

FY 2015 QUESTION NUMBER: 13

QUESTION:

Please indicate specifically how the superintendent's budget addresses each of the Board's budget priorities?

BUDGET PAGE REFERENCE: N/A

ANSWER:

The Board of Education's FY 2015 Operating Budget Interests, adopted on September 10, 2013, assisted the superintendent as the FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget was formulated. The ten budget interests of the Board are as follows:

- Provide multiple pathways enabling graduates to be globally competitive and college and career-ready.
- Meet the needs of each individual child, including their health and social and emotional wellbeing and a strong start for all students before kindergarten.
- Continue to reduce variability of performance/address student performance issues.
- Retain and support staff to create the conditions for success that support schools and students.
- Expand and support community engagement in our schools. Work hard to ensure that communities and families know what they need to do to support their children.
- Maintain and improve our special education programs and processes.
- Promote instructional strategies and curriculum that engage students through innovative delivery methods and 21st Century physical spaces.
- Focus on all students and ensure all students have equity of access to appropriate and higher level courses so that outcomes are not predictable by race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status and all gaps in achievement are eliminated.
- Ensure the budget is aligned to the Strategic Planning Framework and organize and optimize resources, including the implementation of the Strategic Technology Plan and the Environmental Sustainability Plan, while providing the highest quality business operations and support services that are essential to the educational success of all students.
- Pay attention to areas of great need, in particular, middle school.

The following are examples how the Superintendent's FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget is aligned with the Board's budget interests.

**Provide multiple pathways enabling graduates to be globally competitive and college and career-ready.**

The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget supports a wide range of programs that help prepare students to be ready for college and careers. These programs include International Baccalaureate, magnet programs, signature programs, and career pathway programs in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, business and education. The FY 2015 budget also continues funding for the Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) Program that was implemented in ten high schools in FY 2014. The FY 2015 budget includes \$136,534 of new funding along with \$300,000 of funding that is realigned to support the redesign of Alternative Programs to strengthen the instructional program and learning environment for students who have not been successful in traditional middle school and high school programs. In addition, while the Special, Choice, and Signature Programs have provided multiple options to support MCPS students, the FY 2015 budget includes funding for an outside study of these programs to assess their effectiveness in meeting the needs of students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Meet the needs of each individual child, including their health and social and emotional wellbeing and a strong start for all students before kindergarten.**

The new strategic planning framework *Building Our Future Together: Staff, Students, and Community* focuses on three competency areas including academic excellence, creative problem solving, and social emotional learning. Coordinated Student Services Teams (CSST) in the schools align services and programs to enable students to acquire social emotional competence, help educators promote social/emotional learning, identify mental health needs, and provide mental health support. The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget also adds 5.5 counselors, 4.0 school psychologists, and 3.0 pupil personnel as part of a multi-year effort to enhance the work of the CSSTs in MCPS schools. This multi-year plan adds positions over three years to lower caseloads for staff and enhance services to our most vulnerable students. In addition, in FY 2014, MCPS initiated the Intervention Schools Network, comprised of 10 schools to improve timeliness and quality of interventions for students who are struggling as well as to improve academic results in math and literacy and decrease dropout rates. The network is a holistic, team-based approach to support students, and bring together families, communities, and school staff to identify students' growth areas and support their academic, behavioral, and social emotional needs. The FY 2015 budget also provides \$226,881 of additional funding for professional development at these intervention schools, as well as for the development, implementation and monitoring of an early warning indicators system to help identify areas of need.

**Continue to reduce variability of performance/address student performance issues.**

The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget continues to provide resources to support programs to address variability in student performance. In FY 2014, we added 30 middle school focus teachers to provide instruction to students who have not been successful in mathematics and English lowering the student teacher ratios for instruction and provide high quality teachers to high needs schools. The FY 2015 budget adds 15 high school focus teachers to continue to reduce the achievement gap between White and Asian students and their Black and Latino

counterparts. These teachers, like the middle school focus teachers, will be added to the most impacted high schools, and combined with 23.5 existing positions to reduce class size. Budgeted resources and efforts of all MCPS offices, schools and staff are integrated and focused on reducing performance variability among students.

**Retain and support staff to create the conditions for success that support schools and students.**

Our ability to retain and support high quality teachers, leaders, and support staff is a critical element for ensuring the success of our schools and students. The FY 2014 budget added professional development funding to support staff's ability to implement Curriculum 2.0 and other requirements. The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget annualizes the step, longevity and bonus increases that personnel will receive on February 8, 2014, and negotiations are ongoing regarding additional compensation and benefit changes for next year. In addition, the FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget provides \$800,000 for the Career Lattice to attract and retain high-performing teachers, especially in high-need schools, to promote leadership skills among teachers, both in the classroom and in the larger school community, and for collaborative and reflective practices that influence school culture and student achievement. The Career Lattice is the result of our continued collaboration with our employee associations. The budget also includes \$251,932 to provide opportunities for elementary schools with large Special Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), or arts teams with more than four positions to have a team leader. In addition, 12 additional middle schools will receive resources to ensure that team leaders and content leaders for departments are allocated as separate positions. This will allow for more focused attention on each of the content areas so teacher leaders have more time to coach and work directly with teachers in the department.

