

ED COMMITTEE #2
March 7, 2011
Worksession

M E M O R A N D U M

March 4, 2011

TO: Education Committee

FROM: Essie McGuire, Legislative Analyst *EMcG*

SUBJECT: **Worksession – Supplemental Appropriation to the Montgomery County Public Schools’ FY11 Operating Budget, \$4,999,634 for Project North Star Grant**

Today the Education Committee will review a supplemental appropriation for the Montgomery County Public Schools’ (MCPS) FY11 Operating Budget, \$4,999,634 for the Project North Star Grant. The source of funds for this appropriation is a Federal Grant. The Board of Education requested this appropriation on November 12, 2010. The County Executive transmitted a draft resolution and recommended approval of the supplemental appropriation on December 6, 2010 (circles 1-3). The Council introduced this appropriation request on February 1, 2011, and held a public hearing on February 15. There were no speakers at the hearing.

The following individuals are expected to attend the worksession:

- Erick Lang, Associate Superintendent, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, MCPS
- Marty Creel, Director, Department of Enriched and Innovative Programs, MCPS
- Marshall Spatz, Director, Department of Management, Budget, and Planning, MCPS
- Blaise DeFazio, Office of Management and Budget, County Government

SUMMARY

The grant award under consideration for appropriation today is the primary fiscal underpinning to a significant curriculum development project for MCPS, Project North Star. MCPS intends for the project overall to be supported by two funding components, the \$5 million Federal i3 Grant and a funding agreement with Pearson, LLC. Only the Federal funds are before the Council at this time. **Council staff recommends approval of the Federal i3 Grant funds as requested by the Board of Education.** Council staff also recommends that the Committee begin its discussion of the Pearson funding today, request any specific information Committee members require at this time, and continue to monitor that financial relationship as it develops.

BACKGROUND

MCPS began developing an Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC) in 2007, and piloted this new curriculum in the 2009-2010 school year. Development of a revised curriculum is consistent with Board of Education policy that requires curriculum review every 5 years, and coincides also with the State's adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for curriculum.

MCPS also began seeking alternate funding sources to accelerate the EIC development across all elementary grades. MCPS applied for a Federal Investment in Innovation (i3) Fund Grant to support the curriculum development. MCPS also began work with Pearson, LLC, a prominent education services company, to develop a public-private partnership around curriculum development. Securing a match contribution from a private entity is a requirement of the i3 grant; MCPS developed an arrangement with Pearson that could continue the EIC development whether MCPS was awarded the grant or not.

MCPS' purpose in pursuing these funding sources was to accelerate the EIC development. MCPS anticipated that with existing County funding and potential reductions in central office curriculum development functions, the EIC would be completed in 5 years. Funding through Pearson, Federal grant funds, or both would accelerate EIC completion to 3 years. Non-tax-supported funds represent a significant opportunity for MCPS to accomplish this important objective without requesting increased tax-supported dollars, and with potentially achieving a savings in tax-supported dollars.

Below is a summary of events regarding the EIC project and funding:

- On June 8, 2010, the Board of Education approved a contract between MCPS and Pearson to begin work on the curriculum development process, named Project North Star. The contract provided funding up front to support the effort and royalties in the future dependent on curriculum sales. (BOE action memo on circles 29-31; press release on circles 32-33)
- In April 2010 MCPS was awarded \$4,999,634 from the Federal i3 Grant Program to support the North Star curriculum development project. The grant requires a 20% match from a private entity. The agreement with Pearson provides \$1.3 million in in-kind services as the private sector match. (MCPS press release on circle 28)
- On September 27, 2010, the Board of Education discussed the EIC framework, its relationship to the CCSS, and its relationship to the Federal and Pearson funding. The Board gave preliminary approval to the curriculum framework. (BOE action memo on circles 22-27)
- On November 9, 2010, the Board of Education requested the supplemental appropriation for the \$5 million Federal grant funds. (BOE action memo on circles 17-21)
- On December 7, 2010, the Board of Education gave final approval to the EIC framework, incorporating stakeholder feedback and other revisions since the preliminary approval in September. (BOE action memo on circles 7-16)

FEDERAL i3 GRANT

The United States Department of Education (USDE) i3 Fund Grant program was a highly competitive grant process that sought innovative applications in a wide range of educational areas. The program description below indicates the nearly all-encompassing scope:

Program Description: The Investing in Innovation Fund, established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), provides funding to support (1) local educational agencies (LEAs), and (2) nonprofit organizations in partnership with (a) one or more LEAs or (b) a consortium of schools. The purpose of this program is to provide competitive grants to applicants with a record of improving student achievement and attainment in order to expand the implementation of, and investment in, innovative practices that are demonstrated to have an impact on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

These grants will (1) allow eligible entities to expand and develop innovative practices that can serve as models of best practices, (2) allow eligible entities to work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community, and (3) identify and document best practices that can be shared and taken to scale based on demonstrated success.

USDE received over 1,700 applications, and only 49 grants were awarded. MCPS was one of only 11 school districts to win a grant. MCPS was well positioned upon receipt of the grant due to having already established its relationship with Pearson. USDE set up a database of applicants and potential funders to help awardees secure the required private match by a September 8 deadline. Although all awardees did secure funding in time, *Education Week* reported on September 2 that many were still working to secure funding and experiencing unexpected difficulties.

Grant Budget

MCPS outlines on circle 21 the budget for each of the 3 years of the grant. MCPS responded on circles 4-6 to Council staff questions about the grant and Pearson funds. Council staff highlights the following aspects:

- The budget assumes total project expenditures of approximately \$1.5 million in the first year (FY11), and \$1.8 million in the last 2 years (FY12 and FY13).
- Most of the funds support positions to develop and implement the curriculum. The budget includes 11 Instructional Specialists for all 3 years and one Project Supervisor in the final 2 years.
- MCPS reports that while these are new positions, they are being filled by existing or previous MCPS employees in curriculum development. This represents some savings in the current year as existing tax-supported positions are shifted to the grant fund; current year savings will contribute to the MCPS year-end fund balance. It also allows MCPS to reinstate with grant funds some tax-supported curriculum positions that were reduced last spring.

- MCPS states that all staff funded by the grant were informed that these were 3-year positions for the term of the grant only. MCPS also states that these employees can be moved into already existing tax-supported positions, including school-based positions, at the end of the grant.
- The grant budget includes \$268,000 to support external evaluation of the project (the “contractual services” line item on circle 21).

Council staff recommendation

Council staff recommends approval of the requested supplemental appropriation of \$4,999,634 in Federal grant funds. The grant award represents a significant achievement for MCPS, particularly given the wide-open and competitive nature of the i3 grant process. The grant award and budget have no direct requirement for County resources to match or sustain the effort. To better monitor the savings and impact on tax-supported positions, Council staff recommends that the Committee ask MCPS to provide a list of the tax-supported positions the 11 grant funded employees came from and whether the positions were shifted directly or backfilled. The Committee can then get the same report for comparison when the grant ends and employees are returned to tax-supported positions.

RELATED ISSUE: PEARSON FUNDING

Currently, MCPS’ contractual relationship with Pearson includes three funding components:

- A \$1.3 million contribution of in-kind services as a required match to the i3 grant. These in-kind services include creation of assessments and online professional development modules.
- A total of \$1.25 million in up-front funding for the project. MCPS has created an account in the Entrepreneurial Activities Fund to allow expenditures for this project based on revenues from Pearson.
- Future payments based on royalties from Pearson’s sales of the curriculum. The amount and timeframe for these payments are unknown at this time.

There is no action required or requested of the Committee today related to Pearson funding. The in-kind match is assumed as part of the grant project and does not require separate Council action. Council staff suggests that the Committee begin its discussion of the other elements of the Pearson funding today, and identify any specific follow-up questions or issues for MCPS to address. Council staff also recommends that the Committee receive regular reports on the status and expenditure of the Pearson funding, and the curriculum efforts it supports.

Entrepreneurial Activities Fund

In October 1997 the Board of Education established an enterprise fund for entrepreneurial activities. The Board’s resolution authorizing the fund and outlining governing principles for any entrepreneurial activity is attached on circle 34.

Expenditures in the Entrepreneurial Activities Fund require Council appropriation as any other MCPS expenditure and must have revenue to support them. MCPS has received the

\$1.25 million revenue from Pearson. Currently, there is sufficient appropriation in the fund to allow some FY11 expenses for the North Star project. Additional expenditures are included in the FY12 budget request for the Entrepreneurial Activities Fund, and would be appropriated by the Council as part of the FY12 operating budget.

Council staff understands that MCPS intends the \$1.25 million in up-front funds from Pearson to be used over the same 3 year period as the Federal grant. MCPS indicates that FY11 and FY12 funds will be used to support professional staff development and training (costs such as substitutes and stipends) to implement more broadly the K-2 curriculum being piloted now. Some of the FY11-12 Pearson funds will also be used to develop training materials.

