MEMORANDUM

March 25, 2003

TO: County Council

FROM: Sue Richards, Program Evaluator
            Office of Legislative Oversight

SUBJECT: **OLO Intensive Budget Review Report #2 – Montgomery County**
            Public Schools' Approach to Seeking Grant Funds

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Intensive Budget Review (IBR) report examines how Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) identifies and pursues opportunities for competitive grant funds from the federal and state governments as well as private foundations. It responds to the Council's request to learn more about how MCPS is positioned to pursue discretionary funding sources.

During the past three years, MCPS has streamlined its practices for identifying and seeking grant revenues. Staff reactions to these changes have been positive. Also, a review of grant practices in a sample of jurisdictions which are comparable to Montgomery County suggests that the MCPS' approach to seeking grants uses fewer dedicated resources to achieve comparable results.

To date, MCPS has received more than $12.3 million in FY 03 from discretionary grant awards. Additionally, MCPS will receive an additional $6.3 million over the next five years as part of two grants awarded to the University System of Maryland and George Washington University.

OLO recommends that MCPS continue to make ongoing improvements to its grant seeking practices. Some suggested areas of focus include upgrading the grants website to distribute information about school based small grants and awards; building additional collaborative partnerships; and improving the database reports in the Office of the Deputy Superintendent.

INTRODUCTION

A grant is an agreement between two parties where one organization gives another organization funds for a particular purpose to be completed over a specific time period to fulfill the goals and desires of the funding source. The life cycle of a grant, which consists of several components, can be divided into three interrelated phases for administrative purposes:

- Seeking grant funds includes the legislative authorization and appropriation process, the announcement of funding opportunities, the preparation and submission of grant applications, and the award process;
- Receiving grant funds addresses the approval and appropriation processes of the grant recipient; and
- Administering grant funds includes post award performance and administration by the grant recipient as well as payment, audit and closeout procedures.

This report examines MCPS' practices to seek grant funds. Close relationships exist between the decisions to seek grants and the implementation of a grant. As a result, in the course of this study, OLO identified issues related to how MCPS receives funds and implement grants. These issues are beyond the scope of this study; however they may merit a separate follow-up study.

There are many types of grants. The primary focus of this Intensive Budget Review (IBR) report is on competitive or discretionary grants. A competitive grant has an application that is scored against other applications and the outcome of the application is not guaranteed. In contrast, entitlement funds are distributed by the federal or state government based on formulas incorporated into the law. In some instances, when the federal government allocates funds to a state and authorizes the state to distribute funds using a formula, supplemented by an application for additional funding, the lines between a formula and a competitive grant become blurred.

Finally, this report focuses on grants funded by traditional revenue sources, i.e., the federal government, state government, and private foundations. Nontraditional revenue sources include donor activities, enterprise activities, and shared activities.[1] The use of nontraditional revenue sources to fund educational activities has increased significantly, particularly in jurisdictions with property tax caps. The use of grants within these nontraditional revenue sources is beyond the scope of this report but may also merit a separate study.

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[1] Donor activities include grants, local business enrichment funds, educational funds, booster clubs. Enterprise activities include user fees, leasing of services and facilities, and sale of school access for commercial items such as vending machines. Shared activities refers to the use of school buildings by higher education, private nonprofits, e.g. child care centers.

OLO interviewed staff, reviewed documentation and conducted telephone interviews with staff in other jurisdictions. OLO received excellent cooperation from everyone involved in this project.

ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

- Part I sets the regulatory framework and explains the distinction between school based small grants and supported-project grants, and reviews MCPS' revenue estimates for each category;

- Part II describes the roles and responsibilities of MCPS staff who participate in seeking and applying for supported-project grants;

- Part III reviews MCPS' strategies for seeking grant opportunities;

- Part IV presents the steps MCPS follows to package a grant application;

- Part V reports comparative information about grant practices from five jurisdictions; and

- Part VI and Part VII contain OLO's findings and recommendation.

PART I: POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR GRANT PRACTICES

The framework for MCPS grant practices is established in Regulation DDA-RA, "Seeking and Securing Federal, State and Private Grants". This regulation prescribes procedures for seeking and receiving grants. It was most recently revised by the Board of Education in November 1998. (See Appendix A for a copy of this regulation.)

The Board of Education does not have an adopted grants policy.

In February 2003, the Office of the Deputy Superintendent published a booklet titled "Seeking and Securing Grant Funds." This manual provides procedures for principals and others to follow in seeking and securing grant funds. The procedures in this booklet supersede parts of Regulation DDA-RA. (See Appendix B for a copy of this booklet.)

A. SCHOOL BASED SMALL GRANTS VS. SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANTS

MCPS' Regulation DDA-RA distinguishes between grants that support individual school activities versus grants that support the priorities of the MCPS system. This section explains the difference between "school based small grants" and "supported-project grants," and summarizes MCPS' tracking systems and revenue estimates for each category.

<u>School Based Small Grants</u>. To be defined as a school based small grant, a grant must be $10,000 or less and meet the following criteria:

- The grant must NOT require cash, in-kind matching funds, or any commitment of MCPS resources;
- The funding source must NOT require restricted annual financial reporting;
- Except for substitutes, the grant must NOT be used to employ personnel in schools during the school day; and
- The activities must be fully aligned with the goals and objectives of the school improvement plan and aligned with school system priorities.

