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FY 2017 Proposed Q & A

Questions from the Prince George's County Advocates for Better Schools

Received January 19, 2016

Prince George's County Public Schools
Business Management Services
FY 2017 Proposed Operating Budget

Question #	Questions from the Prince George's County Advocates for Better Schools Received January 19, 2016
1.	Will TAG supervisors remain locked positions for FY 2017? Right now, in the proposed budget, that is how they are listed, but will this be how it remains?
2.	What written guidance will be provided to principals at specialty schools regarding locked specialty funding (i.e. TAG, S/T, etc.)? Right now, there are no written guidelines provided to principals and no way to hold them accountable regarding money that is supposed to be locked and supporting the specialty programs within a school.
3.	Page 67 – Locked Staffing Formula What is the rationale for having a shared internship coordinator for Oxon Hill and Flowers but no internship coordinator for Eleanor Roosevelt (page 67 of the proposed budget)? I know this was a legacy decision from back in the day, but is there a reason to keep this policy? It doesn't seem equitable, especially since there are so many more S/T students at ERHS (approximately 30% more than either of the other two) as opposed to the other two S/T centers.
4.	Mattaponi is still listed as a TAG center in the FY 2017 proposed budget. Will it remain so?
5.	Page 76 – School-Based Expenditures Who benefits from the "Tuition Private School 3-21" and why is it increasing from \$500,000 to \$2,000,000?
6.	Do non-specialty schools get funding specific to supporting TAG/advanced students? In the SBB Per Pupil formula, it only lists supplemental funding for ELL, K-1, and Below-Grade-Level students.
7.	How many schools will benefit from the Arts Integration program next year? I was disappointed to find that even though our school was listed as participating in Arts Integration this year, it is only a few classes/opportunities at the school and not benefiting all students.
8.	My middle schooler complains about science class because they do very few hands-on activities/labs. After speaking with friends at other schools, this seems to be the norm at many schools except for the TAG program at Kenmoor. Will this new budget increase funding for hands-on art & science programs so that neighborhood schools can better engage students as well?
9.	When school funding is being discussed, most people have a desire to maximize "money going into the classroom." a) When reading the budget, what is the best place to approximate how much money is going to the classroom? b) Would it be "instructional salaries" in "expenditures by category" table on page 40 of the proposed budget? c) Can you also elaborate what is and what is not included in this "instructional salaries" category?
10.	Related to the previous question, many would like to minimize the amount of funding going to "central administration" (and/or "Sasscer Building"). Is there a good way to estimate costs for central administration in the budget document?
11.	PGCPS has increased various specialty programs over the last few years, which I assume has resulted in increased transportation costs. What has been the trend line in transportation expenditures over the last 5-10 years and how do those increases compare to overall budget increases?
12.	Page 18 - Organization Improvements What is the proposed \$6.5 million increase in charter school funding going toward? (Page 18 of the budget document.)
13.	Page 32 – Fixed Charges What all is included in the budget expenditure category "fixed charges"? (Page 32 of budget, \$443 million in proposed budget.)

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14.	Page 41 – Changes in Operating Expenditures by Object The category of “other operating costs” is increasing by \$66 million, or 114%. What is driving this change, as it is much higher than for any of the other objects?
15.	Page 60 – School-Based Locked Resources In the budget there is an item “High School Assessment”. Which schools have this program, and is this a new program?
16.	Page 85 – Board of Ed Expenditures by Cost Center Why are the cost center expenditures different for the different BOE members? I understand the chair and vice-chair may have different/higher expenditures, but what explains the other differences?

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1. **Will TAG supervisors remain locked positions for FY 2017? Right now, in the proposed budget, that is how they are listed, but will this be how it remains?**

The Talented and Gifted (TAG) Coordinator positions at each of the TAG identified specialty schools will remain locked for FY 2017.

2. **What written guidance will be provided to principals at specialty schools regarding locked specialty funding (i.e. TAG, S/T, etc.)? Right now, there are no written guidelines provided to principals and no way to hold them accountable regarding money that is supposed to be locked and supporting the specialty programs within a school.**

There is no written guidance for principals regarding locked specialty program funding. The staffing resources must be used to support the specialty program. Central Office departments also purchase discretionary items (textbooks, materials, etc.) for the school to support these specialty programs as well.

