

**MEMORANDUM**

December 5, 2019

TO: EC Committee

FROM: Elaine Bonner-Tompkins, Senior Legislative Analyst *EBT*  
Office of Legislative Oversight

SUBJECT: **Worksession on OLO Report 2019-14: *Montgomery County Public Schools Performance and Opportunity Gaps***

On December 9, 2019 the Education and Culture (EC) Committee will hold a worksession on Office of Legislative Oversight Report 2019-14, which the Council received and released on December 3, 2019. Councilmembers are asked to bring their copies of this report to the worksession. This report is also accessible on-line at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Reports/CurrentOLOReports.html>.

Staff recommends the following worksession agenda:

- Overview of the report by OLO staff;
- Comments from agency representatives; and
- Committee worksession on report and OLO recommendations.

The Executive Summary of OLO's report is attached on © 1. Dr. Jack Smith's comments on the report on behalf of Montgomery County Public Schools are attached on © 5.

OLO anticipates the following staff from MCPS will join the worksession:

- Dr. Henry Johnson, Chief of Staff
- Dr. Janet Wilson, Associate Superintendent, Office of Shared Accountability
- Dr. Kecia Addison, Supervisor, Applied Research Unit, Office of Shared Accountability

**A. Project Overview and Findings**

The Council tasked OLO to review MCPS data on student performance and resource allocations to better understand how MCPS targets its resources to narrow performance gaps among student subgroups. OLO Report 2019-14 describes trends in MCPS performance among student subgroups and opportunity gaps relative to school enrollment and per student funding for special education, compensatory education, and ESOL programs. Four key findings emerge:

1. Enrollment among Latinx, Black, low-income, and English learning students is concentrated among MCPS' higher-poverty schools.
2. Over time, performance gaps by race, ethnicity, and service group have stagnated or widened across a majority of the performance measures reviewed.

3. ESOL and compensatory education programs designed to narrow performance gaps by English language proficiency and income are under-funded relative to student need.
4. The under-funding of ESOL and compensatory education programs disproportionately impacts MCPS' higher-poverty schools and the students they enroll.

## **B. Recommendations**

Based on this project's findings, three sets of recommendations are offered. The first are recommendations for Council discussion with MCPS representatives on two items:

1. Discuss MCPS efforts to allocate additional funding to close opportunity gaps for Latinx, Black, English learning and low-income students, particularly for ESOL programming and compensatory education.
2. Discuss with MCPS the merits of using a racial equity lens to identify and remedy MCPS policies, programs, and practices that foster or exacerbate performance and opportunity gaps.

The second set of OLO recommendations are for Council action as follows:

1. Develop Council Resolution requesting the Board of Education to develop an integration and equitable funding plan to address existing opportunity gaps.
2. Encourage the State of Maryland to require the Board of Education to expend all state compensatory education revenue on low-income students/high-poverty schools.
3. Request the Board of Education to earmark County funding above state maintenance of effort requirements for compensatory education and ESOL programs.
4. Request the Board of Education to annually report on student performance and resource allocations for general, special, and compensatory education and ESOL programs analogous to OLO Report 2019-14.

And the third set of OLO recommendations are for Board of Education action as follows:

1. Request a briefing of OLO Report 2019-14 and OLO Report 2018-8, Racial Equity in Government Decision-Making: Lessons from the Field, from OLO staff.
2. Consider adopting a racial equity and social justice policy analogous to the County's new legislation aimed at identifying and remediating policies, programs, and practices that undermine equity.
3. Partner with Montgomery County Government and other local jurisdictions in a community of practice aimed at advancing racial equity and social justice in governmental decision-making.

<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	<b>BEGINS AT:</b>
Executive Summary of OLO Report 2019-14, December 3, 2019	© 1
Superintendent's Comments on OLO Report 2019-14, December 4, 2019	© 5
OLO Report 2019-14, Chapter 6: Findings and Recommendations	© 10

# MCPS Performance and Opportunity Gaps

Executive Summary of OLO Report Number 2019-14

December 3, 2019

**Summary:** This Office of Legislative Oversight report describes trends in Montgomery County Public Schools' performance and opportunity gaps by race, ethnicity, and service group status and offers recommendations for the Montgomery County Council and Board of Education. Two sets of findings emerge from OLO's review:

- **Performance gaps by race, ethnicity and service group status persist** with Asian and White students outperforming Latinx and Black students and all students and students ineligible for service group programs outperforming their peers eligible for free and reduced priced meals, ESOL programs, and special education.
- **Opportunity gaps by race, ethnicity, and service group status also persist** with MCPS concentrating Latinx, Black, English learners, and low-income students in high-poverty schools and in turn under-funding its high-poverty schools by under-funding its ESOL and compensatory education programs relative to student need.

## Performance Gaps by Race and Ethnicity

Performance gaps reflect differences in educational opportunities among student subgroups rather than individual or cultural differences. Like prior OLO reports, this report reveals wide performance gaps by race and ethnicity across each of the measures reviewed. As noted in the table below, Black and Latinx students were only up to half as likely as Asian and White students to demonstrate math or English language arts proficiency or college-readiness based on their SAT or AP/IB performance. **Further, an analysis of trend data reveals that performance gaps by race and ethnicity have not narrowed over time across most of the measures considered.**

Table 1: Percent of MCPS Students by Race and Ethnicity Meeting Performance Benchmarks

Metrics	Asian	White	Two +	Black	Latinx
School Readiness, 2018	67.0%	70.0%	70.0%	46.0%	35.0%
English Language Arts PARCC 3-5, 2019*	76.2%	72.4%	66.1%	39.5%	31.0%
English Language Arts PARCC 6-8, 2019*	79.3%	74.8%	69.3%	39.0%	31.2%
English Language Arts PARCC 10, 2019	77.8%	78.6%	73.0%	38.7%	30.7%
Math PARCC 3-5, 2019*	79.8%	71.8%	64.1%	34.4%	30.1%
Math PARCC 6-8, 2019*	56.0%	53.5%	45.7%	17.1%	14.6%
Algebra 1 PARCC, 2019	63.7%	61.4%	53.4%	17.0%	12.7%
AP/IB Performance, Class of 2018	75.7%	73.3%	63.4%	32.1%	39.7%
SAT Performance - English, Class of 2019	87.8%	91.6%	85.3%	60.1%	52.5%
SAT Performance - Math, Class of 2019	78.2%	77.1%	70.1%	34.2%	28.2%
Four Year Cohort Dropout Rate, 2018	1.4%	2.4%	2.9%	4.9%	15.7%
Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate, 2018	96.6%	94.9%	94.1%	89.6%	75.9%

\*OLO calculated data points based on sum of 2019 grade level data weighted by 2018 test takers.