MCPS staff states that conceptually, the potential future royalties from Pearson would sustain the project past the term of the grant to roll-out the curriculum framework to other grades. However, given that the amount and timeline of any such royalty funding is unknown, and that the grant itself is in the very beginning stages of implementation, it is not possible to fully identify the future of this endeavor.

The uncertainty about the amount and use of such a potentially significant revenue stream raises many questions as to the relationship between the school system and this private entity and the ultimate relationship of the funding to County and State tax-supported revenues. At this time, it appears that the current agreement with Pearson falls within the outlines of the Board's 1997 resolution and within the current funding structure of the Entrepreneurial Activities Fund.

In Council staff's view, the critical assessment going forward for the Board of Education as policy authority and the Council as fiscal authority will be to ensure that any growth in the efforts funded by Pearson royalties related to curriculum development stay within the bounds established by the 1997 resolution and do not overtake, infringe on, or have negative cost impact on the tax-supported mission of the school system. Council staff suggests that this oversight and evaluation will necessarily have to take place incrementally as the amount of royalty funds begins to be known and as the Board determines what additional curriculum development phases are necessary to meet its instructional goals. The Committee can receive regular reports on the revenues and expenditures of this project to address the outstanding policy and fiscal questions going forward.

Bud, Fin +
Econ Dev.



has → EMC
CC
SOF
has → LL

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

December 6, 2010

TO: Nancy Floreen, President, County Council
FROM: Isiah Leggett, County Executive
SUBJECT: Supplemental Appropriation #11-318
FY11 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Public Schools
Project North Star Grant, \$4,999,634

2010 DEC -7 PM 2:04

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COUNCIL

On November 12, 2010, the Board of Education (BOE) requested authorization to receive and expend an FY11 supplemental appropriation for a grant award of \$4,999,634 from the United States Department of Education (USDE) for the three-year Investment in Innovation Fund Project North Star.

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been awarded the federal Investment in Innovation Fund Grant to help support the development of the MCPS integrated elementary school curriculum. With this grant, MCPS will continue its partnership with Pearson, LLC, to create an elementary grades curriculum that fully integrates the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics, with science, social studies, art, music, media literacy, and physical education. There is a 20 percent match and as part of MCPS' grant application, Pearson, LLC, has committed \$1.3 million dollars in in-kind funding for the project. MCPS will use the grant funds for a project supervisor position, 11 elementary instructional specialist positions, contractual services, supplies, employee benefits, and travel expenses for USDE-required meetings and conferences.

I recommend that the County Council approve this supplemental appropriation of \$4,999,634 from the USDE for the three-year Investment in Innovation Fund Project North Star. The source of funds is a federal grant.

IL:bd

Attachments: Supplemental Appropriation #11-318
Request from the Board of Education

Resolution No: _____

Introduced: _____

Adopted: _____

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: County Council

SUBJECT: Supplemental Appropriation #11-318
FY11 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Public Schools
Project North Star Grant, \$4,999,634

Background

1. Section 5-105(d) of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland provides for the expenditure of non-local funds by the County Board of Education after adoption of the budget, only with the approval of the County fiscal authority.
2. Section 307 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that any supplemental appropriation shall be recommended by the County Executive who shall specify the source of funds to finance it. The Council shall hold a public hearing on each proposed supplemental appropriation after at least one week's notice. A supplemental appropriation that would comply with, avail the County of, or put into effect a grant or a Federal, State or County law or regulation, or one that is approved after January 1 of any fiscal year, requires an affirmative vote of five Councilmembers. A supplemental appropriation for any other purpose that is approved before January 1 of any fiscal year requires an affirmative vote of six Councilmembers. The Council may, in a single action, approve more than one supplemental appropriation. The Executive may disapprove or reduce a supplemental appropriation, and the Council may reapprove the appropriation, as if it were an item in the annual budget.
3. The County Executive received the Board of Education's action of October 29, 2010, requesting a supplemental appropriation to the operating budget as follows:

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Funding Source</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 01 Administration | \$ 158,312 | Federal Grant |
| 02 Mid-Level Administration | \$ 3,577,064 | |
| 12 Fixed Charges | \$ 1,264,258 | |
| | Total \$ 4,999,634 | |

4. The Board of Education has stated that this appropriation is needed to receive and expend \$4,999,634 for the grant fund. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been awarded the federal Investment in Innovation Fund Grant to help support the development of the MCPS integrated elementary school curriculum. With this grant, MCPS will continue its partnership with Pearson, LLC, to create an elementary grades curriculum that fully integrates the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics, with science, social studies, art, music, media literacy, and physical education. There is a 20 percent match and as part of MCPS' grant application, Pearson, LLC, has committed \$1.3 million dollars in in-kind funding for the project. MCPS will use the grant funds for a project supervisor position, 11 elementary instructional specialist positions, contractual services, supplies, employee benefits, and travel expenses for United States Department of Education required meetings and conferences.
5. The County Executive recommends a supplemental appropriation to the FY11 Operating Budget of \$4,999,634 and has specified that the source of funds will be a federal grant.
6. Notice of a public hearing was given, and a public hearing was held.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following action:

A supplemental appropriation to the FY11 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Public Schools is approved as follows:

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Amount</u> | <u>Funding Source</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 01 Administration | \$ 158,312 | Federal Grant |
| 02 Mid-Level Administration | \$ 3,577,064 | |
| 12 Fixed Charges | <u>\$ 1,264,258</u> | |
| | Total \$ 4,999,634 | |

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council

Monday, February 28, 2011

Overview

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) was awarded a United States Department of Education (USDE) Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund Grant in September 2010 to help support the development of the MCPS Elementary Integrated Curriculum. This \$650 million grant program was among the most competitive ever offered through the USDE and was created to foster new thinking and new public-private partnerships to improve education. MCPS was one of only 49 applicants to win an i3 grant and one of only 11 school districts that won a grant. Overall, nearly 1,700 districts, schools, consortia, and nonprofits competed for an i3 grant.

MCPS' receipt of the i3 grant and its high score on the grant evaluation (15th out of the 49 winners) is a strong endorsement of the type of partnership MCPS formed with Pearson, LLC, to create an elementary curriculum that fully integrates the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics with science, social studies, art, music, media literacy, and physical education. The curriculum is being aligned with the new Common Core State Standards, recently adopted by Maryland and 41 other states, and utilizes the rigorous and successful curriculum already in use at MCPS. It will be among the first curriculums in the nation aligned to the new standards.

The grant requires a 20 percent private partner match to leverage additional investment in education and, as part of MCPS' application, Pearson, LLC, has committed \$1.3 million dollars in in-kind funding to the project. This funding includes support for the creation of online professional development modules and unique performance-based assessments. The i3 grant and the partnership with Pearson, LLC, will provide MCPS with more robust student assessments and teacher professional development than could have been developed without the support of a partner. A key design feature of the new curriculum is an online learning community for teachers that will deliver well-aligned, real-time professional development in a collaborative Web 2.0 environment. Educators will be able to interact with peers and instructional experts to share lessons and teaching strategies and solve complex instructional challenges.

Utilizing the existing MCPS curriculum as its foundation, the Elementary Integrated Curriculum has been in development since 2007. MCPS began a pilot of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum for kindergarten during the 2009–2010 school year and expanded the pilot to Grade 1 this year. There are currently 112 elementary schools piloting the Elementary Integrated Curriculum.

The innovative partnership with Pearson and the i3 grant allows MCPS—at a time of extraordinarily tight budgets—to accelerate the improvement of its curriculum to give students strong foundational skills in critical and creative thinking without additional expense.

Council staff questions for Project North Star Grant Appropriation worksession

1. The Pearson agreement references a “Program Development Plan” which appears to address many details of the arrangement. Has this plan been finalized? If so, please provide a copy. If not, what is the anticipated timeframe?

The Program Development Plan (PDP) has taken longer to complete than originally anticipated. Although work is under way on the development of curriculum, assessments, and professional development, this first-of-its-kind collaboration between a publisher and a school district has required

Monday, February 28, 2011

more in-depth initial planning than previously anticipated. The PDP is expected to be finalized by late spring, 2011. While Pearson and MCPS continue to work on the PDP, work on the curriculum continues unabated. MCPS remains on schedule to fully implement the Elementary Integrated Curriculum for use in MCPS.

2. The Pearson agreement references a payment to MCPS of \$625,000 within 30 days of the agreement date. Has this payment occurred? If not, what is the status of this payment?

Pearson paid \$625,000 in July 2010. A second payment of \$625,000 was received in December 2010.

3. The Pearson agreement references a total contribution to MCPS of \$4.5 million, half of which is an advance against royalties. Does the grant award affect this payment? Will it still be received in advance of royalties? How will the funds in this agreement relate to the grant funds?

The i3 grant funding obviates the need for an advance against royalties from Pearson to complete the work. As was stated in the contract, MCPS would have been required to repay the advance to Pearson once royalties from sales of the product were received. As a result of the i3 grant, MCPS amended the agreement since the advance was no longer necessary. Pearson has now paid MCPS \$1.25 million and committed \$1.3 million in in-kind funding to fulfill the financial obligations of the contract and the match requirement of the i3 grant. Since no advance against royalties is required to fund the project, MCPS will begin receiving its share of the royalties when sales of the curriculum commence.

