

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

July 17, 2019

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Board of Education Meeting Follow-up (06-11-19-02)

During the *Final Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget* discussion, Board members requested the following information:

Question A

Mrs. O'Neill requested the list of 11 schools that are having shifts in positions as mentioned during public comments.

Response

There are 11 elementary schools with the .5 Full-time Equivalent reduction in special program teacher allocations. The elementary schools are: East Silver Spring, Forest Knolls, Highland View, Montgomery Knolls, New Hampshire Estates, Oak View, Pine Crest, Piney Branch, Rolling Terrace, Rosemary Hills, and Bayard Rustin elementary schools.

Question B

Ms. Wolff requested information regarding the communication plans that were implemented at the affected schools, including those noted in public comments.

Response

The staffing allocations process is ongoing and closely tied to the budget development and review process and may be impacted by the superintendent of school's recommended operating budget. Projected enrollment, Free and Reduced-price Meals services, and student and school needs play significant roles in the staffing allocations and programming decisions of the principal and school leadership team. Schools receive their School Allocation Report (SAR) for the following year in early March after the county executive and County Council review the Board of Education's budget recommendations. The County Council approves the final budget in May and the Board of Education approves the final budget in June.

The SAR provides Full-time Equivalent (FTE) position allocations; special staffing decisions for each school; and explanations for changes to staffing throughout the school year.

- This includes classroom teachers and all additional supports (i.e. academic intervention, counselor, English for Speakers of Other Languages, focus, media specialist, reading specialist, reading support, reading initiative, special programs, and staff development).
- A limited number of positions are reserved and used to support schools that experience significant enrollment increases during summer.

Once the initial allocations are determined, principals make a concerted effort to use the allocation to fit the needs of the students and school programs. During April through August, central services and school staff monitor projected enrollment to adjust allocations. Area associate superintendents and directors closely work with principals to review staffing decisions and master scheduling reports to ensure that the staffing and resources will maintain a high level of instruction and to determine if increases/decreases to staffing are needed.

Eleven elementary schools received a reduction in the 0.5 FTE special program teacher allocation for Fiscal Year 2020. In early April, the Board of Education began receiving advocacy from the Piney Branch Elementary School community requesting the restoration of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics teacher. In early June, the Board of Education received numerous e-mail messages and letters of support for the restoration of the 0.5 FTE special program allocation at Forest Knolls Elementary School.

Question C

Mrs. Smondrowski requested information regarding the notification timeline for the principals at the schools affected by the staffing changes, i.e., Piney Branch and Forest Knolls elementary schools.

Response

As noted in the response to Question B, all schools receive notification of initial staffing allocations for the following year in March. Throughout the spring, central services staff, including the area associate superintendents and directors of learning, achievement, and administration, work with schools affected by staffing changes to ensure student needs are being addressed. Principals at Piney Branch and Forest Knolls elementary schools have made instructional programming decisions that allow the continuation of the core work previously provided by the 0.5 FTE special program teacher. In the absence of the 0.5 FTE special program teacher, both schools have other staffing and resources that support the continued enrichment activities for students.

It also is important to note that the 11 schools that received a reduction in the 0.5 FTE special program teacher allocation identified alternatives to continue the support previously provided by this position, including but not limited to strategic use of paraeducators, the academic intervention teacher, and the focus teacher positions. Staff in the offices of School Support

and Improvement and the Chief Academic Officer will continue to monitor projected student enrollment and support principals with ensuring available resources are used to best meet the need of students.

Question

D. Ms. Dixon requested information regarding the monies added through amendments to the budget by the Board during the Operating Budget discussions.

Response

When the Board adopted the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Operating Budget for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) on February 12, 2019, eight individual amendments were added to the budget. The following is a summary of those amendments and the status of each amendment:

1. Addition of 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) content specialist position for physical education for a cost of \$158,989 for salary and benefits. Status: An individual has been hired and started on July 1, 2019, to fill the pre-K–12 content specialist position for physical education.
2. Addition of 3.0 FTE elementary school counselor positions for a total cost of \$416,802 for salary and benefits. Status: The staffing guidelines for the elementary school counselor position changed from FY 2019 to FY 2020 for focus and non-focus schools. Based on these revised guidelines, we have added a 0.5 FTE to the following schools (for a total of 3.0 FTE): Burtonsville, Greencastle, Flora M. Singer, and Takoma Park elementary schools (focus) and Spark M. Matsunaga and Wyngate elementary schools (non-focus).
3. Addition of 1.0 FTE English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) counselor position for a cost of \$138,934 for salary and benefits. Status: The ESOL counselor will serve some of our most vulnerable students through the Career Readiness Education Academy programs at Thomas Edison School of Technology and Seneca Valley High School which are open to all eligible students in Montgomery County. An individual will be selected by mid-August 2019.
4. Addition of after school activity funds for focus elementary schools for a total of \$50,000. Status: As part of our work around supporting struggling learners in literacy, we are developing a plan for extracurricular programming for students in the identified schools. This programming will be coupled with school day supports to provide literacy focused extracurricular programming.
5. Addition of after school activity funds for secondary schools for a total of \$50,000. Status: Twenty-one middle schools with Free and Reduced-price Meal System rates greater than or equal to 35 percent will receive additional Extracurricular Activity Class I stipend hours and contractual funds. Each school will submit a plan for use of the hours and funds. The funding will be used for after school academic support opportunities for students.

6. Addition of 1.0 FTE fiscal analyst position for the Board of Education for a cost of \$183,120 for salary and benefits. Status: The Board office is working to fill this position.
7. Addition of 1.0 FTE instructional specialist position to focus on reading and writing interventions for a cost of \$158,989 for salary and benefits. Status: An advertisement was recently posted to fill the instructional specialist position for reading and intervention and dyslexia.
8. Addition of 1.0 FTE instructional specialist position for ESOL for a cost of \$158,989 for salary and benefits. Status: An individual has been hired to fill the pre-K–5 content specialist position for ESOL and will start on July 29, 2019.

For questions A, B, or C, please contact Dr. Kimberly A. Statham, chief of school support and improvement, at 240-740-3100, or Dr. Maria V. Navarro, chief academic officer, at 240-740-3040. For question D, please contact Ms. Nicola Diamond, chief financial officer, at 240-740-3160.

JRS:KAS:MVN:ND:TPK:dg:jp

Copy to:

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