Within these guidelines, individual schools have a great deal of latitude to decide whether to pursue a grant or what kind of grant funding to seek. The grant specialist in the Office of the Deputy Superintendent provides support and technical assistance for these efforts. The grant specialist maintains a website with a searchable database of grant opportunities that can be accessed by personnel throughout the school system.

When a school receives a grant award, the principal is responsible for ensuring program and fiscal oversight. The grant funds must be placed in the school's Independent Activity Fund (IAF). The Internal Audit Unit in the Office of Shared Accountability regularly audits the IAF receipts and expenditures for each school. The Internal Audit Unit makes an effort to visit each elementary school once every three years, each middle school once every 18 months and each high school and special school once a year. As part of this review, the Internal Audit Unit examines what grants exist and whether the school accomplished what the grant was for.

Information about the number and amount of small grant funds received by each individual school is not readily available. Because the accounting system for each school is based on-site, the Internal Audit Unit would have to compile the grant information school-by-school and generate a report.

Last year, the grant specialist in the Office of the Deputy Superintendent worked with the Internal Audit Unit to collect information about the small grants from each school. This effort resulted in data from 71 schools that show:

- These schools received 137 grant awards between October 1999 and November 2002;
- The awards totaled $388,000 and the average award size was $2,985;
- There were 52 separate funding sources; and
- The most popular sources of funds were MCPS Education Foundation (32 grants), Citibank (16 grants), The Chesapeake Bay Trust (14 grants) and the Washington Post (8 grants).

The grant specialist is using the Internet to improve the management of school based small grants. Specifically, the MCPS grants website now has:

- A "searchable database of small grant opportunities", which schools can access to get information on current grant opportunities, and
- A one-page form which requests information about each grant a school receives.

The use of the Internet for distributing information about small grants offers promise but needs ongoing attention. The one-page grant information form currently must be downloaded and filled out manually. The grant specialist anticipates schools will be able to fill out this form online by July 2003. At that point, the data will be used to create a small grants award database that will be available online. This information will let schools know what grants are being awarded and will also be available to the Internal Audit Unit for auditing purposes.

B. SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANTS

The term "supported-project grant" refers to competitive grants which do not meet all of the restrictions of a school based small grant. According to Regulation DDA-RA, a supported-project grant meets one of four conditions; it may:

- Require annual financial reporting; OR
- Require a commitment of MCPS resources, including cash or an in-kind matching contribution; OR
- Be used to employ personnel (other than substitutes) in a school during the school day; OR
- Be more than $10,000.

Multiple MCPS offices track grant awards as well as receipts and expenditures associated with supported-project grants:

- The Department of Management, Budget and Planning (DMBP) reports to the Board of Education regarding new and continuing grants which require Board approval. DMBP identifies the project name, amount, number of positions and original funding source as well as the purpose of the grant. Copies of these memoranda are forwarded to the County Council to keep the Council updated about ongoing grant awards. DMBP reports that MCPS has received and set up accounts for 52 competitive grants so far in FY 2003; the total dollar value appropriated for these projects totals $12.3 million, including the first year revenues for two multi-year grants. (See Appendix C for a sample DMBP memorandum.)

- The Department of Financial Services prepares a weekly report of all approved supported-project grants and DMBP tracks the administration of these grants. This report includes information about both entitlement and discretionary grants.

- The grant specialist maintains a database to track awards for supported-project grants. The awards are tracked in two categories: new and continuing grants. The grant specialist collects information about the name of the grant, the purpose, the funding source, the lead office, the supporting offices, the dollar amount for FY 03, the total grant period, and the grant status. The grant specialist's database shows 56 awards with a total of $13.4 million in FY 03 revenues. (See Appendix D for a list of these grants.)

There are some significant administrative differences between school based small grants and supported-project grants. Specifically,

- Pursuit of a new supported-project grant opportunity must be referred to the grant specialist and approved by the Deputy Superintendent;
- The application process for a supported-project grant is a team effort;
- Funds received from a supported-project grant are placed in a separate fund designated for grant revenues (the Provision for Future Supported Grant fund); and
- MCPS central administrative office staff manage the project and fiscal oversight of supported-project grant.

The next three sections of this report examine some of these differences in more detail. Part II looks at the roles and responsibilities for supported-project grants. Parts III and IV, beginning on page 8, describe the procedures for putting together a grant application and seeking out grant opportunities.

PART II: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANTS

Identifying and developing a supported-project grant proposal combines the expertise of staff dispersed throughout the school system:

- A grant specialist, who reports to the Deputy Superintendent, researches potential grant opportunities and coordinates the development of a grant proposal;

- Managers throughout the school system also routinely monitor and respond to grant opportunities;

- Staff in the Department of Management, Budget and Planning and the Office of Shared Accountability regularly help develop the budget and evaluation component of a proposal.

Other offices, including the Office of Staff Development, the Office of Instruction and Program Development, the Office of School Performance, the Office of Global Access Technology and the Office of Student and Community Services, may be called on to contribute depending on the nature of the proposal.