4. The appropriation request states that Pearson will contribute its grant match as \$1.3 million of in-kind support. Is this in addition to any funds contributed through the agreement as identified above, or part of this consideration? Please detail what will constitute the in-kind support, and its timing.

The in-kind support is part of the final agreement with Pearson and was required for MCPS to be eligible to apply for and win the i3 grant. The in-kind funding consists of professional development and assessment development support that will be used in the development of the MCPS Elementary Integrated Curriculum and will result in professional development products (short video clips, online courses, multimedia presentations) and performance-based assessments of the Thinking and Academic Success Skills. These products will be available for MCPS teachers and staff on the MCPS EIC platform and will not require a separate log-in or visit to a Pearson site. These materials will become available as they are completed in 2011–2013. Consultation and support in development of MCPS professional development and assessments has already begun and is ongoing. Although MCPS is collaborating with Pearson on the development of the curriculum, professional development, and assessments, it is important to note that MCPS remains in complete control of what is taught in MCPS classrooms and content and resources utilized by MCPS teachers.

5. What is the relationship of the grant-funded positions to previous and current tax-supported curriculum development (or other MCPS) positions? Are any of these grant-funded positions filled or to be filled with employees previously employed by the schools and reduced in recent years' budgets? Do any of these positions replace positions reduced in recent years? Are any currently tax-supported employees switching to these grant-funded positions? What is the intent for these grant-funded employees when the three-year term of the grant is over?

Monday, February 28, 2011

The 13 grant-funded positions are new positions that allow MCPS to complete the development of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum in three years rather than the six years (Kindergarten to Grade 5) it would have taken if MCPS had only utilized tax-supported positions to complete the project. All of the employees in the grant-funded positions are staff who previously worked in central office or in school-based tax-supported positions. In some cases, staff members funded by the grant were in positions eliminated through the reorganization of central office in the spring of 2010. As a result of the reorganization, curriculum writing instructional specialist positions in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs transitioned to three-year rotating positions. All staff funded by the grant were informed that they were hired for three-year positions. At the end of the three-year grant, employees paid by the grant will move back into existing locally funded positions either in central office or in schools.

6. The appropriation request references an external evaluator that will create and administer an evaluation process for the project. The budget breakdown does not appear to reflect funds for the evaluator. What funds will be used for this effort, and what is the timeline for this effort?

The grant budget includes \$250,000 to support an external evaluation of the project. Most of those funds will be used to hire the external evaluator and a small portion will be used to assist in data collection inside MCPS. An RFP was released in early January 2011, inviting companies to apply to serve as the external evaluator. Submitted proposals are currently under review and a final vendor will be submitted to the Board of Education for approval in March.

7. How much total appropriation for the North Star project is budgeted in the FY12 request for the entrepreneurial fund, and what is the revenue source? Please provide a breakdown of the budget elements requested.

The Fiscal Year 2012 budget includes \$550,000 in the Entrepreneurial Activities Fund. These funds will primarily be utilized to provide substitute and stipend time for teachers to participate in professional development activities related to the curriculum. These expenditures are funded by payments from Pearson referenced in question number 2.

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

December 7, 2010

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework

Executive Summary

The purpose of this memorandum is to request final approval of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC) Framework (Attachment A). Curriculum frameworks are submitted to the Board of Education (Board) as required by Policy IFA, *Curriculum*, and in support of Goal 1 and Goal 2 of *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*, the MCPS strategic plan. Staff members have worked collaboratively since 2007 to develop the EIC. This process began with input and feedback from teachers, principals, and parents through focus groups and established committees and advisory meetings. This input and feedback, plus the current MCPS curriculum and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) adopted by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on June 22, 2010, became the foundation of the EIC Framework. On September 27, 2010, the Board took tentative action on the EIC Framework.

Since that time, additional feedback has been collected from a variety of stakeholders through focus groups, the MCPS website, and regularly scheduled meetings. Although feedback was solicited on the EIC Framework—which is the structure that articulates what students are expected to know and be able to do by each grade level in each subject area—most of the feedback received focused on the implementation of the curriculum, or features of the EIC, such as assessments, the online professional learning community, professional training and development, and parent access to the EIC. Very few comments were received on the framework itself. The feedback on the implementation will be used by the EIC Development Team as it continues to develop this innovative curriculum.

Background

MCPS' curriculum frameworks in English/reading language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies were approved in 2001, setting the stage for systemwide curriculum reform. In 2006, frameworks were approved in art, health, music, and physical education, following state approval of standards in those areas. In 2007, work began to integrate the existing MCPS curriculum at the elementary level. MCPS responded to research and ongoing stakeholder feedback, including comments from parents, to design a new model for curriculum implementation that included the following:

- Creative and critical thinking, as well as academic success skills
- Integrated curriculum to maximize instructional time and to save teachers' planning time
- Small group instruction in reading and mathematics
- State curriculum requirements in all content areas
- An all-electronic platform for disseminating curriculum

The Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum was developed in 2008 and was piloted in 90 schools during the 2009–2010 school year. Feedback from teachers, parents, and administrators was incorporated in the EIC, which is being voluntarily implemented in kindergarten and Grade 1 in 112 elementary schools. The new integrated model provides teachers with instructional strategies and resources for all content areas including reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, health education, and information literacy. The content for all subjects in the EIC is sequenced and organized to maximize the natural connections among content areas. In addition, during each marking period, the work in the integrated curriculum is tied together through the study of a critical or creative thinking skill and an academic success skill.

Development of Curriculum Frameworks

The EIC Framework sets the expectations for student learning that will enable principals, teachers, students, and parents to understand what students are expected to know and be able to do in each discipline at each grade level or at the end of a course. The framework is based on the standards, objectives, and philosophy of the MCPS mathematics, reading/language arts, science, and social studies frameworks approved in 2001 and the art, health, music, and physical education frameworks approved in 2006. The updated framework also reflects changes to mathematics and reading/language arts standards necessary to meet state adoption of the CCSS and includes new information literacy standards developed by MSDE.

The CCSS are very similar to the MCPS curriculum in scope and expectations, but the standards in mathematics have a greater emphasis on mastery of number concepts in the elementary grades. In addition, the CCSS identify a number of concepts as on grade level that previously had been classified by MCPS as above grade level. In addition, some content has been accelerated by a grade and some overall content has been added or deleted. There is greater emphasis on writing in the English/language arts CCSS than in the 2001–2010 MCPS curricula.

To maximize instructional time and to enhance instruction on the Thinking and Academic Success Skills, MCPS rearranged the content standards and indicators within each grade level to take advantage of the natural connections among content areas. The result is a curriculum that helps teachers plan more effectively and develops the critical and creative thinking and academic success skills that will help students build the habits that mark the academic mind—interpret critical perspectives, analyze complex sets of data, solve problems collaboratively, and understand connections among complex ideas. The integration of thinking skills and integrated content allows teachers to create authentic, engaging, and productive learning experiences for students. These changes, along with the curriculum content realignment to take place with the implementation of the CCSS, also will allow MCPS to place a greater emphasis on the development of writing.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement and input are critical to the curriculum development process, as they were during development of the 2001 curriculum frameworks previously approved by the Board of Education. Central services staff members, principals, teachers, parents, and representatives of higher education and/or businesses reviewed the development of the Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum from 2008 through June 2010. This input, along with the MCPS curriculum and the CCSS, adopted by MSDE on June 22, 2010, are the foundation for the EIC Framework.

From September 2010 through November 19, 2010, staff members in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs collected and considered stakeholder feedback from a variety of focus groups and regularly scheduled meetings. In addition, feedback was obtained through the MCPS website from October 15, 2010, through November 19, 2010. Attachment B lists the groups that provided feedback from September through November 2010. Throughout the fall, additional comments were gathered at various venues, including systemwide meetings such as the monthly Elementary Principals' Curriculum Update and the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OCIP) Principal Advisory Committee meetings.

Feedback was requested on the Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework. This feedback, along with the Maryland state curriculum, the recently adopted CCSS in English/language arts and mathematics, and MCPS expectations form the foundation for the EIC Framework. Only six comments of the more than 125 comments received focused specifically on the frameworks.

Throughout the 12 years of our reform efforts, we have experienced the challenges associated with systemic change. We have learned that frequent and two-way communication, ongoing opportunities for input and feedback from practitioners, and continuous improvement are required to effectively manage change. We are listening and learning from our stakeholders and incorporating feedback to create a stronger instructional program. Attachment C summarizes the positive feedback received on the EIC, while recommendations and considerations are listed in Attachment D. Comments gathered from other venues in addition to the focus groups and the MCPS website are reflected in Attachment E.

What Is Working Well: Elementary Integrated Curriculum

When providing feedback on the EIC, various stakeholders, including teachers, school-based administrators, school-based specialists, and parents focused primarily on the implementation of the curriculum and less on the framework itself. The majority of positive comments can be organized into the topics noted below.