## Performance Gaps by Service Group Status

This report also documents wide performance gaps by disability, English proficiency, and income across eleven measures. Students receiving free and reduced priced meals (FARMS), English learners (ESOL), and students with disabilities (SPED) were less than half as likely as their non-FARMS, non-ESOL, and non-SPED peers to start kindergarten "school-ready." Students eligible for FARMS, ESOL, and special education were also less than half as likely as all students to demonstrate proficiency in math or English language arts. ***An analysis of trend data further shows that performance gaps by service group across most measures have not narrowed over time.***

**Table 2: Percent of MCPS Students by Service Subgroup Meeting Performance Benchmarks**

<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Non-SPED</b>	<b>SPED</b>	<b>Non-ESOL</b>	<b>ESOL</b>	<b>Non-FARMS</b>	<b>FARMS</b>
<b>School Readiness, 2018</b>	59.0%	19.0%	65.0%	27.0%	66.0%	33.0%
<b>Four Year Cohort Dropout Rate, 2018</b>	6.5%	8.6%	3.6%	36.3%	6.3%	8.0%
<b>Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate, 2018</b>	90.5%	69.5%	92.8%	46.6%	90.3%	83.1%
<b>SAT Performance – English, 2019</b>	78.0%	19.8%	76.9%	35.9%	81.9%	50.6%
<b>SAT Performance – Math, 2019</b>	58.7%	15.6%	58.5%	19.5%	64.6%	28.9%

**Table 3: Percent of MCPS Students by Service Subgroup v. All Meeting Performance Benchmarks**

<b>Metrics</b>	<b>All Students</b>	<b>SPED</b>	<b>ESOL</b>	<b>FARMS</b>
<b>English Language Arts PARCC 3-5, 2019**</b>	52.5%	15.7%	12.1%	27.9%
<b>English Language Arts PARCC 6-8, 2019**</b>	54.3%	14.7%	5.0%*	27.9%
<b>English Language Arts PARCC 10, 2019</b>	52.7%	15.4%	5.0%*	29.6%
<b>Math PARCC 3-5, 2019**</b>	51.6%	18.1%	16.5%	27.3%
<b>Math PARCC 6-8, 2019**</b>	32.0%	9.2%	5.0%*	11.7%
<b>Algebra 1 PARCC, 2019</b>	33.5%	9.4%	5.0%*	11.4%
<b>AP/IB Performance, Class of 2018</b>	55.2%	14.2%	26.0%	32.8%

\* Equal to five percent of student subgroup or less as reported by Maryland State Department of Education

\*\*OLO calculated data points based on sum of 2019 grade level data weighted by 2018 test takers

## Opportunity Gaps within MCPS

Opportunity gaps reflect differential access to opportunities that promote student learning and achievement. OLO Report 2015-15 found opportunity gaps in MCPS' allocation of resources via the concentration of more experienced teachers in low-poverty schools and the allocation of state aid for compensatory education on programs that did not target low-income students or high-poverty schools.

This report highlights two persistent MCPS opportunity gaps: concentrated poverty and segregation among MCPS schools and the under-funding of compensatory education and ESOL programs relative to student need.



## **Opportunity Gap #1: Concentrated Poverty among MCPS Schools**

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This OLO report finds that MCPS concentrates its lowest performing student subgroups - Black, Latinx, English learners, and low-income students – in its highest poverty schools. If MCPS' campuses were not segregated by race, ethnicity, English proficiency, or income, half of each student subgroup would enroll in focus (high-poverty) or non-focus schools. Yet, among MCPS' elementary schools in FY19:

- Three-quarters of Black, Latinx, and English learning students and more than 80 percent of all low-income students were enrolled in high-poverty focus schools;
- While more than two-thirds of all White, Asian, and multi-racial students were enrolled in low-poverty non-focus schools.

The consensus among researchers is that higher-poverty schools tend to yield lower-levels of academic performance, especially among students of color and low-income students.

## **Opportunity Gap #2: Underfunding of Compensatory Education and ESOL Programs**

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This report, like OLO Report 2015-15, finds that MCPS underfunds in compensatory education and ESOL programs relative to student need. This report also finds that MCPS underfunds compensatory education relative to the additional state aid it receives.

Despite each service group demonstrating the need for specialized services as reflected by performance gaps by disability, English proficiency, and income, in FY19 MCPS budgeted:

- Nearly seventy percent of its service group dollars (\$454 million) for special education programs that served the 12 percent of MCPS students with disabilities;
- Twenty percent of its service group dollars (\$124 million) for compensatory education programs that served the 35 percent of low-income MCPS students eligible for FARMS; and
- Ten percent of its service group dollars (\$80 million) for ESOL programs that served the 18 percent of MCPS students with limited English proficiency.

The disparities in MCPS budgeting by service group translates into wide disparities in per student budgeting by service group that disparately impact students enrolled in MCPS' high poverty schools. Beyond the \$11,700 budgeted per student for general education, in FY19 MCPS budgeted an additional:

- \$22,900 for special education per student with a disability compared to
- \$1,600 - \$2,000 for compensatory education per K-12 student eligible for FARMS
- \$2,800 for ESOL programs per English learner

The difference in per student spending on ESOL v. special education does not reflect the difference in subgroup performance as English learners demonstrate the lowest levels of performance on several indicators (e.g. graduation). Yet, MCPS' ESOL budget has diminished by \$100 per student since FY14 (from \$2,900 to \$2,800).

Since FY14, MCPS has increased its per K-12 per student budget for compensatory education by \$310. Yet MCPS continues to allocate a third of the additional state aid it receives based on its FARMS enrollment to programs that do not directly target low-income students or high-poverty schools. In FY19, \$47 million of the \$142 million in state compensatory education aid MCPS received was budgeted for non-compensatory education purposes.

With students eligible for ESOL and FARMS disproportionately enrolled in MCPS' high-poverty schools, these schools are disproportionately harmed by the low-level of per student funding allocated to ESOL and compensatory education programs. The majority of Black and Latinx students enrolled in MCPS' high-poverty schools, whether ESOL or FARMS eligible, are also harmed by the underfunding of these programs.

## **OLO Recommendations**

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### **1. Recommendations for Council Discussion -**

- *Discuss with the Board of Education and MCPS leaders their efforts to allocate additional funding to closing opportunity gaps to create a school system that generates outcomes for Black, Latinx, English learning, and low-income students that are similar to outcomes for White and Asian students.*
- *Discuss with the Board of Education and MCPS leaders the merits of using a racial equity lens to identify and remedy policies, programs, and practices that foster or exacerbate inequities by race, ethnicity, income, and English learner status.*

### **2. Recommendations for Council Action –**

- *Develop a Council Resolution calling on the Board of Education to develop an integration and equitable funding plan to address existing opportunity gaps.*
- *Encourage the state to require the Board of Education to expend all state resources allocated for compensatory education on low-income students and/or high-poverty schools.*
- *Request the Board of Education to earmark County funding above state maintenance of effort requirements for compensatory education and ESOL/English learner programs.*
- *Request the Board of Education to annually report on student performance and resource allocation data for general, special, and compensatory education, and ESOL programs to improve the Council's understanding and oversight of how MCPS remediates its opportunity gaps.*

### **3. Recommendations for Board of Education Action –**

- *Request a briefing from OLO staff on this current report and on OLO Report 2018-8, Racial Equity in Government Decision-Making: Lessons from the Field.*
- *Adopt a Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy analogous to the County Council's pending legislation aimed at identifying and remediating MCPS policies, programs, and practices that undermine racial equity and social justice.*
- *Partner with County Government and other local jurisdictions in a community of practice aimed at advancing racial equity and social justice in governmental decision-making*

For a complete copy of OLO-Report 2019-14, go to:  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Reports/CurrentOLOReports.html>



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
MARYLAND

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

December 4, 2019



Dr. Elaine Bonner-Tompkins, Senior Legislative Analyst  
Office of Legislative Oversight  
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Dr. Bonner-Tompkins:

Thank you for providing Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff with the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) report on *MCPS Performance and Opportunity Gaps (OLO Report Number 2019-14)*. MCPS staff who participated in the review appreciate the collaborative process used to provide feedback. Comments and suggestions provided by MCPS staff were incorporated in the final report.

The final "Embargoed" *MCPS Performance and Opportunity Gaps* report was received November 27, 2019. However, the final report contained an Executive Summary (p. i-iv) that was not part of the draft report. MCPS staff reviewed the Executive Summary and raised concerns about the OLO Recommendations (p. iv). MCPS is deeply engaged in the work suggested in the recommendations and therefore, we request a meeting with the members of the Education and Culture Committee. We would appreciate the opportunity to share the components of the attached document, *All In: Equity and Achievement Framework*, and related operational supports that guide our equity work. In the interim, this response provides highlights of the Framework as well as additional context and comments specific to the OLO Recommendations.