The roles and responsibilities of the key participants are as follows:

Deputy Superintendent. The Deputy Superintendent decides whether MCPS will pursue a grant opportunity and oversees the development of a plan to create a grant proposal. The Deputy Superintendent appoints a proposal team and designates a team leader.

Grant specialist. The grant specialist reports to the Deputy Superintendent. The specialist manages the grant procedures and coordinates the development of selected grant proposals. The grant specialist's key responsibilities are to: identify and investigate grant opportunities, create an outline and timeline for the development of a specific proposal, provide technical assistance to the grant team, and coordinate the final review and packaging of a grant proposal.

Team leader. The team leader oversees the development of the project proposal and the writing of the grant application. The team leader usually is the MCPS manager for a specific area of expertise. The team leader presents the grant concept at the initial meeting and coordinates the participation of all of the necessary MCPS offices.

Grant team. The proposal team consists of the grant specialist, a team leader who is usually the context specialist, and a representative from each contributing office, including the Department of Management, Budget and Planning and the Office of Shared Accountability. The team may also include representatives from any partner organizations or other key stakeholders.

Grant writers. Grant proposals consist of a common set of elements including a program plan, a time line, a description of methods of implementation and a plan for program evaluation. A team leader or the grant specialist may hire a grant writer on an hourly basis to assist with the collection and compilation of the elements of the grant proposal. A grant writer is jointly supervised by the grant specialist and the team leader.

Department of Management, Budget and Planning (DMBP). A budget specialist from DMBP routinely participates on the grants team. The budget specialist assists the team leader with the development of the budget for the grant proposal. The budget specialist offers advice about the main cost elements to include and reminds the team about costs that are frequently overlooked. The budget specialist reviews the initial budget proposal for accuracy and completeness, and assists with completion of the state budget forms. The Budget Director reviews the final proposal with the budget specialist to be sure all the costs are fully identified and to verify that the numbers are reasonable.

Office of Shared Accountability (OSA). As interest in accountability and results measurement has grown, grant providers more often require an evaluation component. OSA's primary responsibilities in the grant selection process are to help the program manager develop the evaluation component of a grant proposal and to review the proposed evaluation plan and costs to be sure the plan is feasible, the costs are reasonable, and the plan is appropriately funded.

OSA provides assistance to the program manager who is responsible for crafting the evaluation plan. OSA has established a process to help train program managers in the art of program evaluation. In order to shift the focus from reporting information about the project tasks to reporting results, OSA sees the need to train MCPS staff how to write clear program objectives and define measurable results, which are linked to those objectives.

MCPS uses a variety of evaluative tools for grants, depending on the requirements of the grantors and MCPS priorities. Sometimes the Office of Shared Accountability is responsible for carrying out the project evaluation. In other cases, OSA provides access to student records to assist an external evaluator. OSA reviews the costs associated with the evaluation plan to help insure that it will be adequately funded. OSA staff report that, in the past, projects were approved with evaluation plans that were inadequately funded.

PART III: STRATEGIES FOR SEEKING SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

MCPS believes that successfully seeking and pursuing grants requires a multi-year, multi-phase approach. MCPS uses several strategies to identify and pursue grant opportunities.

An Emphasis on Grant Preparation. MCPS has shifted its emphasis from the grant application process to more long-term grant preparation strategies. According to MCPS, the process to develop and package a grant application is one part of a broader strategy to seek grant funding. This broader strategy consists of the following steps:

- Identifying and documenting a problem;
- Getting the agreement of key staff that this problem needs to be addressed;
- Proposing a conceptual solution and a budget estimate; and
- Identifying potential funding sources.

Cultivating relationships with organizations that allocate grant funds. Staff throughout MCPS work actively to cultivate relationships with public and private organizations that allocate grant funds. Staff attend conferences and talk to representatives from federal or state offices or private foundations about the problems MCPS faces and its plans to address these issues. Or, staff may hear about a grant opportunity at a professional conference and follow-up to establish a contact with the grant representative. Over time, these actions help MCPS develop extensive, informal networks of potential grant opportunities.

In addition, the grant specialist serves occasionally as a member of a review panel for a grant that is aligned with MCPS' priorities in order to gain insight into the characteristics of a successful application.

A focused screening process. MCPS has instituted a new process for screening grant opportunities. While it used to take a concerted research effort to find out about potential grants, organizations now routinely post grant opportunities on the Internet. As a result, MCPS shifted its focus from identifying all grant opportunities to finding the "best" ones.

To accomplish this, MCPS centralized the agency's efforts to identify and screen grant opportunities by asking four questions:

- How is this grant aligned with MCPS "trend benders" and priority areas in the school's long range plan?[2]
- What benefits from the grant would accrue to MCPS?
- What obligations would this grant entail?
- What would happen when the grant ends?

The grant specialist and program staff develop answers to these questions. The process of answering these questions allows MCPS to assess how specific grant opportunities would contribute to MCPS' system-wide priorities while also identifying the potential costs of pursuing a particular grant. Over time, MCPS expects this process to decrease funding for projects that are not aligned with the agency's long-range plans.

Cultivating relationships with potential partners. Multiple partnering opportunities exist for MCPS.

