Felton pointed out that there had been many hours and many questions by Board members and the community, and this has been a collaborative process. The responses from staff to individual Board members was outstanding. If there are any additional questions, this work session will help address any concerns.

Ms. Cox noted that the follow-up response from a hearing was about a study for a magnet at Roberto Clemente Middle School to serve upcounty children. The anticipated transportation costs would be \$913 per student. Was there a review of the transportation costs based on the reconfiguration of the elementary gifted centers? Dr. Spatz replied that the transportation estimate was based on the current formula with the potential movement of the program upcounty.

Ms. Cox noticed that there was a position for a diversity and training director, and the realignment was to assemble all training into the Office of Staff Development. Dr. Williams replied that that position was placed in his office for connectivity with the community.

Mrs. King suggested that \$35,000 be added to the budget to plan an upcounty magnet program. Mr. Abrams asked if it was necessary to add the money to the budget to accommodate the planning or if the planning could be done within the recommended budget.

Mr. Bowers thought the Board must act to include the funding and give direction to staff.

Mr. Abrams pointed out that another French immersion program was started without adding funds to the budget. Dr. Weast suggested that the addition of \$35,000 by the Board would send a signal to the community to start a magnet, but the Board might not be able to achieve that goal based on the substantial program and transportation costs. Ms. Cox asked staff to identify the needs for an upcounty middle school magnet without adding to the budget and report back to the Board.

Mrs. King asked for alternatives for crisis response in lieu of adding a position to the Employee Assistance Program. What would be the cost of adding a person? Dr. Spatz replied that the cost for a position would be \$61,627. Dr. Weast replied that staff would investigate alternatives.

Mrs. O'Neill asked for a list of the schools that will receive the class-size reduction, especially in the Blair/Einstein/Kennedy Clusters. Where are Woodlin and Forest Knolls elementary schools? Mr. Bowers promised a written response to her question.

Mr. Abrams asked about parent resource centers. They is a great idea, but it should not be in the school system's budget. Where were they before? Were they grant-funded? If not in the MCPS budget, where? Dr. Bryant replied that the centers were grant-funded until last year, and they will become a part of the Early Childhood Initiative. Alternatives, such as grants and tuition, are being explored for the centers. Mr. Abrams noted that over time the school system becomes encumbered by programs that started as grants. After the grant expires, the school system should have a plan on who should fund the program or if the program should be funded.

Mrs. O'Neill asked about speech pathologists and the ratio of staffing per student. In the projected enrollment for next year, she noticed a decrease of 2,000 students needing those services. Is that realistic since overall enrollment is increasing? Dr. Bryant replied that staff is working with Mr. Crispell to review the enrollment data.

Mrs. O'Neill asked if there were sufficient funds in the budget to service students with wraparound services who were not grandfathered in the divert/return funding. Dr. Bryant answered that those students who would be moving under MCPS responsibility with a residential placement have been funded in this budget. Ms. Cox asked for the staffing changes in special education based on staff's current review and an indication of where there are no changes.

Mr. Lange asked about the reduction of staffing in the Professional Library. He asked if MCPS could collaborate with other institutions to provide those services. Dr. Williams agreed and the plan was to collaborate with colleges and universities and use technology to connect resources. Mr. Abrams asked about a consortium of other school districts.

Dr. Williams replied that a plan is being developed with the assistance from the deans within the area.

Mr. Lange asked for a brief summary and timelines on the instructional management system. Mr. Porter replied that there has been a series of meetings with principals on developing a feedback loop on the performance measures. There will be focus groups with select teachers to help assess the system. The pilot schools will help staff define the full implementation of the system. A good definition of the performance criteria will be ready within the next 30 days.

Mr. Felton noted that there was testimony about signature program coordinators and the discrepancy among schools. He understood this was a matter left to principals. Dr. Williams replied that the building administrator is in charge of those programs.

Mr. Felton asked if staff would investigate a performance-based budget. Dr. Spatz thought that was part of the Baldrige-in-Education Initiative. Mr. Felton understood that at some point the school system will be able to identify the exact cost and measure the success of a program or initiative for each student.

Ms. Cox noticed that in the personnel complement there was a reduction of two teachers in elementary-based learning centers and of four classroom teachers at Mark Twain School. Will this be reviewed with the enrollment projections? Dr. Spatz stated that those enrollment data are being reviewed.

RESOLUTION NO. 18-02

Re: **ADJOURNMENT**

On recommendation of the Superintendent and on motion of Ms. Cox seconded by Mrs. O'Neill, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Board of Education adjourn its meeting of January 22, 2002, at 8:37 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

JDW:gr