MCPS has long been committed to having diverse, inclusive, and equitable schools and classrooms where students' performance is not predictable by characteristics such as race, ethnicity or poverty. To continue this commitment, *All In: Equity and Achievement Framework* provides a sophisticated way of matching student experience and performance with characteristics of poverty and race moving away from traditional aggregate reporting of results that tell us about who the schools serve rather than how well they serve their student population. This is new and drives the system's equity work to increased levels not previously attainable with single measure, aggregate level reporting.

The Equitable Access to Resources (EAR) portion of the Framework examines how well the system and schools are using staff, time, and money as measured by student outcomes, with emphasis on the placement and performance of five focus groups: African Americans/Black, African Americans/Black in poverty, Hispanic/Latino, Hispanic/Latino in poverty, and all other students in poverty. As part of developing the EAR portion of the Framework, MCPS consulted with Education Resource Strategies (ERS), a national non-profit that works with urban

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850 ♦ 240-740-3020

systems to transform how they use resources through an equity lens. The ERS final report containing findings may be accessed on the MCPS website at: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/evidence-of-learning-framework/equitable-access-to-resources.aspx>. MCPS is engaging broad stakeholder groups to provide recommendations to the school system and the Board of Education based on the study findings.

Additional context and comments specific to OLO Recommendations 1-3 include:

- ERS presented the first of a two-part report to the Board of Education on April 29, 2019. ERS reported, "MCPS spends more on its highest-need schools and students, resulting in more staff per student at higher-need schools. This 'extra' investment in high need schools is more than we see in peer districts."
- This presentation is accessible through Board Docs on the MCPS website at: [https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/BBQJRY4E0FE8/\\$file/Prog%20Perform%20Share-out%20ERS%20MCPS%20Partnership%20190429%20PPT.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/BBQJRY4E0FE8/$file/Prog%20Perform%20Share-out%20ERS%20MCPS%20Partnership%20190429%20PPT.pdf)
- MCPS is engaging stakeholders in a Budget Advisory committee where the ERS findings are part of the discussions informing the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget development process as a means of ensuring that resources are targeted in ways that address the achievement gaps.
- MCPS leverages to the fullest extent the ability to expend all state resources allocated for compensatory education with an equity focus for all impacted groups within existing mandatory requirements.
- MCPS leverages to the fullest extent possible the use of a combination of local, state, and federal funds within existing mandatory requirements that govern aspects of fiscal resource use such as supplanting to achieve the goal of addressing the opportunity gaps.
- MCPS annually reports performance data to improve the Council's understanding of how MCPS is making progress with eliminating opportunity gaps.
- Per the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA), the Maryland State Department of Education will provide actual per-pupil expenditures per school sometime during the 2019-2020 school year to improve the public and Council's understanding of the ranges of resource allocations reflected in per-pupil expenditures for each school.
- MCPS has a seat on the County's Equity Advisory Group.
- Board Policy ACA, *Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Cultural Proficiency*, provides guidance governing racial equity and social justice.

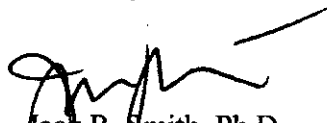


- Related to Policy ACA, MCPS' guidance and mandatory training content includes, but is not limited to: the Culture of Respect Compact; Montgomery County Public Schools *Student Code of Conduct*, Montgomery County Public Schools *Employee Code of Conduct*; and Montgomery County Public Schools *Guidelines for Respecting Religious Diversity*.

The *ALL In: Equity and Achievement Framework* provides the data analysis necessary to report publicly the impact schools have on the students they serve. This information shines a light on what is and what is not working as collectively we work toward the goal of eliminating opportunity gaps. There is much more to do to ensure that we provide the best instructional program delivered by a highly trained and diverse staff to our most vulnerable students. The recommendations contained in the report represent work well under way in MCPS.

We look forward to meeting with the Education and Culture Committee to discuss the recommendations in the report. Thank you again for the opportunity to review the OLO draft and final reports.

Sincerely,



Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

JRS:JSW

Enclosure

Copy to:

County Council Education and Culture Committee Chair Craig Rice  
Members of the Board of Education  
Dr. McKnight  
Dr. Navarro  
Dr. Wilson  
Ms. Webb



# ALL IN: EQUITY AND ACHIEVEMENT FRAMEWORK

MCPS is committed to an All Means All approach for student success. While many of our students achieve at the highest levels, not all have had access, opportunities and resources needed to meet their full potential. MCPS is committed to addressing disparities in student outcomes by closing gaps in opportunity and achievement for all students, in all classrooms, in all of our schools. The MCPS *All In: Equity and Achievement Framework* provides the purpose, path and plan to ensure success for all students.

## Evidence of Learning

[www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/evidence-of-learning-framework/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/evidence-of-learning-framework/)

The Evidence of Learning (EOL) consists of multiple measures in classroom, district, and external categories that assess student learning allowing the district to monitor students progress at each level- primary, intermediate, middle, and high school with the goal of being college and career ready.

Are our students learning? Are they learning enough?



## Equity Accountability Model

[www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/evidence-of-learning-framework/equity-accountability-model.aspx](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/evidence-of-learning-framework/equity-accountability-model.aspx)

The Equity Accountability Model (EAM) uses the Evidence of Learning (EOL) data to determine the impact schools have on the students who have typically not performed as well as their White and Asian peers. The EOL data results are organized by 5 focus groups- African American/Black FARMS, African American/Black non-FARMS, Hispanic/Latino FARMS, Hispanic/Latino non-FARMS and all other FARMS students. The district also measures and monitors the progress of Whites and Asians with the goal of 90% achievement among all student groups.

If not why not? How do we know?



## Equitable Access to Resources

The Equitable Access to Resources (EAR) portion of the Equity and Achievement Framework examines how well the system and schools are using staff, time and money as measured by student outcomes with emphasis on the performance of the 5 focus groups. The primary goal of a deep examination of system resource allocation and use is to reduce the likelihood that student outcomes are predictable by race or income.

What are we going to do about it?



STUDENT EXPERIENCE & OUTCOMES



**Students must have the physical, social and psychological well-being in order to be academically successful. MCPS' Be Well 365 initiative will ensure that students have the skills to:**

- Become positive members of the community • Manage their emotions • Build academic and social resilience
- Identify and access supports • Peacefully resolve conflict, and • Make positive decisions

## MCPS Strategic Planning Committee, Board of Education, Key Community Stakeholders

The Strategic Planning Process identified equitable practices as a backbone for systemwide operations, including allocation of resources. The MCPS Strategic Plan ensures academic success is not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency or disability. We will continue to strive until all gaps have been eliminated for all groups.