In some cases, MCPS benefits from grants awarded to other agencies. For example, Montgomery College has frequently received grant awards that benefit MCPS. In November, George Washington University and the University System of Maryland each received grants from the National Science Foundation which will benefit MCPS. The table lists grant awards to other organizations with benefits to MCPS in FY 03.

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[2] MCPS' Call to Action identifies the following six "trend benders": Developing a System of Shared Accountability; Early Success; Improving Workforce Excellence; Broadening the Concept of Literacy; Reorganizing for School Success, and Creating Family and Community-Friendly Partnerships.

PARTNERSHIP GRANTS WITH BENEFITS TO MCPS IN FY 03

Grant Awardee	Name of Grant	Purpose	Funding Source	Total grant period and grant award
Montgomery College	Tech Prep Incentive Grant National Academy Foundation Site Enhancement for Gaithersburg High School	Enhance the Information Technology Academy at Gaithersburg High School	Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)	$14,982 for one year
Montgomery College	Tech Prep Incentive Grant	High Schools that Work	Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)	$10,940 for one year
Montgomery College	Tech Prep Incentive Grant Project Lead the Way	Implement "Project Lead the Way" at Wheaton and Magruder High Schools.	Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)	$22,201 for one year.
George Washington University	Middle School Science Educational Research Initiative	Study effectiveness of three highly rated science curriculum units on student outcomes.	National Science Foundation	Total grant award to GWU is $5,224,634. MCPS will receive $1,914,956 over a five year period.
University System of Maryland	High School Science Vertically Integrated Partnerships Project	Enrich science teacher knowledge in order to improve high school science instruction to enable students to meet rigorous state standards.	National Science Foundation	Total grant award to University System of Maryland is $7,499,997. MCPS will receive $4,456,671 over a five year period.

Source: OLO, based on MCPS data as of February 25, 2003.

In other cases, MCPS responds to a request for proposal which requires that several organizations collaborate to deliver services. For example, the proposal for the 21st Century Learning Communities called for MCPS to partner with other organizations to provide after school services. MCPS has partnered with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Recreation, the Department of Libraries, the Collaboration Council, the Arts and Humanities Council, and Linkages to Learning.

Staff in MCPS and the other agencies observe that the level of coordination and collaboration for these partnering opportunities has varied over time and needs improvement. Staff in various organizations struggle with issues such as deciding which requests should take priority, which agency should take the lead, and what is the best conceptual response to the grant from a countywide perspective. Staff acknowledge it can be difficult to establish a consistent set of practices to respond to these collaborative opportunities because the organizations' priorities and approaches are not always aligned.

Because various organizations and non-profits continually request letters of support from MCPS, staff has developed a template which these agencies must fill out. This template asks agencies to respond to the same four questions MCPS uses in its own screening process. MCPS reports that these questions have helped to focus and systematize its review of these requests.

Participating in the County's efforts to obtain funds via congressional earmarking. In response to concerns expressed by the Council about the lack of MCPS participation in the congressional earmarking process, MCPS stepped up its efforts in this area.

Each year, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs contacts various County departments to coordinate a Countywide effort to obtain local funds via the congressional earmarking process. Last year, MCPS gave a presentation on Capitol Hill about the impact of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, and later identified a few potential funding requests. MCPS' funding request were then included in the letter from the County Executive and Council President to the County's Congressional delegation. Although MCPS' requests were not funded last year, MCPS resubmitted its requests this year and is continuing to identify funding needs.

The Office of Intergovernmental Affairs believes the congressional earmarking process offers a promising source of funds for the County. Intergovernmental Affairs staff emphasize that it is important to be persistent and as specific as possible when seeking funds through the earmarking process.

PART IV: DEVELOPING A SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANT APPLICATION

In June 2002, the Deputy Superintendent was charged with reorganizing how MCPS finds grant proposals and decides which proposals to pursue. This section of the report describes the identification and approval process established by the Deputy Superintendent. The process includes four general stages:

Stage (1): Identify and monitor opportunities and decide whether to apply.
Stage (2): Convene the grant team and develop a project proposal.
Stage (3): Prepare the grant proposal package.
Stage (4): Submit the grant proposal.

The elapsed time for a grant application process typically follows the amount of time allowed by the funding agency. Federal grants usually set deadlines which are 45 to 60 days after the advertising date. The state generally has a shorter time frame of one to six weeks.

Stage (1): Identify and monitor opportunities and decide whether to apply.

Many people throughout the school system, including program managers and the grant specialist, identify grant opportunities. The grant specialist routinely reviews the federal register, Internet postings, and The Foundation Directory to identify potential grants. Managers throughout the school system become aware of grant opportunities from different sources, including professional conferences and journals, conversations with other educators, or discussions with their colleagues in the field. Managers who are already administering one or more grant-funded programs may also have established contacts with staff within particular funding agencies.

The grant specialist is aware of web based search engines designed for identifying grant opportunities but believes they are redundant because they merely repackage information that is readily available to the public. Widespread use of the Internet for posting requests for grant proposals has improved notification to such an extent that MCPS staff express confidence that they know about all potential grant funding.

When someone identifies a new request for proposal (RFP), the next step is to inform the grant specialist who then conducts an initial review of the RFP. The specialist reviews the RFP to determine how well it fits with MCPS' priorities and how realistic the project would be for MCPS to accomplish. (See page 9 for the list of specific questions asked during this initial screening process.)

