

Fast Facts About the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2016 Operating Budget

December 2014

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (MCPS) Superintendent Joshua P. Starr has recommended a \$2.4 billion Operating Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 (the 2015-16 school year). This is a 4.6 percent increase (\$103.6 million) over the current Operating Budget (FY 2015). An additional \$23.3 million will be needed to replace one-time sources that the County Council used to fund the FY 2015 Operating Budget, including an account that funds retiree benefits. In addition, the Council will need to provide \$22 million to replace the funds it used from the FY 2014 MCPS fund balance.

The FY 2016 Operating Budget represents the third year of a multiyear budgeting strategy that makes specific investments in areas that will allow MCPS to—

- Manage its continued growth;
- Narrow, and ultimately close, achievement gaps; and
- Foster innovation to prepare students for the future.

Managing Growth and Increased Costs

MOST OF THE INCREASE in Dr. Starr's recommended budget will simply allow MCPS to provide the same services to a growing number of students—more than 2,000 per year for each of the last seven years. This includes the addition of more than 270 positions just to keep up with enrollment growth, including 111 elementary and secondary school positions, 96 special education positions, 41.5 positions to serve students who receive English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services, and 25 positions for transportation.

The increase also funds ongoing costs, including compensation increases for MCPS staff, benefits for current employees and retirees, transportation and operational costs, supplies, materials, and technology. Some of the budget increase will be offset by savings realized by expenditure restrictions Dr. Starr has put in place, budget cuts, and increased contributions by staff toward their health benefits.

Strategic Investments

DR. STARR IS RECOMMENDING \$8.2 million in strategic priority enhancements, aimed at narrowing the achievement gap and preparing students for the 21st century. Among the investments—

- \$1.5 million to continue efforts to improve the student services model, including the addition of 18 counselors, school psychologists, and pupil personnel workers across the district;
- \$1 million, including 6.8 positions, to continue districtwide efforts to improve middle schools;
- \$1 million (12 positions) to improve services and support to students with disabilities, including investments in Learning and Academic Disabilities services in elementary schools; efforts to provide elementary students with services in their home school; and expanding the use of the High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) team approach that supports timely services to students;
- \$339,000 for five content coaches to improve math understanding and achievement in elementary schools;
- \$1.1 million to add 15 positions that will facilitate school-based teacher leadership and staff development;
- \$255,550, including six positions, to improve services to students who need Interim Instructional Services outside of the school;
- \$329,000 to provide athletic trainer services to all high schools;
- More than \$834,000 to provide additional leadership and administrative support at all grade levels and nearly \$600,000 to restore elementary teaching positions lost during the recession; and
- \$250,000 for the Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) program, which fosters college enrollment and completion, and \$250,000 for the Children's Trust, to help serve children in need.