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/campaigns/Strategic-Planning-FY19-22/>

**INFLUENCERS**



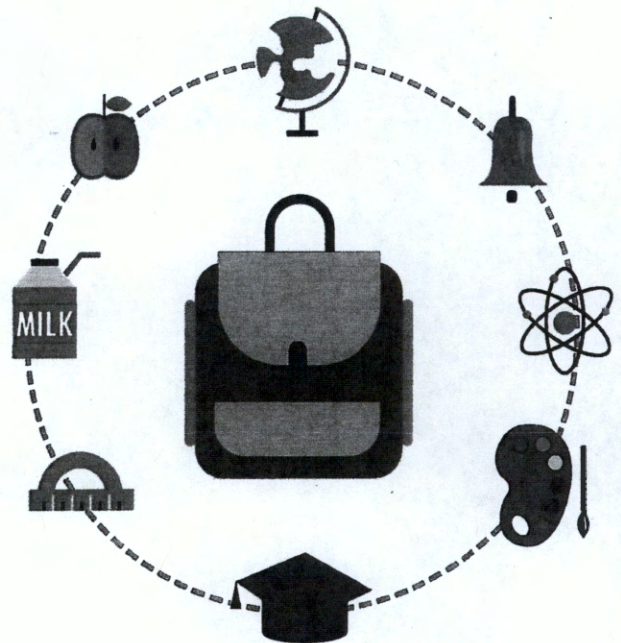
# EQUITABLE ACCESS TO RESOURCES

**ESSA: The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** requires states to annually report every public school's total per-pupil spending of federal, state and local money disaggregated by source of funds. This includes actual (not average) spending on personnel.

MCPS has expanded on the requirements of ESSA to examine not only **how much** is being spent, but **how well** the resources (money, time and staff) are being used across and within schools to ensure equity and excellence for all students.

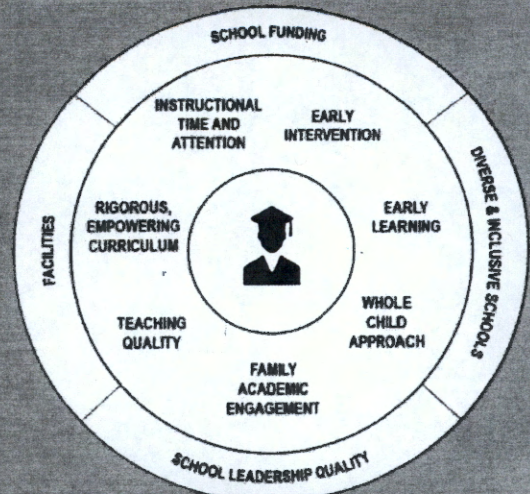
## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- » a deep understanding of resource allocation
- » an understanding of how MCPS compares to other similar districts in resource allocation, use, and equity
- » learnings from schools that are achieving better student performance
- » tools that enable school leaders and community stakeholders to make informed decisions about resource use
- » ensure continuous improvement
- » effective communications of school resource allocation



## DIMENSIONS OF EQUITY

The dimensions of equity with appropriate allocation of resources work together for positive experiences and outcomes for all students. This is done through ensuring that the annual operating budget process is fully informed and considers the guidance of the EAR framework.



COURTESY OF EDUCATION RESOURCE STRATEGIES (ERS)



## Chapter 6. Findings and Recommendations

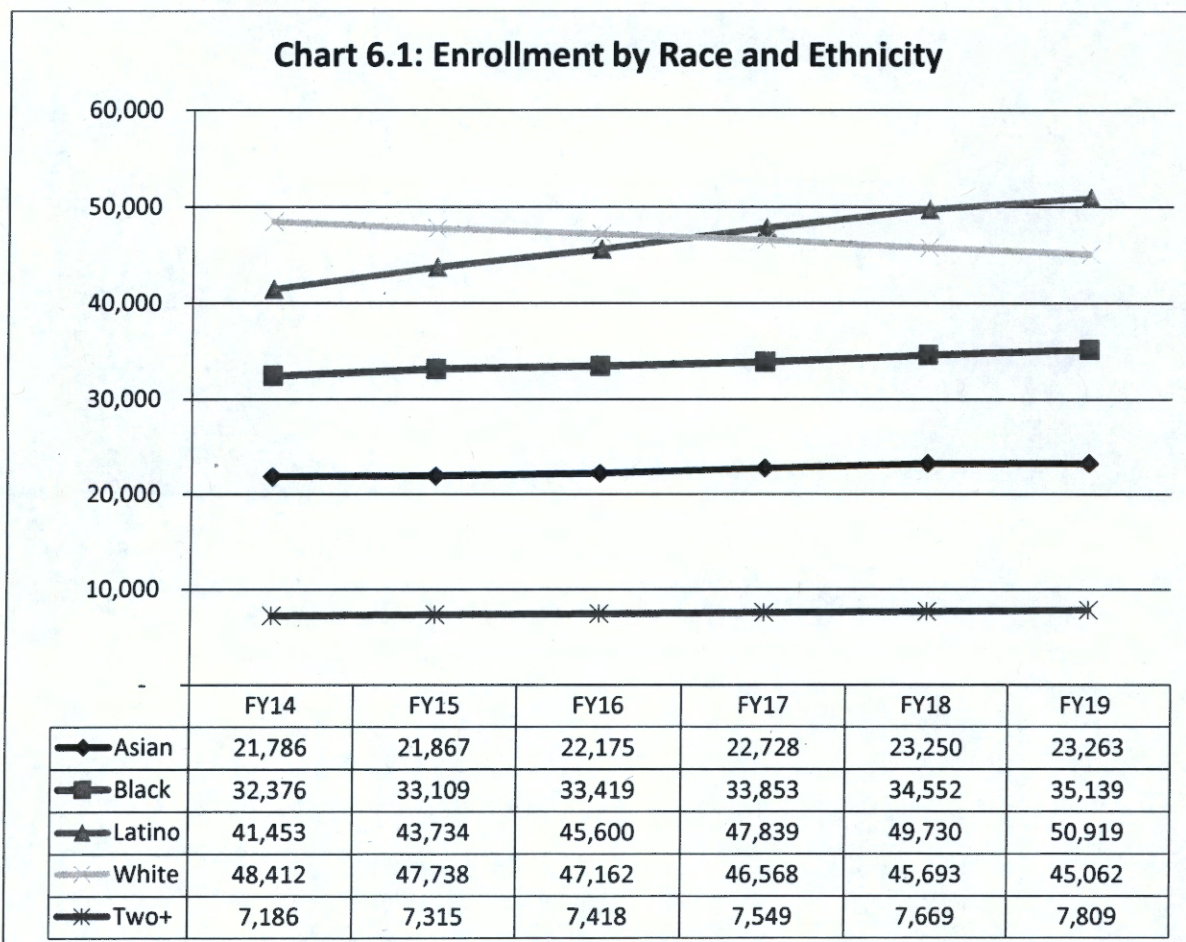
The County Council tasked the Office of Legislative Oversight to review Montgomery County Public Schools data on student performance and resource allocations to better understand how the school system targets its resources to narrow its performance gaps among student subgroups. Overall, OLO found that performance gaps by race, ethnicity, income, language, and disability persist within MCPS. OLO also found that two opportunity gaps – lack of access to integrated schools among Black and Latinx students and inadequate funding of compensatory education and ESOL programs – also persist within MCPS. This chapter is presented in two parts to describe OLO's key findings and recommendations for County Council and Board of Education discussion and action.

### Summary of Findings

Based on an analysis of the data reviewed, with this current OLO report five key findings emerge regarding student performance and resource allocations.

