

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

December 19, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Proposed Hiring of Consultant for School Boundaries Assessment (12-04-18-07)

Question

Mrs. Smondrowski requested information regarding whether there a fiscal note with Ms. Tadikonda's New Business item. Dr. Smith stated that a benchmark of similar proposals will be done to determine a fiscal note for the proposed hiring of a consultant as proposed by Ms. Tadikonda and the information will come to the Board in the transmittals before the holidays.

Response

On December 4, 2018, Ms. Tadikonda presented a new business item that proposed hiring a consultant to conduct a comprehensive assessment of school boundaries across the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) school district as a whole. The resolution proposes an analysis to examine both the current state and to analyze possibilities for changes or adjustments to school boundaries to address disparities in socioeconomic and racial demographics, as well as disparities in facility utilization. The resolution also states that the consultant will benchmark with comparable school systems.

A competitive bidding process will yield the best information on what funding would be required to support this effort. However, staff reviewed similar efforts that have been undertaken in recent years to identify a potential cost range for this proposed study. Staff identified a number of studies that have addressed facility or programmatic concerns across the entire district. We found that there is a significant range in the costs of the relevant studies. The date, cost, and scope of various examples of districtwide studies follow.

- **Facility Assessments:** In June 2018, a contract totaling \$1.2 million was awarded to Facility Engineering Associates to conduct facility assessments of all MCPS schools. While districtwide, this assessment effort may be more extensive and costly than a programmatic review, in that a team of engineers and experts in a number of fields physically goes to every school in the district to conduct facility assessments.

- **Resource Allocation Analysis:** In June 2018, a contract was awarded to Educational Resource Strategies for \$310,000 to conduct an analysis of resource and staffing allocation and school-based budgeting.
- **Enrollment Projection Methodology Review and Growth Management Plan Development:** A contract for \$262,000 was awarded in May 2017, to MGT of America, Inc., for two specific districtwide project elements. The first was a review of the previous enrollment projection methodology, benchmarking with other jurisdictions, and development of recommendations for best practices and adjustments to the methodology. The second was to develop a template for regional growth management plans in the period beyond the six-year Capital Improvements Program.
- **Career and Technology Education Review:** An initial contract of \$75,000 was awarded in December 2016, to Education Strategy Group to review the Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs in MCPS. With extensions in 2017 and 2018, the contract totaled approximately \$131,000. The purpose of the study was to analyze the current state of MCPS CTE programs and to develop strategic recommendations for improvements.
- **Choice Study:** In January 2015, a contract was awarded to Metis Associates for \$200,000. The contract was to conduct a comprehensive study of the wide variety of choice and other special academic programs that MCPS offers for students such as magnets; language immersion programs; and regional consortia, such as the Northeast and Downcounty consortia.
- **Special Education Audit:** On November 11, 2014, a contract was awarded to WestEd for \$150,000 to conduct an independent review of MCPS special education processes. The goal of the study was to better understand the experiences of students and their families related to Individualized Education Program development, implementation, and dispute resolution.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Andrew M. Zuckerman, chief operating officer, at 240-740-3050.

JRS:AMZ:em

Copy to:

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