The grant specialist then briefs the Deputy Superintendent, who makes the final decision about whether to pursue a grant opportunity or not. If the decision is made to pursue a grant, then the grant specialist drafts a short memorandum to notify management with a copy forwarded to the Board of Education. (See Appendix B, page 21 for a copy of this memo.)

Stage (2): Designate the team leader, convene the grant team and develop a project proposal.

The focus of the second stage of the grant application process is to develop a proposal concept. A key step is the appointment of a team leader, a staff member who specializes in the content area of the potential grant. This may be the staff member who initially suggested the grant opportunity or another staff member designated by an Associate Superintendent.

The team leader and the grant specialist convene a meeting of staff representatives from each of the contributing departments. A budget analyst from the Department of Management, Budget and Planning and a staff member from the Office of Shared Accountability are always included in the meeting.

Representatives from other departments are brought in, if necessary. For example, a staff member from the Office of Human Resources participates if the grant is large and involves hiring new staff. Similarly, a representative from the Office of Student and Community Services participates if the proposed response anticipates community involvement.

At the first meeting, the team leader presents the project concept and the grants specialist presents the schedule for team review and signoff. The team leader has primary responsibility for conceptualizing the project plan, a project schedule and a method of implementation. The team leader develops an evaluation plan in consultation with the Office of Shared Accountability, and a project budget in consultation with the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning. The grant specialist takes the lead in establishing the schedule for completing the grant application and explaining the proposal's criteria and expectations to the team members.

The complexity of the proposed project approach can vary considerably. According to the grant specialist, future supported-projects include both competitive and formula based grants. Typically, the application for a formula based grant only needs to describe how MCPS will divide the money among various functions allowed under the grant. In contrast, the application for a competitive grant needs to conceptualize a project approach, which tends to require a much more complex, creative and open-ended response.

At the first meeting, team members also may identify other organizations or agencies that need to be included in the grant application process. This happens with increasing frequency because many grant opportunities require a collaborative component.

It is useful to identify potential partners early in the process. Typically, MCPS staff who are designing the project must negotiate with a partner organization to determine his/her specific contribution and budget requirements. In some cases, collaborative partners may contribute to the conceptual project approach and participate as a member of the grant team.

During this stage, the grant specialist and the team leader will also attend any meetings convened by the funding source. The team leader usually attends at least the first meeting; the grant specialist generally attends all of the meetings.

The number of staff meetings convened during this stage depends on the size and complexity of the grant opportunity and whether MCPS has responded to a similar proposal in the past. If this is a new and complex opportunity, staff will meet frequently to flesh out the approach and hammer out the details of the proposal. If this is a more routine proposal, one meeting may suffice.

Stage (3): Prepare the grant application package.

The grant specialist provides copies of the RFP to each contributing office or department and provides technical assistance regarding the requirements and format of RFP.

The team leader may hire a grant writer from a list provided by the grant specialist. The team leader and grant specialist may meet with the grant writer to review the grant, the proposed approach and the schedule.

A grant application package consists of several components, including a project proposal, a methodology, a budget, and an evaluation plan. The grant writer works with the members of the grant team to gather information and address the questions posed in the RFP. The grant writer produces a rough draft of the application package which is reviewed, edited and polished by the team leader and the grant specialist. This is largely an electronic process.

Stage (4): Submit the grant application package

Ten days before the application deadline, the Department of Management, Budget and Planning and the Associate Superintendent receive a copy of the final grant application package for review and approval. The grant specialist and team leader address any questions and incorporate any recommended edits. The purpose of this review is to make sure management is fully informed of and agrees with the proposed project.

The team leader and grants specialist draft an informational memo and forward the final proposal, cover letter, and accompanying documentation to the Deputy Superintendent and Chief Operating Officer. The package is then forwarded to the Superintendent for final review and approval. After the Superintendent signs-off on the completed package, the grant specialist ensures timely delivery or mailing of the proposal.

Previously, the grant application process included an approval from the Board of Education before a grant application package was submitted. Staff would prepare a five page package for the Board of Education which briefly summarized the proposal and explained why MCPS was seeking the grant.

Seeking the review and approval of the Board of Education to proceed with a grant application took place at the same time staff was developing the grant proposal. This overlap forced staff members to divide their time between seeking approval for the proposal and preparing the actual application. As the time frame for grant applications shrunk, it became more and more difficult to handle both responsibilities simultaneously. The decision to eliminate the Board of Education's approval enables staff to concentrate on preparing the grant application package.

After the grant application is submitted, the grant specialist follows up with the funding source. If MCPS is awarded the grant, the Board of Education takes action to formally approve the grant and receive the award. If MCPS is not awarded the grant, the grant specialist will solicit reviewer comments from the federal government to find out why the proposal was not selected. If the grant is re-advertised, the grant specialist will incorporate these comments into the analysis of whether MCPS should pursue the grant a second time.

PART V: PRACTICES IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

This section of the report describes practices used by a sample of other school districts to monitor and select grant opportunities and to package grant applications. In 2000, MCPS developed a list of school districts to use for benchmarking purposes. The list identified schools that most closely compare with MCPS on criteria such as size, median wealth, percent minority, and per pupil expenditures.