Curriculum is Descriptive Not Prescriptive—Stakeholders responded favorably to the EIC being descriptive and not prescriptive. They said it tells teachers what to teach and not how to teach it, respecting teachers' professional judgment. They noted the variety of suggested strategies and appreciated the freedom the EIC provides for teachers to teach concepts in their own way while planning together as a team.

Integration of Content and the Thinking and Academic Success Skills—The majority of positive comments focused on the integration of all content areas and the Thinking and Academic Success Skills (TASS). Stakeholders appreciate the focus on science and social studies and see the integration as a way to engage students and to address the whole child. The EIC will help teachers to better understand their students, one commenter stated, while another said it will allow children to develop the ability to think of novel ways to approach situations and solve problems. The TASS are seen as important and well defined.

Online Professional Learning Community—The online professional learning community was cited as a positive feature, particularly the ability to post and rate activities and resources. Sharing resources and ideas across the county and being able to see what others are doing are additional positive aspects of the EIC. The various views of curriculum indicators across content areas and by quarters available on the myMCPS portal were recognized as fostering teaching and monitoring skills across content areas and across the school day. The EIC Development Team reports that between 400 and 600 individual staff users a day are logging on to the site.

Recommendations and Considerations: Elementary Integrated Curriculum

When soliciting feedback on the EIC Framework and the Thinking and Academic Success Skills, recommendations and considerations focused less on the framework and more on the implementation of the curriculum. Six comments were directly related to the EIC Framework. The comments and responses are detailed in the following chart.

**EIC Framework
Recommendations and Considerations**

| | Comment | Response |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Although elements of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) were mentioned in the superintendent's September 27, 2010, memorandum to the Board, on the EIC Framework, UDL was not specifically mentioned in the framework. | UDL is one of the foundational design principles of the EIC. An instructional specialist position on the team was purposefully hired to focus on UDL and all EIC writers and supervisors have been trained on UDL techniques in curriculum. Each model lesson adheres to the principles of UDL and provides teachers numerous examples of how to help students access and master curriculum goals. Though it was not specifically mentioned in the framework, a document consisting mainly of state required content skills and knowledge, reference to the foundational principals of UDL will be added to the framework. |
| 2 | When assessing goals and objective, uses broad terms that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills using a variety of means, consistent with the principles of UDL. Do not use more limited terms—such as write, explain, describe, narrate, and dictate—which prevent students from showing what they can do if they have difficulty communicating in these ways because of a disability or limited English proficiency. | UDL will continue to be part of the curriculum when articulating how students access knowledge (instruction) and the ways in which they demonstrate their learning (assessment). Additionally, principles of UDL will continue to be part of professional development for teachers and other users of the EIC. |
| 3 4 | 3 Include handwriting and keyboarding. 4 Include handwriting, with the increased emphasis on writing. | Handwriting and keyboarding are part of the English/language arts and information literacy curricula, respectively. The CCSS increased emphasis on writing will help students refine handwriting and keyboarding skills. |
| 5 | Place more emphasis on science and scientific fact and basic American history. | The EIC Framework includes foundational knowledge and skill requirements in science and history, including American history. |
| 6 | The math curriculum seems weak. While providing more depth to number-focused areas, this math curriculum is not seen as challenging. | The math content standards in the EIC are based on the CCSS, which are widely regarded as a challenging math curriculum designed to be competitive with other nations, such as Singapore and Japan, that are experiencing success in math. |

Recommendations and considerations received on the implementation of the EIC can be clustered into the following themes:

Curriculum and Instruction—Comments or questions were raised related to extending this sort of integration through Grade 12, giving students more time to think by slowing down the pace of instruction, and building concrete materials and guides for teachers. One commenter questioned if the EIC had a global perspective and how the EIC helped to prepare students to live in the 21st century, both culturally and technologically.

Professional Development—There were many recommendations on the need for professional development, not just on the technology related to the online environment, but also regarding teacher effectiveness. Using the sample lesson plans in professional development was cited as a recommendation. Online training has been offered to all teachers, including webinars that are archived for teachers to review at any time and short professional development pieces (usually a video or PowerPoint) that target essential skills in implementing the EIC. A series of voluntary face-to-face training in a computer lab setting for all teachers is being conducted. Additionally, upon request, the EIC Development Team conducts face-to-face training for school instructional leaders, including administrators, staff development teacher, math content coach, reading specialist, and art, music, and physical education teachers. Despite reductions in professional development resources caused by the current difficult financial situation, MCPS is planning additional training for the upcoming school year.

Parent Access to the EIC—Adding a portal for parents was seen as a way to enhance parent involvement. More communication with parents as to the rationale for and research behind the EIC was stated as a continuing need. Future design of the Instructional Center on *myMCPS* includes technical requirements for parent access. OCIP staff members will work with the Department of Family and Community Partnerships in developing content for the parent portal. In the meantime, parents can access updated information about the EIC by going to the MCPS website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/integrated/>.

Special Populations—Another topic of interest was guidance for special populations, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and advanced learners. The curriculum was designed using UDL principles, ensuring a wide variety of ways for students to access curriculum as well as demonstrate their understanding. An instructional specialist position on the team was purposefully hired to focus on UDL and all EIC writers and supervisors have been trained on UDL techniques in curriculum. Differentiation continues to be delivered primarily through small-group instruction. The model lessons included in the EIC are designed to reach a variety of students, including English language learners, students with disabilities, and advanced students. Each lesson also will include suggestions on how to adjust instruction for students who already know the material or are struggling to master the objectives.

Accountability—Comments regarding accountability ranged from developing Look Fors for administrators and teachers to evaluating the curriculum. Look Fors are being developed and will be distributed to principals and teachers over the next few months. As part of the Investing in Innovation (i3) grant, an external evaluation—looking at implementation and outcomes—will be conducted on the EIC.

Access to Technology—Considerations also were expressed related to the availability of technology and high-speed Internet connection across the county. All elementary schools received technology updates during the summer of 2010, including Internet Explorer 8.0 and Silverlight, which are required to access the EIC. The current network in elementary schools is sufficient to handle the demand of the EIC. However, all schools are scheduled to be upgraded to the county’s FiberNet, a high speed fiber optic network, before the end of calendar year 2013 through an *American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009* grant.

Additional Comments: Elementary Integrated Curriculum

In addition to the feedback collected at focus group meetings and via the MCPS website, feedback also was received from principals, teachers, and parent representatives. Comments were gathered on the three topics listed below in addition to those already mentioned.

Availability of Assessments—All summative assessments remain the same with the exception of mathematics. The MCPS Assessment Program in Primary Reading will continue to be administered three times per year using the hand-helds. Based on the alignment with the CCSS, mathematics unit assessments will need to be replaced. Since many of the indicators in the EIC are the same as those in the previous curriculum, teachers can use the formative assessments previously developed. Additionally, each sample learning task in the EIC includes a formative check for understanding.

Alignment to Standards-based Grading and Reporting—With the adoption of the CCSS, standards-based grading and reporting requires realignment. The EIC provides a good way to align standards-based grading and reporting to the CCSS and incorporate feedback from the elementary Online Achievement and Reporting System schools to end up with a better overall result. Standards-based grading and reporting will be fully aligned to the EIC for implementation next year. It is anticipated that specifics will be shared with teachers and principals in the spring.

Availability of Materials and Resources—Sample learning tasks may reference a book, for example, “Use a book such as *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, or a similar book that develops concepts of print...” Books currently referenced in the EIC are available in most schools. In cases in which the EIC Development Team believes a title is essential to the curriculum and is not widely available, the book is purchased centrally to send to schools.

Next Steps

Final approval of the EIC Framework sets the stage for the continued development of the EIC and the alignment of our curriculum to the CCSS. Included in the development process are ongoing opportunities to listen and learn from our stakeholders. Input and feedback will be reviewed and incorporated, as appropriate.

The EIC will not include instructional guides that have been used in the past. Instead, the curriculum lives in a digital environment in the form of the online learning community that includes planning tools, professional development, sample learning tasks, and instructional resources for teachers.

We cannot underestimate the impact that change has on an organization. Although most of the indicators in the EIC are taken directly from the existing curriculum, the new format, added resources, alternate assessments, and new Look Fors create a learning curve for all users.

Future development of the online learning community will include a portal for parents to access resources. In the interim, parent resources for the EIC are located on the MCPS website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/integrated/>.

The following resolution is presented for your consideration to conclude this stage of the curriculum development process.

WHEREAS, On February 13, 2001, the Montgomery County Board of Education approved a curriculum policy that guides the development, implementation, and monitoring of curricula throughout the school system; and

WHEREAS, The Montgomery County Board of Education approved the curriculum frameworks in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies on July 2, 2001, and approved frameworks in visual arts, general music, health education, and physical education on April 20, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics on June 22, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has created the research-based Thinking and Academic Success Skills Framework; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has woven the Thinking and Academic Success Skills into the existing curriculum frameworks along with the Common Core State Standards to form the innovative Elementary Integrated Curriculum; and

WHEREAS, Feedback and input from stakeholders have been used to develop and refine the Elementary Integrated Curriculum and Thinking and Academic Success Skills Framework; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montgomery County Board of Education grant final approval of the MCPS Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework, which combines existing elementary curriculum, Common Core State Standards, and Thinking and Academic Success Skills as the foundation for the development of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum.