Some discretionary funds are allocated by the central office to the school. The intent of these resources are to be used to support the specialty program at the particular school; however it is within the principals discretion to use all available funds for the needs of the entire student body.

3. **Page 67 – Locked Staffing Formula**

What is the rationale for having a shared internship coordinator for Oxon Hill and Flowers but no internship coordinator for Eleanor Roosevelt (page 67 of the proposed budget)? I know this was a legacy decision from back in the day, but is there a reason to keep this policy? It doesn't seem equitable, especially since there are so many more S/T students at ERHS (approximately 30% more than either of the other two) as opposed to the other two S/T centers.

Eleanor Roosevelt High School already had an established program when the programs at Oxon Hill and Flowers high schools were created. These new programs needed assistance with developing internships for their programs to be equitable with those at Eleanor Roosevelt.

The system will re-examine these positions and determine if they need to remain as is, be established for all three programs, or become an unlocked position.

4. **Mattaponi is still listed as a TAG center in the FY 2017 proposed budget. Will it remain so?**

Yes, Mattaponi is scheduled to remain a TAG center for FY 2017.

5. **Page 76 – School-Based Expenditures**

Who benefits from the "Tuition Private School 3-21" and why is it increasing from \$500,000 to \$2,000,000?

The proposed budget includes \$2.0 million in Tuition Private School – Age 3-21 to cover non-public tuition for special education students. The increase in this sub-object represents anticipated service levels to support this group of students.

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6. Do non-specialty schools get funding specific to supporting TAG/advanced students? In the SBB Per-Pupil formula, it only lists supplemental funding for ELL, K-1, and Below-Grade-Level students.

Non-specialty schools receive resources from the Advanced Enrichment Office specifically to support TAG identified students. Non-specialty schools also receive funding through the SBB process to support all students, including the advanced student, which also includes Talented and Gifted (TAG) students.

While TAG may not appear as spelled out, the systemic expectation is that schools will support their TAG students. We will examine how TAG support can be identified within the locked funds but our gifted students in all schools are receiving support.

7. How many schools will benefit from the Arts Integration program next year? I was disappointed to find that even though our school was listed as participating in Arts Integration this year, it is only a few classes/opportunities at the school and not benefiting all students.

PGCPS plans to expand to 30 more schools for a total of 71 participating schools in the next school year. All the teachers in the school have received training in using arts integration strategies. In the first year as an arts integration school, the implementation varies, and it might not look exactly the same from grade to grade. However each teacher in the participating schools is currently doing a book study using the book, *Lively Learning: Using the Arts to Teach the K-8 Curriculum* to further the teacher's development and understanding of arts integration. Additionally, each grade has or will have an arts integration teaching artist residency this year. See list below.

- Kindergarten - Environmental Literacy in the Spring
- 1st grade - Opera Kids - Three Little Pigs - The performance was watched by students in Pre-K, 2 and 3rd grade, Japanese Origami activity that included writing
- 2nd Grade - Butterfly Garden that included art and writing, Sculpting with Vocabulary activity
- 3rd Grade - Artful Thinking activities
- 4th Grade - Shadow Puppets by Ingrid Haas, Mirroring activity to prepare for drama unit
- 5th Grade - Cartooning Projects with Language Arts by George Kochell, 3D Water Cycle
- Instrumental Music Students in grades 4 and 5 went to the Clarice Center to see a literacy/music arts performance.
- Russian Students in K, 1 and 2 - Teacher incorporates singing, music, dancing, puppetry and stepping to learn vocabulary.
- Museum in a Box is coming soon.

Before there will be full arts integration, the teachers have to learn about it in order to implement it. So, our teachers have participated in several arts integration trainings by Ingrid Haas, Judith Blackman and Elizabeth Stuart. Teachers have also attended other trainings sponsored the Arts Integration office as well as workshops at the Kennedy Center. Two teachers went to the History of Jazz workshop at Oakland's Elementary School.

It is however a process, so as more teachers become proficient in arts integration, the program will continue to expand.