**Expand and support community engagement in our schools. Work hard to ensure that communities and families know what they need to do to support their children.**

The Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships (OCEP) was established in FY 2013 as part of the superintendent's reorientation to serve as the primary catalyst to improve student outcomes by engaging parents and forming strategic partnerships with community organizations. The FY 2015 budget expands OCEP adding 5 positions and \$532,230 to increase efforts to collaborate with county agencies, nonprofit and community organizations. This includes leadership positions for OCEP's efforts to develop strategies and expand networks with corporate partners and exploring trends and activities in community organizing around education. The FY 2015 budget also adds parent community coordinators to provide additional coordination for OCEP's parent and community engagement teams. In addition, our ESOL and Special Education staff will continue to provide extensive parent outreach along with the Office of Communications and its variety of tools such as the web, social media, and television to reach MCPS parent.

**Maintain and improve our special education programs and processes.**

The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget includes \$449.5 million (about 20 percent of the total operating budget) to provide services to 17,503 students with disabilities. The budget

provides an additional 76.6 positions and \$8.0 million over FY 2014 for serving special education students. Over the last several years, funding has been added to provide hours-based staffing in all middle schools. Overall, resources for Special Education have increased over the last decade to serve an increased number of students and provide services to students at an earlier age, all with the goal of providing educational programs in the least restrictive environment.

**Promote instructional strategies and curriculum that engage students through innovative delivery methods and 21st Century physical spaces.**

Like the FY 2014 budget, the FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget continues the implementation of Curriculum 2.0, designed to engage all MCPS students with rigorous instruction. Our secondary curriculum is being updated to address the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Professional development funding was added in FY 2014 to provide training and support for elementary school teachers who are implementing Curriculum 2.0 and for secondary English and math teachers to address curriculum changes with CCSS. The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget adds 7.0 teachers to support students who this year are taking compacted mathematics for Grades 4 and 5 in Grade 4 so they can participate in compacted Grade 5/6 mathematics next year. The FY 2015 budget also adds professional development funding to prepare for Wheaton High School's transformation from a traditional high school to a project-based learning community. Another strategy receiving additional funding in FY 2015 is the Innovation Schools Network. This funding will be allocated to individual Innovation Schools to support the development and implementation of each school's improvement plan and for leadership teams to deepen their work as leaders of school improvement practices.

**Focus on all students and ensure all students have equity of access to appropriate and higher level courses so that outcomes are not predictable by race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status and all gaps in achievement are eliminated.**

Within MCPS, the Department of Instructional Programs in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OCIP) works to tailor curriculum implementation to diverse learners' needs across the school district. The Department collaborates with other components of OCIP as well as with the offices of School Support and Improvement, Special Education and Student Services, and Community Engagement and Partnerships to develop strategies of equity in achievement for all students. In addition, the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction provides programs, resources, professional development, and schools support required to implement a challenging curriculum and instruction for all students to achieve at the highest levels. There will continue to be a focus on programs and resources directed to eliminate the achievement gap.

**Ensure the budget is aligned to the Strategic Planning Framework and organize and optimize resources, including the implementation of the Strategic Technology Plan and the Environmental Sustainability Plan, while providing the highest quality business operations and support services that are essential to the educational success of all students.**

Along with the Board's budget interests for the FY 2015 Operating Budget, the new Strategic Planning Framework *Building Our Future Together: Students, Staff, and Community* was

integral in the development of the Superintendent's recommended budget. From its five district wide milestones to the key competencies of academic excellence, creative problem solving, and social emotional learning, all were important in the crafting of the budget. In terms of optimizing resources, both budget realignments as well as reductions are reflected in the FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget. The Superintendent has said on many occasions that before we ask for additional resources, we must fully utilize the resources we currently have. For example, from a technology standpoint, the FY 2015 budget includes \$3 million in additional funding along with realigned funding to utilize innovative mobile technology to create new opportunities for how we teach and learn in the digital age. In addition to being an important part of enhancing our students' learning experiences, these devices will assist MCPS to comply with the state's Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) online assessment requirements.

**Pay attention to areas of great need, in particular, middle school.**

The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget continues the focus on middle schools that was reflected in the FY 2014 Operating Budget. Some of the most significant gaps in achievement between White and Asian students compared to their Black and Latino counterparts have been in middle schools. The FY 2014 Operating Budget added 30 focus teachers to work with students who are struggling in math and English in schools with the greatest need. Training and substitute funding was also added to literacy leadership teams in middle schools as the new CCSS is rolled out. The FY 2015 Recommended Operating Budget adds 10.5 teachers to address the performance of English language learners to ensure that these students attain and progress in English proficiency, and score proficient in reading and mathematics. Additional funding is also included to continue implementation of the middle school improvement strategy. A pilot group of five middle schools and leadership teams will study ways to incorporate the Strategic Planning Framework's competencies of academic excellence, creative problem solving, and social emotional learning throughout the middle school instructional programs.