#### **Finding #1: MCPS is a diverse and segregated school system.**

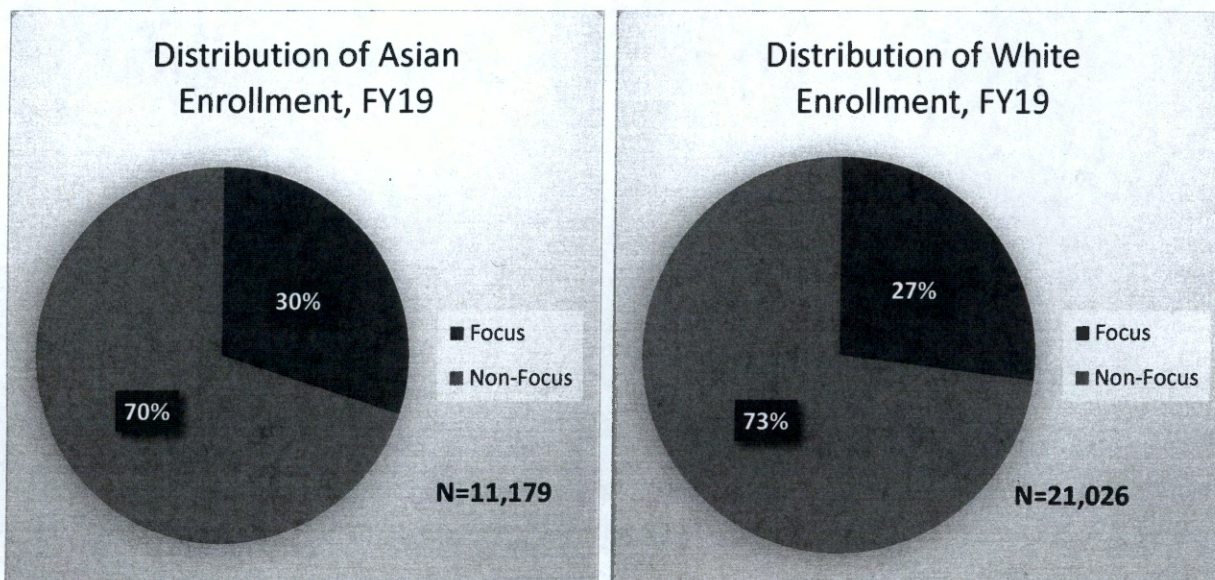
Students of color – Latinx students, African Americans, Asian students and multi-racial students– have increased their share of student enrollment while the number of White students enrolled has declined. In FY19, White students accounted for 28% of MCPS enrollment compared to 33% of enrollment in FY14.



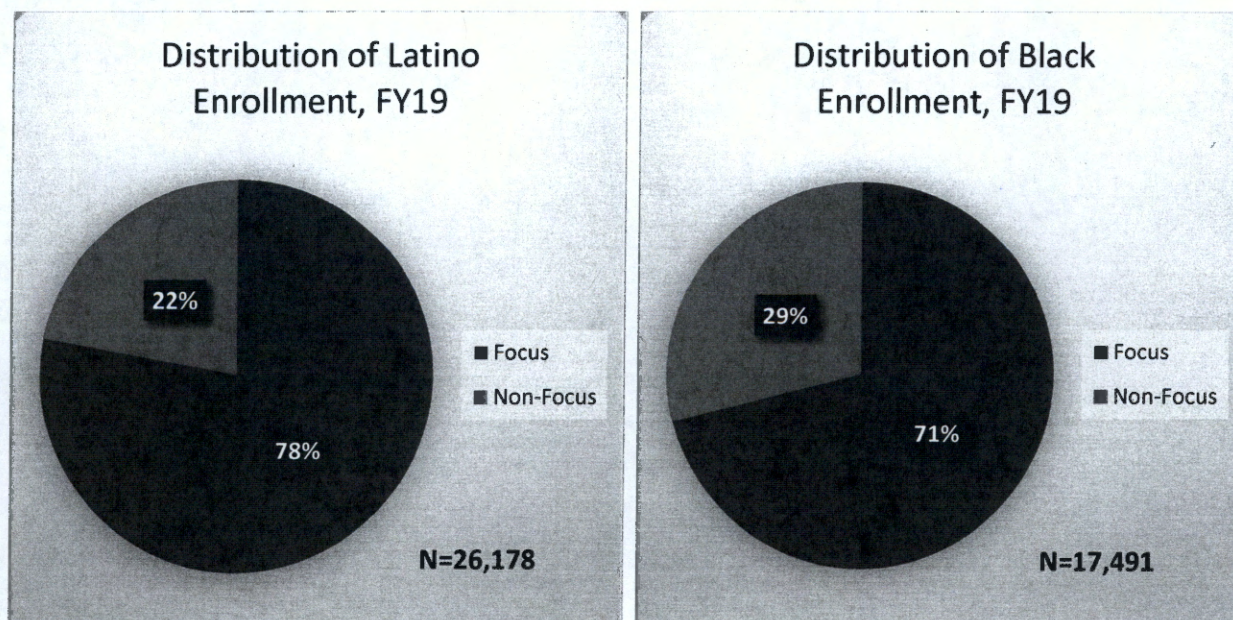


White and Asian students, however, accounted for a majority of students enrolled in MCPS' low-poverty elementary schools while Latinx and Black students accounted for a majority of students enrolled in MCPS' high-poverty elementary schools. A majority of the school system's low-income students and English learners were also enrolled in MCPS' high-poverty schools. Research suggests that concentrated poverty among schools adversely impacts students enrolled in such schools.<sup>52</sup>

**Figure 6.1: Distribution of Asian and White Students in Elementary Schools**

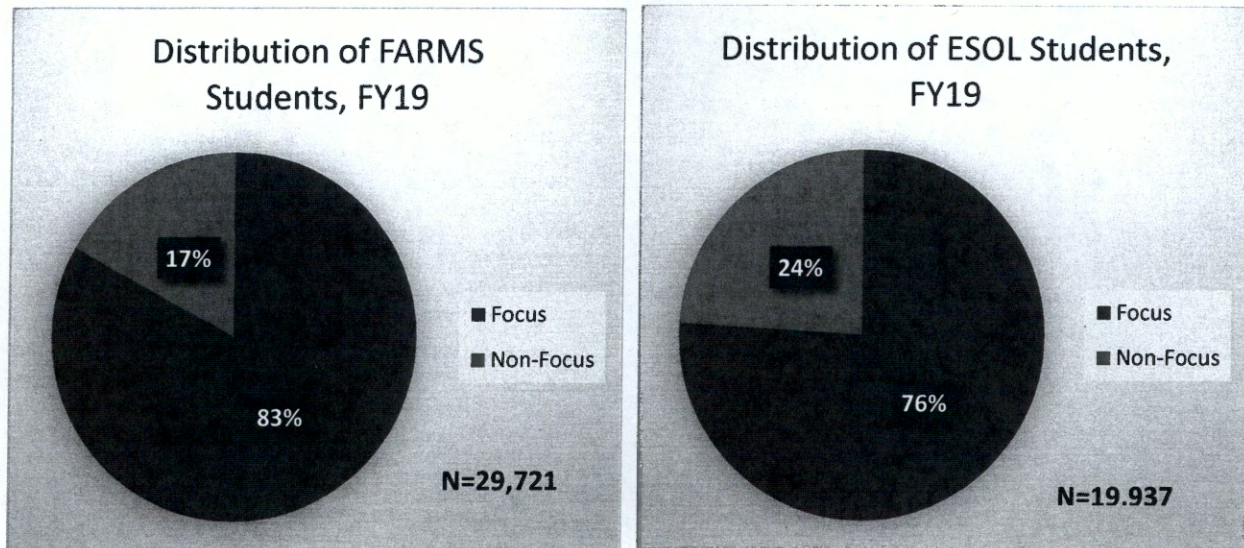


**Figure 6.2: Distribution of Latinx and Black Students in Elementary Schools**



<sup>52</sup> See <https://education.umd.edu/research/centers/mep/research/k-12-education/does-school-composition-matter-estimating-relationship>; <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/OLO%20Report%202014-7%20Final.pdf>



**Figure 6.3: Distribution of FARMS and ESOL Students in Elementary Schools**


**Finding #2:** *MCPS' performance gaps by race and ethnicity persist.*

There has been little to no diminution in the performance gap by race or ethnicity among most of the measures reviewed by OLO. As noted in the chart below, Asian, White, and multi-racial students consistently outperformed Latinx and Black students across a dozen measures.