At the table for today's discussion are Mr. Erick J. Lang, associate superintendent, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs; Mr. Martin M. Creel, director, Department of Enriched and Innovative Programs; Ms. Theresa A. Cepaitis, director, Elementary Integrated Curriculum Team; and Mrs. Deann M. Collins, principal, Montgomery Knolls Elementary School.

JDW:jls

Attachments

Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework

Montgomery County Public Schools

The Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC) Framework is the guiding curriculum document for the Elementary Integrated Curriculum and represents the elementary portion of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Pre-K–12 Curriculum Frameworks. The EIC Framework contains the detailed indicators and objectives that describe what students should know and be able to do in Kindergarten through Grade 5 in Art, General Music, Health Education, Information Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Education, Reading Language Arts, Science and Engineering, and Social Studies.

The indicators and objectives in this framework for Art, General Music, Health Education, Physical Education, Science and Engineering, and Social Studies are from previously approved frameworks. The indicators and objectives for Reading Language Arts and Mathematics are from the Common Core State Standards. The indicators and objectives for Information Literacy are from a recent Maryland State Department of Education update to Information Literacy standards. The standards and indicators for the Thinking and Academic Success Skills were developed by MCPS based on research and implementation practice.

The EIC Framework is divided into three major sections: Philosophy and Rationale, Grade Level Overviews, and Detailed Content Objectives by Grade Level. The Philosophy and Rationale section contains the overarching Pre-K–12 Frameworks for the content areas and detailed framework for the Thinking and Academic Success Skills. The Grade Level Overviews are a single page synopsis of the Desired Outcomes for all contents by grade level. Desired Outcomes are a high level synthesis of the content area objectives and will form the basis of measurement topics for reporting purposes. The Detailed Content Objectives by Grade Level go down to the objective level for each content area at each grade, representing all that students should know and be able to do at that grade level.

The EIC Framework is the source of “what to teach” for the online Instruction Center, the primary tool teachers use to plan instruction. The Instruction Center contains resources and tools that guide “how to teach” and information for implementing the Elementary Integrated Curriculum. The resources and tools in the Instruction Center are designed using principles of instruction, including Universal Design for Learning, Baldrige tools, Understanding by Design, differentiated instruction, standards-based instruction, equitable practices, and working with diverse learners. Each of these instructional philosophies is intended to provide higher expectations and more access to the curriculum for each child. The principles of Universal Design for Learning, flexible presentation of instruction, flexible student engagement, and flexible student expression of understanding best summarize how greater access and high expectations are achieved for each child – even when national or state standards use language that may appear restrictive for some learners.

16

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

November 9, 2010

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Recommended Fiscal Year 2011 Supplemental Appropriation for Project North Star

Recommendation in Brief

Authorization is requested to receive and expend, subject to County Council approval, a Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 supplemental appropriation of \$4,999,634 from the United States Department of Education (USDE) for the three-year Investment in Innovation (i3) Fund Project North Star.

Background

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been awarded federal Investment in Innovation (i3) Fund Grant to help support the development of the MCPS integrated elementary school curriculum. MCPS was one of 49 applicants to be awarded an i3 grant, and one of only 11 school districts to do so. Nearly 1,700 districts, schools, consortia, and nonprofits applied for part of the \$650 million in grants offered by USDE. With the i3 grant, MCPS will continue its partnership with Pearson, LLC, to create an elementary grades curriculum that fully integrates the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics with science, social studies, art, music, media literacy, and physical education. The curriculum will be aligned with the new Common Core State Standards, recently adopted by Maryland and 39 other states, and utilizes the rigorous and successful curriculum already in use at MCPS.

The grant requires a 20 percent match and, as part of MCPS' application, Pearson, LLC, has committed \$1.3 million dollars in in-kind funding to the project. This funding includes support for the creation of online professional development modules.

The i3 grant and the partnership with Pearson, LLC, provide MCPS with more robust student assessments and teacher professional development than could have been developed without the

support of a partner. A key design feature of the new curriculum is an online learning community for teachers that will deliver well-aligned, real-time professional development in a collaborative Web 2.0 environment. Educators will be able to interact with peers and instructional experts to share lessons and teaching strategies and solve complex instructional challenges.

Utilizing the existing MCPS curriculum as its foundation, the Elementary Integrated Curriculum has been in development since 2007. MCPS began a pilot of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum for kindergarten during the 2009–2010 school year and expanded the pilot to Grade 1 this year. There are currently 112 elementary schools piloting the Elementary Integrated Curriculum.

At the August 21, 2008, meeting of the Board of Education, Board members received an update on the development of the platform and initial components of the online elementary and secondary curriculum. During the January 12, 2010, meeting of the Board of Education, Board members were updated on the development of the Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum. The Board approved the contract for Pearson, LLC, to publish the Elementary Integrated Curriculum at its meeting of June 8, 2010, and at the September 27, 2010, Board meeting, members of the Board of Education preliminarily approved the Elementary Curriculum Frameworks. Staff members currently are collecting feedback on the frameworks. Following the feedback period, the Board is scheduled to take final action on the Elementary Curriculum Frameworks at its December 7, 2010, meeting.

Support of Board of Education Mission

Program activities of Project North Star are aligned specifically with the goals and strategies of the MCPS strategic plan, *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*, specifically Goal 1: Ensure Success for Every Student, and Goal 2: Provide an Effective Instructional Program. The new integrated curriculum provides all students with opportunities to develop critical thinking and academic success skills, which will enable them to attain the Seven Keys to College Readiness, the pathway to college readiness at graduation. Additionally, Project North Star supports each of the following Board of Education academic priorities:

- Organize and optimize resources for improved academic results.
- Align rigorous curriculum, delivery of instruction, and assessment for continuous improvement of student achievement.

Relationship to Ongoing Program

MCPS has developed a comprehensive curriculum by content area at the elementary level. The curriculum resources for kindergarten, mathematics, and reading language arts were last updated in 2003. To keep current with research and ongoing stakeholder feedback, a cross-functional

development team was established in 2007 to design a new model for curriculum that included the following:

- Development of creative and critical thinking, as well as academic success skills
- Integrated curriculum to maximize instructional time and save teachers' planning time
- Small group instruction in reading and mathematics
- Attainment of state curriculum requirements in all content areas
- An electronic platform for disseminating curriculum

The new integrated model provides teachers with instructional strategies and resources for all content areas including reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, health education, and informational literacy. This new vehicle for curriculum delivery and implementation includes and builds upon curriculum developed and implemented during the last decade and is aligned to the new Common Core State Standards. The integrated curriculum is more responsive to how students learn and it is anticipated that more students of diverse backgrounds will find the curriculum engaging, leading to enhanced achievement. The customizable nature of the new integrated curriculum materials means that teachers will be able to adapt them to meet a range of learning styles and any specific learning needs of their students.

Evaluation

A request for proposals (RFPs) is under development through the MCPS procurement process to identify an external evaluator for this project. The external evaluator will create and administer an evaluation process aligned with the goals of the project. This process will be used to monitor gains in student achievement. The evaluator will prepare the federal reports summarizing these data and make recommendations for meeting project goals.

Use of Funds

Funds will be used to provide for a project supervisor position, 11 elementary instructional specialist positions, contractual services, supplies, and employee benefits. Funds for local and out-of-state travel have been designated for grant staff members to attend USDE-required meetings and conferences. The attached chart outlines the use of funds.

Recommended Resolution

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized to receive and expend, subject to County Council approval, a Fiscal Year 2011 supplemental appropriation of \$4,999,634 for the Investment in Innovation Fund Project North Star Grant, in the following categories:

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Positions*</u> | <u>Amount</u> |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Administration | 1.0 | \$ 158,312 |
| 2 Mid-Level Administration | 11.0 | 3,577,064 |
| 12 Fixed Charges | | 1,264,258 |
| <u>Total</u> | <u>12.0</u> | <u>\$ 4,999,634</u> |

Positions*

11.0 instructional specialists

1.0 supervisor

and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the county executive and County Council; and be it further

Resolved, That the county executive be requested to recommend approval of this resolution to the County Council.