OLO contacted five of these jurisdictions to find out about their practices for monitoring, selecting and applying for grants. OLO also compiled information from the U.S. Department of Education website about discretionary grant awards to each jurisdiction for the past several years.

Partner Profiles. The chart on the next page summarizes key comparative characteristics of the other school districts interviewed; in sum, the five are:

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Public Schools, which has 103,336 students in 135 schools;

- Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Schools, which has 156,412 students in 195 schools;

- Hillsborough County (Florida) Public Schools, which has 164,311 students in 210 schools;

- Jefferson County (Kentucky) Public Schools, which has 96,860 students in 174 schools; and

- Palm Beach County (Florida) Schools, which has 153,871 students in 177 schools.

COMPARATIVE CHARACTERISTICS FOR SELECT SCHOOL DISTRICTS

SCHOOL DISTRICT	# OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL STUDENTS (SCHOOL)	TOTAL STAFF (DISTRICT)	# OF TEACHERS	STUDENT/ TEACHER RATIO	EXPENDITURE /STUDENT	# OF LTD. ENG. PROFICIENCY STUDENTS	% MINORITY ENROLL.
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG NC	135	103,336	13,281	6,562	15.70	$8,049	5,570	53%
FAIRFAX COUNTY VA	195	156,412	21,424	11,574	13.50	$8,972	16,746	39%
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY FL	210	164,270	20,299	10,031	16.40	$7,052	17,156	48%
JEFFERSON COUNTY KY	174	94,407	10,733	3,248	29.80	$7,273	1,080	37%
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MD	192	134,180	16,734	8,560	15.70	$8,604	11,416	51%
PALM BEACH COUNTY FL	177	153,825	16,805	8,084	19.00	$7,514	18,608	50%

Source: OLO, National Center for Education Statistics Common Core Data (CCD). Data provided directly from State Education Agencies (SEA) for the 200-2001 school year.

Resources. All five jurisdictions have a grants office, which is assigned responsibility for searching out and monitoring grant opportunities. The size of this function varies. Similar to Montgomery County, Palm Beach County has one grant coordinator position. In comparison, Hillsborough County and Jefferson County have the largest grants offices, each with six positions.

Strategies for seeking and identifying grant opportunities. The jurisdictions report using similar strategies to monitor grant opportunities. These include reviewing the Federal Register, searching for opportunities on the Internet, and cultivating relationships with funding sources and grant partners.

A few offices mentioned that they had subscribed to on-line publications or a web-based search engine but that they had let the subscription lapse because the services were not used regularly. Hillsborough County relies primarily on a list service managed by the State of Florida which provides information for both state and federal grants.

The jurisdictions differ as to whether the grants office has the primary responsibility for seeking grants or whether this task is shared with others. In Fairfax County, Hillsborough County and Jefferson County, the grants office has the primary responsibility for finding and informing other people about grant opportunities. Fairfax County and Hillsborough County use a website to share information about small grant opportunities with school-based staff.

In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the grants office and professional staff both identify grant opportunities. The opportunities identified by professional staff tend to be from professional organizations, which typically offer smaller awards than those identified by the grants office. Charlotte-Mecklenburg also identifies a contact person at each school who is responsible for posting information about grant opportunities sent out by the grants office on a bulletin board at the school.

In Palm Beach County, professional staff (not in the grants office) have the primary responsibility for finding and preparing grant applications.

Deciding to pursue a grant opportunity. The grants offices in all five jurisdictions report that the decision to pursue a grant opportunity is made jointly between the grants office and the appropriate central department. The grants office screens the opportunity to be sure the school system meets the eligibility criteria for the grant. The grants office in Charlotte-Mecklenburg also makes sure the potential grant is aligned with the school district's goals and objectives. If a grant passes this first filter, then the grant office will contact the professional staff to see if they are interested in pursuing the grant.

The grants coordinators in the five districts contacted agree it is important to operate as a team in deciding whether to pursue a grant or not. One person observed that getting the grant is easy but implementing the grant "is almost like taking on a second job."

Practices for preparing a grant application. The grant offices differed in the level of support provided to help prepare a grant application. For example:

- In Fairfax County, program managers are responsible for preparing the grant proposal. After the program staff has prepared an initial draft, the grants office will fine tune an application and add any statistical information required in the application. A staff member in the budget office is routinely available to put together a budget based on ideas provided by the program staff.

- In Hillsborough County, the grants office is staffed to take the lead in preparing the grant application. The office designates a lead writer and tasks other staff with the needs assessment. The director prepares the budget and relies on the evaluation department to help out with the larger more complex evaluation plans.

- In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the proposal is prepared by the program staff and edited by the grants office.

Seeking the approval of the Board of Education. Practices for seeking the approval of the Board of Education also vary. Charlotte-Mecklenburg seeks approval from the Board of Education to apply for any grant over $2,000. Fairfax County only seeks approval if a grant requests funding for a position; the superintendent signs off on any grants over $10,000. Similarly, Hillsborough County only seeks approval from the Board of Education if matching funds are required. Jefferson County reports only rarely seeking approval from its Board.

Other grants offices prepare periodic reports to keep their respective Boards of Education informed of grant awards that are received. For example, Palm Beach County requires a report to the Board of Education for every grant over $10,000.