**Table 6.1: Percent of MCPS Students by Race and Ethnicity Meeting Performance Benchmarks**

Metrics	Asian	White	Two +	Black	Latinx
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Algebra 1 PARCC, 2019	63.7%	61.4%	53.4%	17.0%	12.7%
AP/IB Performance, Class of 2018	75.7%	73.3%	63.4%	32.1%	39.7%
SAT Performance - English, Class of 2019	87.8%	91.6%	85.3%	60.1%	52.5%
SAT Performance - Math, Class of 2019	78.2%	77.1%	70.1%	34.2%	28.2%
Four Year Cohort Dropout Rate, 2018	1.4%	2.4%	2.9%	4.9%	15.7%
Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate, 2018	96.6%	94.9%	94.1%	89.6%	75.9%

\*OLO calculated data point based on sum of 2019 grade level data weighted by 2018 test takers.



And, as noted in the table below, across most measures the performance gaps for Latinx and Black students relative to their Asian and White peers did not narrow between 2014/15 to 2018/19.

**Table 6.2: Change in Performance Gaps by Race and Ethnicity<sup>53</sup>**

<b><u>Metrics</u></b>	<b><u>Latinx Gap</u></b> (point change)	<b><u>Black Gap</u></b> (point change)
School Readiness	No Change (< 2)	Increased (+ 3)
English Language Arts PARCC 3-5	No Change (< 2)	No Change (< 2)
English Language Arts PARCC 6-8	Increased (+ 3)	No Change (< 2)
English Language Arts PARCC 10	Increased (+ 8)	No Change (< 2)
Math PARCC 3-5	No Change (< 2)	No Change (< 2)
Math PARCC 6-8	Decreased (- 6)	Decreased (- 6)
Algebra 1 PARCC	No Change (< 2)	Decreased (- 3)
AP/IB Performance	Increased (+ 3)	Decreased (- 4)
SAT Performance - English	Increased (+13)	Increased (+5)
SAT Performance - Math	Increased (+11)	No Change (< 2)
Four Year Cohort Dropout Rate	Increased (+ 5)	No Change (< 2)
Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Increased (+ 4)	Decreased (- 3)

<sup>53</sup> SAT performance compare 2017 to 2019. PARCC data compare 2015 to 2019. Remainder compare 2014 to 2018.

**Finding #3: MCPS' performance gaps by service group status persist.**

Students ineligible for FARMS, ESOL programs, and special education also consistently outperformed their peers eligible for these services as described in the table below. The performance of all students also exceeded the performance of service group students as noted on the table on the next page.<sup>54</sup>

**Table 6.3: Percent of MCPS Students by Service Subgroup Meeting Performance Benchmarks**

<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Non-SPED</b>	<b>SPED</b>	<b>Non-ESOL</b>	<b>ESOL</b>	<b>Non-FARMS</b>	<b>FARMS</b>
<b>School Readiness, 2018</b>	59.0%	19.0%	65.0%	27.0%	66.0%	33.0%
<b>Four Year Cohort Dropout Rate, 2018</b>	6.5%	8.6%	3.6%	36.3%	6.3%	8.0%
<b>Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate, 2018</b>	90.5%	69.5%	92.8%	46.6%	90.3%	83.1%
<b>SAT Performance – English, 2019</b>	78.0%	19.8%	76.9%	35.9%	81.9%	50.6%
<b>SAT Performance – Math, 2019</b>	58.7%	15.6%	58.5%	19.5%	64.6%	28.9%

**Table 6.4: Percent of MCPS Students by Service Subgroup Meeting Performance Benchmarks**

<b>Metrics</b>	<b>All Students</b>	<b>SPED</b>	<b>ESOL</b>	<b>FARMS</b>
<b>English Language Arts PARCC 3-5, 2019**</b>	52.5%	15.7%	12.1%	27.9%
<b>English Language Arts PARCC 6-8, 2019**</b>	54.3%	14.7%	5.0%*	27.9%
<b>English Language Arts PARCC 10, 2019</b>	52.7%	15.4%	5.0%*	29.6%
<b>Math PARCC 3-5, 2019**</b>	51.6%	18.1%	16.5%	27.3%
<b>Math PARCC 6-8, 2019**</b>	32.0%	9.2%	5.0%*	11.7%
<b>Algebra 1 PARCC, 2019</b>	33.5%	9.4%	5.0%*	11.4%
<b>AP/IB Performance, Class of 2018</b>	55.2%	14.2%	26.0%	32.8%

\* Equal to five percent of student subgroup or less as reported by Maryland State Department of Education

\*\*OLO calculated data point based on sum of 2019 grade level data weighted by 2018 test takers

The data summarized in the table below shows that MCPS' performance gap by service group status also did not narrow across a majority of the measures reviewed. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that MCPS' efforts aimed at narrowing gaps by service group have been ineffective.

<sup>54</sup> Based on available data, Table 6.3 compares student performance by service group status while Table 6.4 compares the performance of all students (inclusive of service group students) to service group students.



**Table 6.5: Change in Performance Gaps by Service Group<sup>55</sup>**

<b>Metrics</b>	<b>ESOL Gap (point change)</b>	<b>FARMS Gap (point change)</b>	<b>SPED Gap (point change)</b>
School Readiness	Increased (+3)	Increased (+3)	Increased (+11)
ELA PARCC 3-5	No Change (<2)	No Change (<2)	Increased (+3)
ELA PARCC 6-8	Increased (+5)	No Change (<2)	No Change (<2)
ELA PARCC 10	Increased (+9)	No Change (<2)	Increased (+6)
Math PARCC 3-5	Increased (+4)	No Change (<2)	Increased (+5)
Math PARCC 6-8	No Change (<2)	Decreased (-3)	Decreased (-3)
Algebra 1 PARCC	No Change (<2)	No Change (<2)	Decreased (-4)
AP/IB Performance	Increased (+14)	No Change (<2)	No Change (<2)
Four Year Cohort Dropout Rate	Increased (+14)	Decreased (-2.5)	Decreased (-3)
Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Increased (+10)	Decreased (-5)	No Change (<2)
SAT Performance – English	Increased (+8)	Increased (+4)	Increased (+19)
SAT Performance – Math	Increased (+6)	Increased (+4)	Increased (+18)

**Finding #4:** *MCPS allocates a third of the state funding it receives based on its FARMS enrollment to non-compensatory education programs.*

Of the \$171 million in federal and state compensatory education funding MCPS received in FY19, it budgeted \$124 million for educational resources that exclusively served low-income students or were allocated to schools based on their FARMS rate. MCPS was required to budget all of the federal compensatory funding (\$29 million) it received for Title I and Head Start for supports that benefited low-income children. Maryland, however, does not require MCPS to exclusively target state aid based on its FARMS enrollment for compensatory education programs.

In 2015, MCPS acknowledged that it allocated a significant share of its state compensatory education revenue to special education programs to comply with federal maintenance of effort requirements.<sup>56</sup> This shifting of resources, however, is not without a consequence as research suggests that a minimum \$4,000 per student for compensatory education programs per year is necessary to narrow the performance gap by income.<sup>57</sup> In FY19, MCPS budgeted \$22,900 per student eligible for special education compared to allocating \$1,600 - \$2,000 in compensatory education programming per K-12 low-income student. Moreover, due to the concentration of poverty within MCPS, the shifting of state aid for compensatory education to other purposes adversely impacts a majority of MCPS' Black, Latinx, and English learning students attending high-FARMS schools.