JDW:LAB:MCS:jp

Attachment

**Project North Star
Three-Year Summary**

| Project North Star | FTE | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Total |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Indirect Costs | | 46,512 | 55,900 | 55,900 | 158,312 |
| Project Supervisor | 1.0 | 0 | 113,572 | 113,572 | 227,144 |
| Elementary Intergrated Curriculum Instructional Specialists | 11.0 | 934,600 | 1,028,060 | 1,028,060 | 2,990,720 |
| Contractual Services | | 89,250 | 89,250 | 89,250 | 267,750 |
| Office Supplies | | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 30,000 |
| Travel Local | | 5,500 | 6,600 | 6,600 | 18,700 |
| Travel Out | | 14,250 | 14,250 | 14,250 | 42,750 |
| Workers Compensation | | 3,738 | 4,567 | 4,567 | 12,872 |
| Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) | | 71,497 | 87,335 | 87,335 | 246,167 |
| Employee Benefits | | 126,630 | 151,956 | 151,956 | 430,542 |
| Retirement | | 166,826 | 203,781 | 203,781 | 574,388 |
| Unemployment | | 85 | 102 | 102 | 289 |
| | | 1,468,888 | 1,765,373 | 1,765,373 | 4,999,634 |

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

September 27, 2010

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education
From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework

Executive Summary

The purpose of this memorandum is to request your preliminary approval of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Elementary Integrated Curriculum (EIC) Framework (attachment). Curriculum frameworks are submitted to the Board of Education as required by Board of Education Policy IFA, *Curriculum*, and in support of Goal 1 and Goal 2 of *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*, the MCPS strategic plan. The framework establishes the organization and sequence of what students should know and be able to do at the end of each subject, grade level, or course. The standards and objectives included in this framework are from content frameworks previously approved by the Board of Education in all areas, except for information literacy, thinking and academic success skills, reading/language arts, and mathematics. The standards and objectives for reading/language arts and mathematics in this framework are based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Maryland State Board of Education adopted the CCSS in English/language arts and mathematics on June 22, 2010. All curriculum and assessments in Maryland within these two critical areas will be based on the CCSS. The Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs will submit a recommended secondary framework in English and mathematics based on the CCSS for approval later this school year. The Thinking and Academic Success Skills were developed by MCPS as part of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum and are submitted pending further collection of feedback and approval at a later Board meeting. This framework includes new information literacy standards developed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Background

MCPS' pre-K-12 curriculum frameworks in English/reading language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies were approved in 2001, setting the stage for systemwide curriculum

reform. In 2006, frameworks were approved in art, health, music, and physical education, following state approval of standards in those areas. In 2007, work began to integrate the existing MCPS curriculum at the elementary level. At the January 12, 2010, Board of Education meeting, a memorandum, *Update on Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum*, was presented for discussion. MCPS responded to research and ongoing stakeholder feedback, including comments from parents, to design a new model for curriculum implementation that included—

- Creative and critical thinking as well as academic success skills;
- Integrated curriculum to maximize instructional time and to save teachers' planning time;
- Small group instruction in reading and mathematics;
- State curriculum requirements in all content areas; and
- An all-electronic platform for disseminating curriculum.

The Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum was developed in 2008 and was piloted in 90 schools during the 2009–2010 school year. Feedback from teachers, parents, and administrators was incorporated in the EIC, now being voluntarily implemented in kindergarten and Grade 1 in 112 elementary schools. The new integrated model provides teachers with instructional strategies and resources for all content areas including reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, health education, and information literacy. The content for all subjects in the EIC is sequenced and organized to maximize the natural connections among content areas. In addition, during each marking period, the work in the integrated curriculum is tied together through the study of a critical or creative thinking skill and an academic success skill. For each week in a marking period, unifying questions help teachers provide an instructional focus on these skills that permeates all content areas. For example, analysis and collaboration are the target critical thinking skill and academic success skill in the first marking period in kindergarten.

Philosophy

MCPS is committed to the following beliefs about curriculum:

- The goal of curriculum is to provide all students with essential learnings and knowledge to prepare them for success in higher-level courses, and to become productive citizens and lifelong learners.
- The curriculum is integrated and well balanced among the disciplines and appropriate for all students.
- The instruction of critical and creative thinking and academic success skills will help all students become lifelong learners.
- The curriculum structures include Universal Design for Learning principles and culturally relevant curriculum best practices to provide equitable opportunities for all students to succeed academically.
- The curriculum is both challenging and engaging, so that students feel a sense of accomplishment and understand its relevance to their lives.
- The curriculum aligns essential learnings and knowledge, instruction, and formal assessments.

- The development and implementation of curriculum reflects current research, best practices, monitoring of student progress, and use of technology to support instruction.

Development of Curriculum Frameworks

The EIC Framework sets the expectations for student learning that will enable principals, teachers, students, and parents to understand what students are expected to know and be able to do in each discipline at each grade level or at the end of a course. The EIC Framework is based on the standards, objectives, and philosophy of the MCPS mathematics, reading/language arts, science, and social studies frameworks approved in 2001 and the art, health, music, and physical education frameworks approved in 2006. The new framework also reflects changes to mathematics and reading/language arts standards necessary to meet state adoption of the CCSS and includes new information literacy standards developed by MSDE.

The CCSS were developed by a consortium of states to ensure that all students are well prepared for a world that increasingly demands college-level skills from every student who graduates from high school. The 2001–2010 MCPS curricula in mathematics and reading/language arts included in the EIC were designed to meet high levels of instruction, but have been adjusted to meet the change in grade-to-grade sequencing of objectives of the CCSS. The CCSS are very similar to the MCPS curriculum in scope and expectations, but the standards in mathematics have a greater emphasis on mastery of number concepts at the elementary grades. In addition, the CCSS identify a number of concepts as on grade level that previously had been classified by MCPS as above grade level. For example, some mathematics content taught in Grade 2 or originally in the acceleration lane for Grade 1 is now part of the required curriculum for all students in Grade 1. In addition, some content has been accelerated by a grade and some overall content has been added or deleted. The emphasis on writing in the English/language arts CCSS is stronger than the 2001–2010 MCPS curriculum. The EIC Framework reflects these changes and will establish a firm foundation for MCPS as it adjusts to anticipated changes in state assessments. Maryland is a governing member of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), one of two consortia developing assessments for the CCSS. MCPS is carefully monitoring the development of assessments for the CCSS to ensure that our students will be well-prepared for any changes in state assessments.

The EIC Framework also contains the standards and objectives for the Thinking and Academic Success Skills, which form the core of the integrated comprehensive curriculum.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Critical Thinking Skills | Analysis—Breaking down a whole into parts that may not be immediately obvious and examining the parts so that the structure of the whole is understood. |
| | Evaluation—Weighing evidence, examining claims, and questioning facts to make judgments based upon criteria. |
| | Synthesis—Putting parts together to build understanding of a whole concept or to form a new or unique whole. |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Creative Thinking Skills | Elaboration—Adding details that expand, enrich, or embellish. |
| | Flexibility—Being open and responsive to new and diverse ideas and strategies and moving freely among them. |
| | Fluency—Generating multiple responses to a problem or an idea. |
| | Originality—Creating ideas and solutions that are novel or unique to the individual, group, or situation. |
| Academic Success Skills | Collaboration—Working effectively and respectfully to reach a group goal. |
| | Intellectual Risk Taking—Accepting uncertainty or challenging the norm to reach a goal. |
| | Effort/Motivation/Persistence—Working diligently and applying effective strategies to achieve a goal or solve a problem; continuing in the face of obstacles and competing pressures. |
| | Metacognition—Knowing and being aware of one's own thinking and having the ability to monitor and evaluate one's own thinking. |

To maximize instructional time and to enhance instruction on the Thinking and Academic Success Skills, MCPS rearranged the content standards and indicators within each grade level to take advantage of the natural connections among content areas. The result is a curriculum that helps teachers plan more effectively and develops the critical and creative thinking and academic success skills that will help students build the habits that mark the academic mind—interpret critical perspectives, analyze complex sets of data, solve problems collaboratively, and understand connections among complex ideas. For example, analysis is presented at the kindergarten or Grade 1 level as breaking ideas apart and looking for patterns. In science, students look for patterns in weather. With the arrangement of standards in the EIC Framework, students will be able to collect age-appropriate data about weather and convert it into tables and graphs as part of their study of mathematics. They then will look for patterns in the data and, with prompting and guidance from their teachers, will attempt a generalization about the weather from the data they have collected. This integration of thinking skills and integrated content allows teachers to create authentic, engaging, and productive learning experiences for students. These changes, along with the curriculum content realignment to take place with the implementation of the CCSS, also will allow MCPS to place a greater emphasis on the development of writing.

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement and input are critical parts of the curriculum development process, as they were for the 2001 curriculum frameworks previously approved by the Board of Education. Central services staff members, principals, teachers, parents, and representatives of higher education and/or businesses reviewed the development of the Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum from 2008–2010. Staff members in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs are collecting and considering stakeholder feedback through the Curriculum Advisory Assembly, Councils For Teaching and Learning, principals advisory committees, and parent and

community focus groups representing the rich diversity of MCPS. Feedback on the EIC and Thinking and Academic Success Skills will be used to improve the implementation of the curriculum.