Amount of award money. The jurisdictions contacted collect varying amounts in grant dollars. Fairfax County reported receiving $20 million in grants in 2002, including $5 million in competitive grants. Hillsborough County reported collecting $23 million in competitive grants during the past eight months. Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Jefferson County estimated that they each received between five and seven million dollars in competitive grants each year. Palm Beach County does not have current information on its discretionary grant revenues.

Based on information maintained on the federal Department of Education website, the table below shows the amount of federal grant awards made between FY 01 and FY 03 to Montgomery County and the other five jurisdictions contacted. It is important to keep in mind that these data only report one of multiples source of grant dollars routinely used by each of the grant offices.

U.S. DEPARTMENT DISCRETIONARY GRANT AWARDS FOR SELECT JURISDICTIONS, FY 01-FY03

Jurisdiction	# of Awards	Total Award Amount	Average Award
Charlotte-Mecklenberg NC	7	$5,622,280	$803,183
Fairfax County VA	13	$4,097,865	$315,220
Hillsborough County FL	19	$11,585,655	$609,771
Jefferson County KY	12	$6,304,633	$525,386
Montgomery County MD	**13**	**$11,532,193**	**$887,092**
Palm Beach County FL	12	$9,005,685	$750,474

Source: OLO, U.S. Department of Education, 2003

PART VI: FINDINGS

Last year, during the budget worksessions the Council raised concerns about the grant funding practices used by the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Councilmembers wondered whether MCPS was routinely identifying all possible grant opportunities, how information about these opportunities was shared with program staff and teachers, and whether MCPS had a set of practices in place for packaging grant applications. These questions are still relevant this year as fiscal pressures continue to increase.

In an era of tight fiscal resources, legislators would like assurances that an agency or department is vigilantly monitoring opportunities for outside funding and is well positioned to pursue a promising opportunity. The effective use of outside resources,

however, is not merely a matter of empowering staff to identify and pursue as many opportunities as possible. Rather, it requires a methodical system for looking, the judgment to assess the value a grant would bring to the organization, and the skill to respond quickly.

OLO's review of MCPS' grant practices examined how MCPS monitors emerging opportunities and what steps MCPS follows to develop and package a grant application. OLO also researched practices used in jurisdictions similar to MCPS for comparative purposes. OLO's findings are summarized below.

Finding #1: During the past three years, MCPS restructured the agency's practices for identifying and seeking grant revenues. Staff reactions to the changes are positive.

Historically, MCPS used a loosely decentralized system to identify and pursue grant opportunities. Managers and staff within each division would decide whether to seek grant funding and which opportunities to pursue. Staff who proceeded through the application process received minimal support and little oversight. Staff would seek approval from the Board of Education to apply for a grant at the end of the process after a significant investment of resources. In some cases, the request for approval was granted after the application had been mailed.

During the past three years, MCPS significantly restructured its practices for identifying and seeking grant revenues. Implementation of the new structure culminated in June 2002 when MCPS centralized the authority for grant decisions with the Deputy Superintendent and moved the grant specialist position to the Office of the Deputy Superintendent.

MCPS adopted new practices and procedures designed to make the agency's grant seeking efforts more proactive and to ensure that the grant revenues received are aligned with MCPS priorities. Specific changes included:

- Eliminating the requirement that the Board of Education approve a grant application;
- Instituting an upfront process to screen grant opportunities to identify those grants that are aligned with MCPS priorities and can be sustained beyond the term of the grant with little or no ongoing commitment of local resources;
- Streamlining the process and paperwork for seeking approval to apply for a grant;
- Making adequate resources, e.g. the grant specialist, staff from the Budget Office, staff from the Office of Shared Accountability and contract grant writers, available to program staff to develop and package a grant application;
- Using the Internet to distribute information about small grant opportunities; and
- Implementing reporting requirements to track both small grants and supported - project grant awards.

OLO heard many positive comments about these changes. Overall, staff find the new process very supportive. Staff report that the upfront approval process provides important management guidance and saves time; the technical assistance provided by the grant specialist is very helpful, especially for staff who are applying for a grant for the first time; and the grant specialist taking responsibility for the logistics enables program staff to concentrate on the substance of the application.

Finding #2: MCPS' grant specialist has made a good start in implementing a systematic set of practices to support individual schools wanting to seek small grants. More work is needed to finish this task.

MCPS' efforts to revise its grant practices have focused on supporting staff in individual schools who wish to apply for a small school based grants. Over the past year, the grant specialist has implemented a series of changes to these practices. Specifically, the grant specialist:

- Clarified the definition and approval process for small grants and published this information in a brochure,
- Developed a simple, one-page form to collect information on the awards received, and
- Initiated a database of small grant awards based on this information.

The database of awards and opportunities are posted on the MCPS grant website. Posting information about awards is intended to help those interested in applying for grants see practical examples of what awards are possible.

The reporting form to collect information on small grants is also posted on the website. Currently, however, it must be downloaded, filled out manually and mailed to the grants specialist. The grant specialist anticipates school staff will be able to fill out the form online by this summer.

Finding #3: MCPS staff supplement the conventional approach of applying for competitive discretionary grants with non-traditional strategies. Some of these are beginning to show promising results.