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8. **My middle schooler complains about science class because they do very few hands-on activities/labs. After speaking with friends at other schools, this seems to be the norm at many schools except for the TAG program at Kenmoor. Will this new budget increase funding for hands-on art & science programs so that neighborhood schools can better engage students as well?**

Hands-on activities/labs are built into the middle school curriculum to give students more real-world experiences in Science; however, course scheduling often prevents students from the benefit of multiple experiences. PGCPs is however committed to expanding the opportunities in this area for all students and will continue to include integrating labs into the mandatory professional development trainings teachers receive.

The FY 2017 proposed budget does include additional funding for more hands-on art and science programs. In the next school year, the science program is transitioning to Next Generation Science Standards, which includes the adoption of new classroom materials and science kits for student activities.

9. **When school funding is being discussed, most people have a desire to maximize “money going into the classroom.” When reading the budget, what is the best place to approximate how much money is going to the classroom? Would it be “instructional salaries” in “expenditures by category” table on page 40 of the proposed budget? Can you also elaborate what is and what is not included in this “instructional salaries” category?**

The School Based Resources section of the FY 2017 Proposed budget (pp 49-80) represents the majority of funds that are directly allocated to schools. However, there are additional funds throughout the document that can be captured through the State categories of Instructional Salaries, Textbooks and Instructional Materials, Other Instructional Costs and Special Education (page 40 – excerpt below).

	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Approved	FY 2016 Revised	FY 2017 Proposed	Change from FY 2016 Revised to FY 2017 Proposed	% Change from Revised to Proposed
Expenditures by Category						
Instructional Salaries	584,580,531	631,350,401	631,775,100	693,600,822	61,825,722	9.8%
Textbooks and Instructional Materials	17,781,646	17,933,200	17,933,200	20,374,378	2,441,178	13.6%
Other Instructional Costs	59,491,222	65,031,376	67,232,300	81,623,885	14,391,585	21.4%
Special Education	266,928,208	269,076,200	270,576,200	281,845,794	11,269,594	4.2%

These State categories directly capture the staff, materials and other related expenditures that interact or contribute to the delivery of instructional programs and related student instructional support services. The category of Instructional Salaries captures those staff whose responsibilities include interaction with students in the delivery of instructional programs and related instructional services.

Please see the link below for a full definition of all Maryland State Department of Education expenditure categories.

http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/bus_svcs/frm.htm

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10. **Related to the previous question, many would like to minimize the amount of funding going to “central administration” (and/or “Sasscer Building”). Is there a good way to estimate costs for central administration in the budget document?**

The budget document is published by state mandated categories and by department. Central office departments are vital to the operation of the school system. This includes the Board of Education, Chief Executive Officer, Legal Services, Human Resources, Accounting, Payroll, Employee Benefits, Budget, Technology and other central supports.

An excerpt of services provided by the departments that are reflected in the State category of Administration, as defined by the *Financial Reporting Manual for Maryland Public Schools*, is provided below. Budgeted expenditures in this state category are \$59.4 million or 2.9% of the Chief Executive Officer's FY 2017 Proposed Annual Operating Budget.

Financial Reporting Manual for Maryland Public Schools, Maryland State Department of Education, Revised 2009.

http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/bus_svcs/frm.htm

Category 201 - Administration

Administration: Administration includes the activities associated with the general regulations, direction, and control of the Local Education Agency (LEA). Such activities as establishing and administering LEA operating policy, providing fiscal and internal services necessary for operating the LEA, supporting each of the other instructional and supporting services programs, and assisting the instructional staff with the content and process of providing learning experiences for students are included in Administration. Administrative expenditures affect the LEA as a whole and are not confined to a single school building.

General Support Services: The activities concerned with establishing and administering policy for LEA operations. Included are:

Board of Education Services: Activities of the elected or appointed body that is created according to state law and vested with the responsibility of directing, planning, and making policy for the LEA, including but not limited to directing and managing the general operation of the LEA and attending school district meetings. Included are:

- services of the Secretary or Clerk of the Board of Education;
- legal services (legal services directly related to Special Education may be charged to Special Education), including general liability situations;
- external audit services;
- treasurer services;
- election services; and
- other services directly performed by the elected or appointed Board.