Development Partnership

Goal 3 of *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence* calls on MCPS to strengthen productive partnerships for education that support student achievement. MCPS has partnered with Pearson Education, Inc. (Pearson), the world-leading textbook and assessment publisher, to accelerate and enhance the development of EIC from a simple framework to a user-friendly online learning community with curriculum resources, lessons, assessments, and professional development. This collaborative partnership will allow MCPS to build out the framework in three years instead of five and improve the quality of assessments and professional development offered in the online learning community. The recent award of a United States Department of Education Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund Grant recognized the importance of this partnership for students in Montgomery County and across the nation. The i3 funds will be used to support MCPS development efforts and reduce costs. It is important to note that neither the partnership with Pearson nor the i3 grant changes the fundamental goals of MCPS curriculum expressed in the EIC Framework. MCPS staff members, parents, and students remain as the only parties making instructional decisions for the children of Montgomery County. Additionally, alignment of the EIC with the CCSS will ensure that MCPS' students meet or exceed proficiency on future assessments designed by MSDE to gauge college and career readiness.

Next Steps

Approval of this document sets the stage for the continued development of the EIC and alignment to the CCSS. The EIC will not include instructional guides. The curriculum is in the form of the online learning community that includes planning tools, professional development, sample learning tasks, and instructional resources for teachers. Future development of the online learning community will include parent access to resources. For this year, parent resources for the EIC are located on the MCPS website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/integrated>.

The changes in the CCSS and the work of the PARCC consortium will require MCPS to realign some of its assessments. During the 2010–2011 school year, schools implementing the EIC will use formative assessments to report student progress to kindergarten and Grade 1 parents. MCPS also will study the implementation of the CCSS in kindergarten and Grade 1, review possible acceleration models, and plan for adjustments that may be required by new state assessments.

In the 2011–2012 school year, mathematics progress reporting for kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 students will include benchmark assessments aligned to the CCSS. Schools will continue to use existing mathematics assessments for students in Grades 3–5. Full implementation of the EIC in Grades 3–5 is planned for the 2012–2013 school year.

The following resolution is presented for your consideration regarding the curriculum development process.

WHEREAS, On February 13, 2001, the Montgomery County Board of Education approved a curriculum policy that guides the development, implementation, and monitoring of curricula throughout the school system; and

WHEREAS, The Montgomery County Board of Education approved the curriculum frameworks in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies on July 2, 2001, and approved frameworks in visual arts, general music, health education, and physical education on April 20, 2006; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in English/language arts and mathematics on June 22, 2010; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has created the research-based Thinking and Academic Success Skills Framework; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has woven the Thinking and Academic Success Skills into the existing curriculum frameworks along with the Common Core State Standards to form the innovative Elementary Integrated Curriculum; and

WHEREAS, Feedback and input from stakeholders will be used to develop and refine the Elementary Integrated Curriculum and Thinking and Academic Success Skills framework; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montgomery County Board of Education grant preliminary approval of the MCPS Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework, which combines existing elementary curriculum, Common Core State Standards, and Thinking and Academic Success Skills as the foundation for the development of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum.

At the table for tonight's discussion are Mr. Erick J. Lang, associate superintendent, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs; Mr. Martin M. Creel, director, Department of Enriched and Innovative Programs; Ms. Theresa A. Cepaitis, director, Elementary Integrated Curriculum Team; Mrs. Niki T. Hazel, supervisor, Elementary Integrated Curriculum Team; and Mr. A. Raymond Myrtle, supervisor, Elementary Integrated Curriculum Team. Ms. Betsy Brown, director, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, is in the audience to help answer Board members' questions.

JDW:smw

Attachment -- copy available for review in the Board Office



Montgomery County Public Schools

Media Announcement

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Dana Toffig, Director

Phone: 301-279-3853

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

MCPS Awarded Federal Innovation Grant for Integrated Curriculum

August 5, 2010

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been awarded \$5 million from the federal Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund to help support the development of a new, integrated elementary school curriculum. MCPS was one of 49 applicants to win a coveted i3 grant, and one of only 11 school districts.

Nearly 1,700 districts, schools, consortia and non-profits applied for part of the \$650 million in grants. MCPS' application received a score of 100.39, the 15th highest overall.

With the i3 grant, MCPS will continue its unprecedented partnership with Pearson, LLC, to create a groundbreaking elementary grades curriculum that fully integrates the core subjects of reading and mathematics with science, social studies, art, music and physical education. The curriculum will be aligned with the new Common Core Standards, recently adopted by Maryland and 34 other states, and is based on the rigorous and successful curriculum already in use at MCPS. (Learn more about the integrated curriculum)

"As parents, we are concerned that the focus on reading and mathematics, especially in early grades, has forced other important subjects to the side. The integrated curriculum will make sure our K-5 students receive a more robust and engaging education," said Patricia O'Neill, president of the Montgomery County Board of Education. "I'm very pleased and honored that we were chosen from a very large pool of applicants to receive this grant."

The grant requires a 20 percent match and, as part of MCPS' application, Pearson has committed \$1 million to the project.

"This public-private partnership allows us to innovate and improve, even in these very difficult economic times," said Superintendent of Schools Jerry D. Weast. "We are pleased that President Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan have created a fund that allows this type of collaboration to take root for the benefit of our students."

Already in development, the integrated curriculum will foster deep student knowledge across all content areas rather than forcing a choice between a rich, comprehensive curriculum and one narrowly focused on the assessed subjects of reading and math. During the 2009-2010 school year, MCPS began a six-year development and implementation process by piloting the integrated curriculum in kindergarten. The feedback from teachers, principals, and parents was extremely positive.

The grant, and the partnership with Pearson, offers MCPS the opportunity to complete the development of the curriculum in three years, instead of six, and provides MCPS with more robust student assessments and teacher professional development than could have developed without the support of a partner.

A key design feature of the new curriculum is an online learning community for teachers that will deliver well-aligned, real-time professional development in a collaborative Web 2.0 environment. Educators will be able to interact with peers and instructional experts to share lessons and teaching strategies, and solve complex and commonplace instructional challenges.

Pearson and MCPS will market the integrated curriculum for use in other school districts around the country, and Montgomery County would receive royalties from any sales. However, MCPS retains complete control over what will be taught in local classrooms.

- VIDEO: Learn more about the i3 Grant and the Integrated Curriculum

28

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

June 8, 2010

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Approval of Contract with Pearson Education, Inc.

Recommendation in Brief

Approval is requested to enter into a contract with Pearson Education, Inc. (Pearson) to jointly develop an online integrated elementary curriculum for the benefit of students in Montgomery County and across the nation. Together, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Pearson will produce a Kindergarten through Grade 5 elementary curriculum based upon the Integrated Kindergarten Curriculum MCPS has already created and deployed this school year. Pearson will provide development funds to MCPS to pay for positions in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs (OCIP) to accelerate the development of the new curriculum. Pearson will market and sell the curriculum and MCPS will receive royalties from the sale of the curriculum.

Background Information

MCPS and Pearson are creating an unprecedented public-private partnership that will greatly accelerate the development of a unique integrated curriculum aligned to the Common Core Standards and based on the proven, successful and highly rigorous MCPS curriculum. The partnership with Pearson, the world's largest education company, is called *Project North Star* and the shared goal is to develop and implement the MCPS Online Elementary Integrated Curriculum and to share this innovative program with other schools and school districts through Pearson's sales and marketing capability.

During the January 12, 2010 Board of Education meeting, you received an update on the development and initial implementation of the integrated kindergarten curriculum developed over the last two years with stakeholder feedback. Teachers and administrators provided extremely positive feedback on this integrated model of our existing curriculum and professional development and requested an accelerated implementation schedule. However, in light of current budget circumstances, MCPS could implement only one grade level per year, extending the implementation schedule to 2015. In addition, due to limited resources, it would be challenging for MCPS to fully develop the assessment and professional development components of the integrated curriculum without additional professional expertise. In partnership with Pearson, MCPS will be able to accelerate the implementation schedule, fully develop instructional, assessment, and professional development resources, and share best practices beyond Montgomery County.

Project North Star includes development of integrated content and processes in an innovative manner that improves instruction and saves teachers and students valuable instructional time. Critical and creative thinking skills, and academic success skills form the nucleus around which the delivery of reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education content is carefully planned by marking period. The power of making connections among content areas will help unleash the natural curiosity of young children and the habits of that mark the academic mind—persistence, questioning, and collaboration.

Pearson will also bring its considerable assets and expertise to help develop the first generation of Common Core Standards assessments that measure achievement of challenging academic standards alongside the skills that develop advanced learners. The final key design feature of this project will be curriculum-aligned, just-in-time professional development offered in a collaborative Web 2.0 environment. Teachers will be able to harness the power of their peers and instructional experts to solve the complex and commonplace challenges they face every day.

Project North Star recognizes that the crucial habits that affect life-long learning are most easily developed in elementary school. Further, this project is based on the research-backed notion that these habits are teachable and not part of a predetermined life-pattern based on race, neighborhood, gender, or income. Well-supported teachers who have high expectations for all students, backed by high standards, open the doors to those traditionally under-prepared for a college education. By complementing the college level trajectory reflected in the Common Core Standards and MCPS curriculum, *Project North Star* promises to help change the face of education in Montgomery County and across the United States.