<sup>55</sup> SAT compare 2017 to 2019; PARCC compare 2015 to 2018; remainder of data points compare 2014 to 2018.

<sup>56</sup> See [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2015 Reports/OLOReport2015-15ResourcesAndStaffingAmongMCPSSchools.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2015%20Reports/OLOReport2015-15ResourcesAndStaffingAmongMCPSSchools.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> See <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Download-the-paper-2.pdf>.



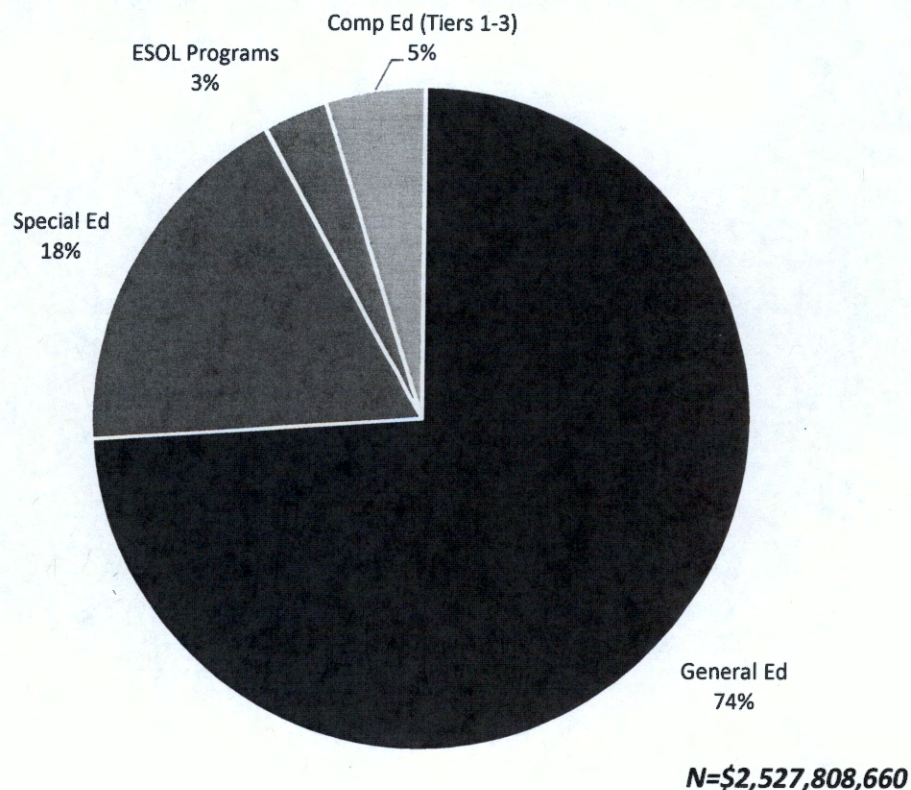
**Finding #5: MCPS budgets far less for compensatory education and ESOL programs than for special education.**

In FY19, MCPS allocated nearly a quarter of its operating budget to service group programs aimed at improving student outcomes and narrowing performance gaps. Yet, MCPS allocated almost 70% of its service group dollars to special education for students with disabilities that accounted for 12% of enrollment compared to allocating 20% of its service group dollars to compensatory education programs for the third of students eligible for FARMS and the remaining 10% for ESOL programs for English learners that accounted for 18% of enrollment.

Combined, ESOL and compensatory education programs have accounted for only 7-8% of the MCPS operating budget since FY14 despite persistent performance gaps by English proficiency and income. The ESOL program's persistent 3% share of the operating budget is striking given English learners increased share of MCPS enrollment and the widening performance gap by English proficiency for dropouts, graduations, and proficiency on the PARCC in English language arts and math (Finding #3).

Overall, MCPS budgets for special education at three times the per pupil cost of general education compared to budgeting a 14-24% differential for compensatory education and ESOL programs. Combining per student general education and service group program costs, MCPS budgeted \$34,600 per student with a disability for FY19, \$14,500 per English language learner and \$13,300 to \$13,700 per low-income student v. \$11,700 per general education student.

**Chart 6.2: Current Fund Budget by Function, FY19**



### **OLO Recommendations**

This OLO report and prior ones have documented the persistent performance gaps among student subgroups. This current report and a prior one (OLO Report 2015-15) have also documented opportunity gaps in MCPS' allocation of staffing and resources for compensatory education and ESOL programs that negatively impact students of color, English learners, and low-income students.

Improving opportunities and outcomes among students and schools highly impacted by the performance gap remains a priority for the Council and the public at large.<sup>58</sup> Based on this report's findings, OLO offers three sets of recommendations for Council discussion with MCPS representatives, Council action, and for Board of Education action, as follows:

#### **Recommendations for Council Discussion with MCPS -**

- ***Discuss with the Board of Education and MCPS leaders their efforts to allocate additional funding to closing opportunity gaps to create a school system that generates outcomes among Black, Latinx, low-income and English learning students that are analogous to outcomes among White and Asian students.*** A review of MCPS' performance and budget data demonstrate that the school system has not effectively targeted resources in ways that have narrowed the performance gap. OLO recommends that the Council discuss with MCPS its efforts to target resources to Black, Latinx, low-income, and English learning students. In particular, OLO recommends that the Council request information about what strategies have been advanced or considered and what resources have been budgeted for:
  - Increasing resources for high-poverty schools;
  - Expanding compensatory education programs in secondary schools;
  - Increasing the number of experienced teachers (and reducing the number of novice teachers) in high-poverty schools<sup>59</sup>;
  - Expanding ESOL programming to keep pace with ESOL enrollment and student need; and
  - Promoting socio-economic diversity across schools to enhance opportunities and promote achievement among Latinx, African American, and low-income students.
- ***Discuss with the Board of Education and MCPS leaders the merits of using a racial equity lens to inform decision-making.*** Promising practices suggests that applying a racial equity lens to decision-making by using racial equity impact assessments (REIA) can reduce disparities by reversing the drivers of institutional racism that perpetuate inequities. REIA's are designed to provide a structured process to analyze the consequences of proposed policies, programs, and practices on racial and ethnic disparities. Critical questions considered in REIA's include:
  - Who benefits from the proposed policy and/current practice?
  - Have stakeholders from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, especially those most likely to be impacted, been included in the decision-making process?

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<sup>58</sup> See <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2019%20Reports/OLOReport2019-16.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> Increasing Black and Latinx students access to effective and diverse teachers and school leaders were also recent "asks" of the Board of Education made by the Black and Brown Coalition for Educational Equity and Excellence at their October 15, 2019 Community Forum.

- What positive impacts, if any, will the recommended policy or practice have on reducing racial inequities and disparities?
- Will the policy or practice perpetuate or exacerbate current disparities? If so, how the can adverse consequences be minimized?
- What are the success indicators and progress benchmarks?

OLO encourages the Council to discuss with MCPS representatives and the Board of Education the merits of using a racial equity lens to inform their decision-making.<sup>60</sup>

**Recommendations for Council Action –**

- ***Develop Council resolution calling on the Board of Education to develop an integration and equitable funding plan to address existing opportunity gaps.*** Although the Board of Education develops policy for MCPS, the County Council is uniquely poised to advocate for changes in MCPS budgeting and operations that advance racial equity and social justice in their decision-making. As such, OLO encourages the Council to consider passing a resolution that calls for the Board of Education to develop a plan to integrate its schools and to equitably allocate existing and future resources to high-poverty schools.<sup>61</sup>

De facto segregation by race, ethnicity, language, and income undermines student achievement. Moreover, the diversion of state aid intended to offset the impact of poverty on student achievement for other purposes is counterproductive and inequitable given MCPS' persistence opportunity gap by income. Further, the allocation of more experienced teachers to low-poverty schools as noted in OLO Report 2015-15 and recently by ERS exacerbates disparities by race, ethnicity, language, and income in the County.