Executive Administration: Activities associated with the overall general administration of or executive responsibility for the entire LEA. Examples are:

- the office of the superintendent including activities of deputy, associate, and assistant superintendents unless the activities can be placed in another category, program, or activity;
- community relations operated system-wide for bettering school/community relations, including system promotion and support of school/business partnerships;

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- state and federal relations associated with the development and maintenance of good federal/state relationships;
- grant procurement; and
- other associated activities.

Business Support Services: Activities concerned with paying, transporting, exchanging, and maintaining goods and services for the LEA. Included are the fiscal and internal services necessary for LEA operations. Business services provided by central office staff for an individual school or for any of the other categories defined in this Manual are to be reported here. These expenditures are not distributable to any other expenditure category. Included are the following services:

Fiscal Services: Activities concerned with the fiscal operations of the LEA. Examples are:

- directing, managing, and supervising fiscal services;
- budgeting;
- receiving and disbursing funds;
- payroll;
- financial accounting;
- internal auditing;
- property accounting; and
- other fiscal services.

Purchasing Services: Activities concerned with purchasing supplies, furniture, equipment, and materials used in school or school system operations.

Printing, Publishing, and Duplicating Services: The activities of printing and publishing administrative publications such as annual reports, school directories, and manuals. Activities here also include centralized services for duplicating school materials such as school bulletins, newsletters, and notices. Record the total cost of staff and equipment; materials may be charged to the category for which the service was provided.

Centralized Support Services: Activities that, whether contracted out or performed within an internal service fund, support each of the other instructional and supporting services programs. Planning, research, development, and evaluation services are included. Activities of a system-wide nature associated with selecting or identifying the overall, long-range goals and priorities of the organization or a program; researching, developing, and improving education programs; and evaluating or appraising the success of a particular previously-established goal or program. Include costs associated with administering the standardized and criterion reference tests.

Information Services: Activities concerned with dissemination of educational and administrative information to the public through various news media, personal contacts, reports, brochures, or other means. Examples are:

- directing, managing, and supervising information services;
- collecting, editing, and publishing information needed about the operation of the LEA; and
- writing, editing, and providing administrative information to students and staff.

Human Resource Services: Activities concerned with providing staff services. Sabbaticals for non-instructional staff should be charged here.

- directing managing, and supervising staff services;
- recruiting and placing LEA personnel;
- providing in-processing programs for personnel;
- providing system-wide staff relations and negotiations services for all personnel;

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- administering the employee benefits programs, such as employee wellness programs;
- operating staff health programs, such as physical examinations, emergency care, and referral services;
- recording and summarizing staff-related information; and
- provide in-service training for non-instructional personnel.

Data Processing Services: All activities concerned with directing, managing, and supervising centralized data processing services, including systems analysis, programming, data entry, and data processing operations. Include all costs associated with the data processing staff, equipment, and supplies as well as any data processing services that are contracted out. Data processing related to the Student Transportation program may be charged to 209 - Student Transportation. Software, in general should be charged to the program that the expenditures supports.

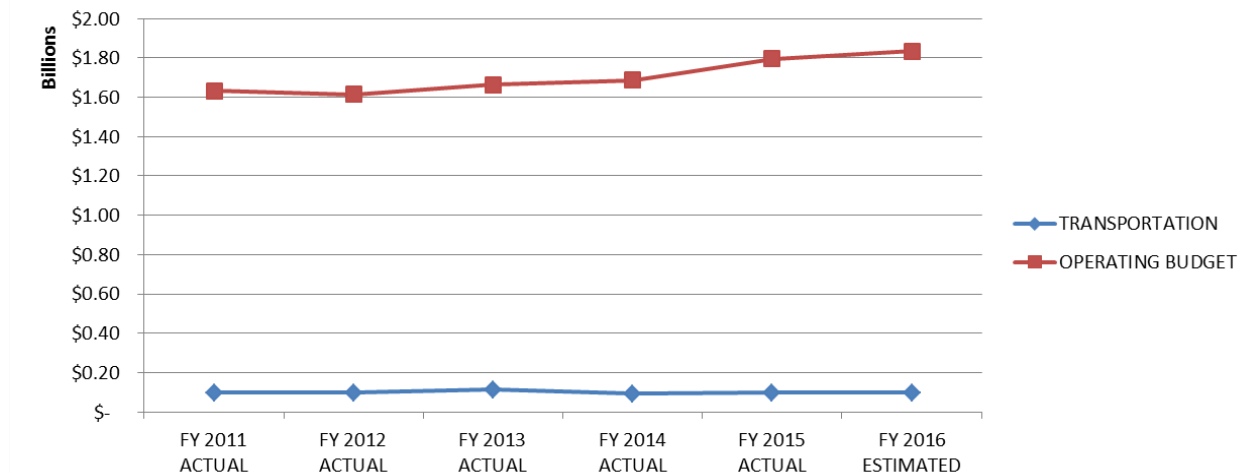
Note: These are state-mandated classifications and must be reported in the Administration category.