Project North Star provides MCPS with much needed resources during a historically lean budgetary era. Through this partnership MCPS will be able to fully develop the integrated curriculum for implementation in Grades K-2 for school year 2011-2012, and implementation of Grades 3-5 for 2012-2013, two years ahead of schedule. To meet this accelerated timeline MCPS is using resources from Pearson in the areas of curriculum development, professional development, and assessments to form collaborative teams in OCIP. The teams will be managed by a Pearson and MCPS Leadership Team comprised of managers with extensive experience in complex curriculum, assessment, professional development, and online platform production. *Project North Star* will be hosted on *myMCPS* in Montgomery County and on the Pearson technology platform to purchase and implementation in other school districts.

In accordance with the Agreement, Pearson will contribute up to \$4,500,000 and its expertise in assessments, professional development, and publishing. One-half of these development funds will be considered an advance against future royalties. With this collaborative effort, MCPS will get a professional and fully developed integrated curriculum for Grades K-5 within two years and a minimum 2.5% in royalties on domestic sales. MCPS has applied for a federal Investing in Innovation Fund grant to facilitate the development of the program with Pearson providing the required private matching contribution. The Agreement requires MCPS and Pearson each to contribute pre-existing materials and collaboratively developed materials to the joint project and, consistent with industry practice, vests copyright ownership in the joint project to Pearson.

This is an exciting, groundbreaking opportunity that will benefit Montgomery County students and students across the nation for years to come.

Recommended Resolution

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has demonstrated the capacity to positively impact students through high academic standards, high quality instruction, and data-driven decision making; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools has built a foundation for continued success through the development and creation of an integrated model of the existing Montgomery County Public Schools curriculum where the disciplines are not isolated from each other, but tied to the critical and creative thinking and academic success skills that help students form an academic identity; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools brings the foundational materials, instructional experience, and vision that can be utilized to fully develop an integrated curriculum program that can be used across the nation; and

WHEREAS, Pearson is a leading international education company in the development of instructional programs and assessments and brings a wealth of development expertise that can ensure a more rapid development of the integrated curriculum as well as more robust and complete assessments, curriculum materials, and professional development; and

WHEREAS, In partnership, Montgomery County Public Schools and Pearson can combine targeted resources to support an accelerated implementation of the elementary integrated curriculum that will reduce teacher instructional preparation time, expand curricular focus to include all disciplines, provide just-in-time professional development experiences, and host an online professional learning community through *myMCPS*, all designed to improve instruction in the various content areas and focus on high expectations, continued academic achievement, and the development of an academic identity in all students; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Montgomery County Board of Education enters into a contractual agreement with Pearson to secure financial resources, services and professional expertise necessary to accelerate, fully develop and implement all components of the elementary integrated curriculum by 2013.

JDW:BKE:spm

Attachment

New Partnership To Develop College-Ready Elementary Curriculum

One-of-a-kind Program Among First to Be Tied to Common Core Standards

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Pearson have forged an unprecedented public-private partnership to develop a unique integrated curriculum that will prepare elementary school students for a lifetime of learning. The integrated curriculum will be aligned to the new Common Core Standards and is based upon the successful and highly rigorous curriculum already implemented in MCPS.

This ground-breaking curriculum fully integrates the core subjects of reading and math with science, social studies, art, music and physical education by building a student's critical and creative thinking and academic success skills across disciplines. The program, North Star, weaves together all of the content areas in a way that will save teachers valuable planning time and encourages compelling and engaging instruction. Instead of choosing between a rich, comprehensive curriculum and the narrowly assessed topics of reading and math, the integrated curriculum deeply develops student knowledge across all content areas to foster long-term academic success. MCPS is currently implementing an integrated kindergarten curriculum that has been enthusiastically embraced by teachers and will serve as the model for this project.

"This curriculum is exactly what our children in Montgomery County deserve and our country needs. It reminds me of when we went from black and white television to full color—this curriculum will be that different and engaging," said Jerry D. Weast, superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools. "MCPS has demonstrated that all children can learn at high levels if you have high expectations for every child and give the teachers the tools and support they need in the classroom. With North Star, we will take the best that MCPS and Pearson have to offer and create an exceptional program for our schools and school systems across America."

MCPS and Pearson experts will collaborate over the next two years to develop the curriculum and roll it out within MCPS, while preparing for national distribution. In addition, Pearson will dedicate assets and expertise to help develop the first generation of Common Core Standards assessments that measure achievement of challenging academic standards alongside the skills that develop advanced learners. The final key design feature of this project will be curriculum-aligned, just-in-time professional development offered in a collaborative Web 2.0 environment. Teachers will be able to access peer and instructional experts to solve the complex and commonplace challenges they face every day.

"What Montgomery County Public Schools has accomplished for its students over the last ten years is inspirational for the rest of the nation. We are honored to join with this outstanding school system to co-develop North Star, which will transform elementary instruction," said Marjorie Scardino, chief executive of Pearson. "We all know that students must have a strong educational foundation in elementary school if they are going to be successful. We believe North Star will provide that foundation and help prepare the next generation for the rigors of high school, college and beyond."

Ten years ago, in order to provide an academic structure to support higher achievement, MCPS rewrote and mapped its curriculum, instruction and assessments to college-ready standards. The goal was to prepare all children to take Advanced Placement level courses in high school, proven indicators of college readiness. To do this, district leaders, like many educators, believed this preparation had to begin in the earliest grades. Research shows that an elementary student's content skills, conceptual thinking, and self-perception as a student are established in elementary school. Developing a strong academic identity in elementary school prepares a student for a lifetime of learning.

Two years ago, in an effort to improve its students' performance and save teachers planning and instruction time, MCPS surveyed the latest research and concluded that, in addition to developing specific content knowledge and processes, its curriculum needed to develop critical and creative thinking skills more effectively. Rather than using a theme-based integration, the new integrated model emphasizes skills that transcend any given subject, allowing each content area to maintain its academic integrity while helping students learn more. MCPS researchers also found that students who become more self aware of how they learn become more confident and are better prepared to tackle new academic challenges. Developing academic success skills sparks the natural curiosity of young children and establishes the habits that mark the academic mind—persistence, questioning and collaboration. Students who think well and know how to learn are more likely to be academically well-prepared.

The new integrated kindergarten curriculum was implemented in Fall 2009. Thus far, the feedback from teachers, principals and parents has been extremely positive, and monitoring of the program's implementation is showing improved student performance results.

The Montgomery County Board of Education formally approved the agreement with Pearson at its June 8, 2009 meeting, authorizing both entities to commence work on this exciting partnership.

###

About MCPS

MCPS is the largest school district in Maryland and the 16th largest in the nation with more than 141,000 students. Students in MCPS come from more than 160 different countries and speak more than 130 different languages while having some of the highest student achievement in the United States. MCPS has the highest high school graduation rate among the 50 largest districts in the nation and is a finalist for the 2010 Broad Prize for Urban Education. For more information, go to <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org>.

About Pearson

Pearson (NYSE:PSO), the global leader in education services, technology and school solutions, provides innovative print and digital education materials for pre-K through college, student information systems and learning management systems, teacher professional development, career certification programs, and testing and assessment products that set the standard for the industry. Pearson's other primary businesses include the Financial Times Group and the Penguin Group. For more information, go to <http://www.pearson.com/>

###

For more information contact the Public Information Office

850 Hungerford Drive, Room 112, Rockville, MD 20850

Phone: 301-279-3853 | Fax: 301-279-3221

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org | pio@mcpsmd.org | Follow us on Twitter

RESOLUTION NO. 636-97

Re: ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVES

On recommendation of the superintendent and on motions of Ms. Signer and Mr. Ewing seconded by Mrs. King, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Board of Education establishes an enterprise fund for the sale of science materials kits sold through the Taylor Science Materials Center, and that the school system pursues other efforts with similar organizations to sell other products and materials; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Education instructs the superintendent to assess this approach using the following basic criteria:

1. The effort must not interfere with the basic educational mission of the school system. Marketing activities cannot take available resources away from classroom instruction. In addition, these activities cannot take staff members away from their focus on the needs of MCPS students and the Success for Every Student Plan.
2. The activity must at least break even and should show a reasonable profit. In fact, any endeavor must be more than worthwhile so that the revenue generated is significant enough to illustrate beyond any doubt that it is not interfering with the primary business of the school system.
3. The school system must be able to illustrate that the activity has a direct positive effect on enhancing the support of the instructional program in MCPS.
4. The school system should only market goods and services that are exemplary and for which there is a market demand. Selling services and materials should reflect positively on the system.
5. The resources needed to startup an enterprise activity cannot be taken from ongoing instructional programs supported by the general fund.
6. Activities that are generally done by school systems through professional courtesy or collaboration should not be redirected to an enterprise activity. MCPS currently receives materials and resources from other school systems at the nominal cost of reproduction. We need to continue to respond to other school systems in the same manner.