A Council resolution highlighting current inequities by race, ethnicity, and income with MCPS and encouraging a realignment of MCPS resources to promote integration and the more equitable allocation of existing resources could support Board of Education action toward these ends. Such a resolution would also be responsive to recent community stakeholders that recognized disparities and inequities in public education and the preeminent challenge to achieving racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Montgomery County Council recently passed legislation establishing a racial equity and social justice policy [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2019/20190917/20190917\\_5C.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2019/20190917/20190917_5C.pdf)

<sup>61</sup> In September 2019, the Howard County Council introduced [https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CouncilMain/Press%20Releases/2019/CMR\\_OJ\\_DJ%20Desegregation%20Press%20Release.pdf](https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/Portals/0/Documents/CouncilMain/Press%20Releases/2019/CMR_OJ_DJ%20Desegregation%20Press%20Release.pdf). On October 7<sup>th</sup>, a resolution was passed requesting the school system “draft, approve and implement a lawful multi-year integration plan,” ensuring all schools are integrated by socioeconomic factors – see <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/cng-ho-council-legislation-round-up-1016-20191009-wrkvbmgfrfvhrfnlsacqnyxau44-story.html>

<sup>62</sup> See OLO's Racial Equity and Social Justice Community Conversations report at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2019%20Reports/OLORReport2019-16.pdf>.



Finally, a Council resolution encouraging MCPS to develop an integration and equitable funding plan may also support MCPS' school boundary analysis currently underway. The aim of the MCPS school boundary study is to examine how well their existing school boundary process addresses facility utilization, student demographics, transportation and other objectives.<sup>63</sup> An interim boundary review analysis report is scheduled for release in March 2020 and a final report is scheduled for release in June 2020.

- **Encourage the state to require the Board of Education to expend *all* state resources allocated for compensatory education on low-income students or high-poverty schools.** While the state allocates additional funding to school systems based on their enrollment of low-income students, it does not require them to allocate the compensatory education funding received on low-income students or high-poverty schools. Instead, the state allows schools systems to treat state compensatory education funding as unrestricted state aid. In turn, MCPS has used a significant share of its state compensatory education funding for non-compensatory purposes.

Encouraging Maryland to require the Board of Education to allocate all state aid based on FARMS enrollment for compensatory education programs that offset the impact of poverty on student achievement would generate additional resources for MCPS to invest in improving opportunities for low-income students and students in enrolled in high-poverty schools. This recommendation is similar to the Education Trust's recommendations to the Kirwan Commission.<sup>64</sup>

- **Request the Board of Education earmark County funding above maintenance of effort to expand compensatory education programs for low-income students and high-poverty schools and ESOL programming.** Annually, increases in County funding are used to supplement general education and special education programs. Only a small share of County funding is allocated to ESOL programs and no County funding is allocated for compensatory education. Annually, the Board of Education shifts a third or more of state compensatory education revenue from potential compensatory education functions to help fund its general education and special education budgets. Since MCPS' compensatory education programs are funded at too low a level to significantly impact performance gaps, the Council should encourage the Board of Education to allocate any County funding above maintenance of effort to compensatory education and ESOL programs to better address the school system's opportunity and performance gaps by race, ethnicity, income, and ESOL status.

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<sup>63</sup> See October 8, 2019 update to the Board of Education on School Boundary Review Analysis at [https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/BGSUFD7BC6C7/\\$file/Districtwide%20Boundary%20Analysis%20191008%20PPT.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/mcpsmd/Board.nsf/files/BGSUFD7BC6C7/$file/Districtwide%20Boundary%20Analysis%20191008%20PPT.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> On page 4 of <http://education.baltimorecommunityfoundation.org/download/education-trust-report/?wpdmcl=202>, the Education Trust recommends that "the state must make sure that districts – especially those serving the most students of color – get their fair share of funding by ... ensuring that extra funds that go to districts for particular groups of students are spent in the schools serving those students."

- **Request the Board of Education to annually report on student performance and resource allocation data for general, special, and compensatory education, and ESOL programs to improve the Council's understanding and oversight.** Towards this end, OLO recommends that the County Council request an annual report describing revenues and budgets for general, special and compensatory education and ESOL programs. Specific data points to be included in this annual report should include per pupil expenditures by program and by school poverty; average teacher experience and compensation among low-poverty and high-poverty schools; and shares of novice teachers among low- and high-poverty schools.

Data on inputs and outputs by student demographics and service groups are central to improving the Council's and the public's understanding of MCPS operations and outcomes. Moreover, in the absence of a MCPS program budget, an annual report describing budgeted expenditures in general, special and compensatory education, and ESOL programs, would greatly improve the Council's and the public's understanding and oversight of the MCPS budget.

#### **Recommendations for Board of Education Action –**

- **Request a briefing from OLO staff on this current report and on OLO Report 2018-8.** This report raises a lot of questions regarding student performance and resource allocations. OLO welcomes the opportunity to address questions from the Board of Education, MCPS leadership, and staff to help cultivate mutual understanding and effort aimed at improving outcomes among students and communities adversely impacted by inequities and disparities.

A related OLO report, *OLO Report 2018-8 – Racial Equity in Government Decision-Making, Lessons from the Field*, also raises questions germane to MCPS' efforts to close its performance and opportunity gaps by race, ethnicity, language, and income. That OLO report finds that narrowing racial and ethnic disparities requires focused attention on race, addressing institutional racism, and policies and practices targeting institutions and systems rather than individuals. OLO has offered a number of recommendations for County Government aimed at advancing racial equity in County operations; the Board may want to consider adopting these recommendations for MCPS to advance equity and reduce inequities as well.

- **Adopt and implement a Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy.** There has been a high level of synergy among County leaders on the need to advance equity in government decision-making to narrow disparities by race and ethnicity. The Board of Education President, Student Member of the Board (SMOB), and the Superintendent of MCPS attended racial equity trainings with other County leaders in January of 2019; and in April the 2018-19 SMOB co-hosted a community conversation on racial equity with the Council President. Additionally, the Council recently passed Bill 19-27 establishing a racial equity and social justice for the County.

To further align racial equity and social justice efforts countywide, OLO recommends that the Board of Education replicate the County Council's efforts to advance racial equity and social justice in government decision-making by enacting its own racial equity and social justice policy that targets **central office decision-making**. The Board could further encourage MCPS to adopt best practices for enhancing racial equity in government decision-making that include the use of racial equity impact assessments, staff training on racial equity, and the use of data to identify and address inequities in MCPS policies, practices, budgeting, and operations as noted in OLO Report 2018-8.

- **Partner with County Government and a regional network of jurisdictions to advance equity.** OLO recommends that MCPS join the County's partnership with the Government Alliance for Race and Equity to advance racial equity in government decision-making. MCPS is uniquely poised to advance racial equity in decision-making by utilizing the expertise of its Equity Unit Teams to uncover and address the implicit institutional biases within the school system that foster opportunity and performance gaps by race, ethnicity, income, and English proficiency. Without understanding these drivers and reallocating resources to address the learning needs of these student subgroups, existing performance gaps will persist and widen.

To enable MCPS to address biases in its resource allocation practices that contribute to its performance and opportunity gaps, OLO recommends that MCPS join Montgomery County Government as members of a regional cohort of jurisdictions being convened by GARE and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments as a community of practice for advancing racial equity. There is much that MCPS can contribute to this work and learn from others to both support and champion burgeoning efforts among local jurisdictions in this region aimed at reducing inequities and racial and ethnic disparities in outcomes.