11. PGCPs has increased various specialty programs over the last few years, which I assume has resulted in increased transportation costs. What has been the trend line in transportation expenditures over the last 5-10 years and how do those increases compare to overall budget increases?

Between FY 2011 and FY 2016, transportation expenditures have increased a total of 0.7%, while the operating budget has increased 12.2% over the same period. The table below provides a five-year history of actual transportation costs compared to the approved operating budget and a graph depicting the trend line data for fiscal years 2011 through 2016.

FIVE-YEAR HISTORY

	FY 2011 ACTUAL	FY 2012 ACTUAL	FY 2013 ACTUAL	FY 2014 ACTUAL	FY 2015 ACTUAL	FY 2016 ESTIMATED	% Increase Over Five Years
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 96,091,697	\$ 97,359,875	\$ 111,673,524	\$ 91,222,586	\$ 96,530,688	\$ 96,783,500	
Year over Year Change		1.3%	14.7%	-18.3%	5.8%	0.3%	0.7%
OPERATING BUDGET	\$ 1,633,526,541	\$ 1,614,358,600	\$ 1,664,422,000	\$ 1,687,807,813	\$ 1,795,250,300	\$ 1,833,067,725	
Year over Year Change		-1.2%	3.1%	1.4%	6.4%	2.1%	12.2%



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12. Page 18 - Organization Improvements

What is the proposed \$6.5 million increase in charter school funding going toward?

The proposed \$6.5 million increase in charter school funding supports additional student enrollment via grade expansion, new school based personnel, and discretionary resources for the 10 existing charter schools.

13. Page 32 – Fixed Charges - \$443 million

What all is included in the budget expenditure category “fixed charges”?

The category of Fixed Charges includes expenditures to support employee benefits such as social security, life insurance, worker’s compensation, health insurance, terminal leave, unemployment insurance, etc.

14. Page 41 – Changes in Operating Expenditures by Object

The category of “other operating costs” is increasing by \$66 million, or 114%. What is driving this change, as it is much higher than for any of the other objects?

The increase of \$66 million within the category of “other operating costs” is driven by \$52.6 million in Non-Public Tuition funds related to Special Education. Due to our new reporting format, an error occurred and the funds were inadvertently included in the category of “other operating costs.” This error will be corrected in FY 2017 requested document.

15. Page 60 – School-Based Locked Resources

In the budget there is an item “High School Assessment.” Which schools have this program, and is this a new program?

The High School Assessment program was a new initiative implemented in FY 2007. The Maryland High School Assessments (HSA) are end of course tests that gauge both school performance and individual student performance, providing valuable information to students, parents, and school improvement teams. The HSAs are four tests—one each in algebra/data analysis, biology, government and English. Scores from the HSA and other state tests are posted on the Web at www.mdreportcard.org.

The High School Assessment program provides 23.00 HSA Bridge Teachers which provides 1.00 teacher at each of our 22 high schools and 0.50 teacher for each alternative high school (Croom and Tall Oaks).

16. Page 85 – Board of Ed Expenditures by Cost Center

Why are the cost center expenditures different for the different BOE members? I understand the chair and vice-chair may have different/higher expenditures, but what explains the other differences?

The individual Board member cost center expenditures differs due to employee benefits-health insurance selection. Board members have the option to purchase health benefits to include dental and vision. Some Board members elect not to purchase health insurance because they are covered under their employer’s plan, their spouse’s plan, or a healthcare exchange. In addition, Board members can choose just health with no vision or dental, or dental and no vision and health care. It can be any combination the Board member chooses to meet his or her needs. The various selections are reflected in the cost which is then reflected in each Board member’s cost center.