At the same time MCPS has centralized and streamlined its grant application practices, the agency expanded its approaches for cultivating grant opportunities. In response to Council concerns, MCPS has worked with the County Government's Office of Intergovernmental Relations to increase MCPS' participation in the congressional earmarking process.

MCPS is also actively working to identify and target how it works with potential grant partners with a particular focus on institutions of higher education. Recently, Montgomery College, the University of System Maryland, and George Washington University each received grant awards which will benefit MCPS.

MCPS also collaborates with publicly funded entities such as the Department of Health and Human Services and the Collaboration Council. Staff observe that the level of coordination and collaboration in these partnering opportunities has varied over time and needs improvement.

Finally, in order to gain insight into the characteristics of winning applications, as time permits, the grant specialist serves on review panels for grants that are aligned with MCPS' priorities.

Finding #4: Multiple MCPS offices track grant awards for supported-project grants for different purposes. MCPS uses these systems to routinely report data about FY 03 revenues; however reports of total grant award amounts, trends in annual revenues over time, and upcoming grant terminations are not readily available.

The Department of Management, Budget and Planning (DMBP) reports to the Board of Education regarding new and continuing grants which require Board approval. DMBP identifies the project name, amount, number of positions and original funding source as well as the purpose of each individual grant. DMBP forwards copies of these memoranda to the County Council to keep the Council updated about ongoing grant awards.

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) prepares a weekly report of all approved supported-project grants that DFS and DMBP use to track the administration of these grants. This report, which includes information about both entitlement and discretionary grants, also captures information for each individual grant.

The grant specialist in the Office of the Deputy Superintendent collects information about the name of the grant, the purpose, the funding source, the lead office, the supporting offices, the dollar amount for FY 03, and the total grant. This database, which includes grants received as of January 2001, has the potential to report total grant awards as well as revenue trends over time; however much of the data for grants received prior to June 2002 are missing.

Finding #5: **To date, MCPS has received $12.3 million in discretionary grant award revenue in FY 03. MCPS will receive $6.3 million in revenues from partnership grants over the next five years.**

MCPS receives a substantial amount of funding from discretionary grants. In tracking grants, MCPS distinguishes between small, school based grant awards and larger grant awards, called supported-project grants. MCPS also tracks grants made to other agencies which benefit MCPS.

- Small school based grants are $10,000 or less and cannot require any commitment of MCPS resources. Reporting of these grants found that 71 schools received a total of $388,000 in grant awards between October 1999 and November 2002.

- Supported-project grants are competitive grants which do not meet all of the restrictions of a school based small grant. A supported-project grant meets one of four conditions. It may be over $10,000, require a commitment of MCPS resources, be used to hire school personnel, or require annual financial reporting. In FY 03, MCPS received $12.3 million in revenues from 52 grants.

- Partnership grants are grants which are awarded to other agencies with benefits that accrue to MCPS. In November 2002, George Washington University and the University of System Maryland (USM) each received a grant from the National Science Foundation which will benefit MCPS. The total grant award to George Washington University was $5.2 million; MCPS will receive $1.9 million of this award over a five-year period. The total grant award to USM was $7.5 million; MCPS will receive $4.4 million of this award over a five-year period.

Finding #6: **Available data suggest that, compared to similar school districts, MCPS' approach to seeking grants uses fewer dedicated resources to achieve comparable results.**

MCPS relies on one grant specialist and multiple program managers to monitor and identify grant opportunities. Both the grant specialist and program staff regularly review the Federal Register and multiple online sources. In addition, program staff routinely read professional journals, review newsletters and postings from multiple professional associations, and regularly check with their colleagues to stay abreast of grant opportunities.

If the Deputy Superintendent decides to pursue a grant application, MCPS assembles an ad hoc working group to support the team leader/program manager, who is responsible for developing and producing the grant application.

OLO's investigation of grant practices in the five other jurisdictions found that most jurisdictions maintain a small grant office, staffed with three to six people. Typically, these offices monitor and screen grant opportunities and then contact the appropriate program staff to see if they are interested in pursuing an opportunity. If they are, either the program people or the grants office will take the lead in preparing the grant application.

A database of discretionary grant awards maintained by the Department of Education suggests MCPS is receiving similar types of grants and comparable award amounts, compared to similar jurisdictions.

PART VII: RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the past few years, MCPS has instituted many incremental changes. Taken together, this collection of changes has reshaped the agency's grant practices and created an environment of continuous improvement. OLO offers the recommendations below as suggestions to build on the work that has been started.

Recommendation #1:   MCPS should continue to upgrade its grants website to distribute information about school based small grants and awards.

Over time, MCPS will want to provide more complete information about the small grant awards schools are receiving. Upgrading the MCPS grants website so that staff will be able to fill out a reporting form online should help achieve this. It will be especially helpful to have easier access to the amount and number of school-based grant awards.

MCPS will also want to improve the database of grant opportunities and awards which is currently posted on the site. The database does not always open easily and there may be a more user friendly format to advertise information about upcoming awards. Finally, it would be a good idea to seek feedback about possible design modifications, such as a customized set of sequenced links about small grants, which would better meet the needs of school based small grant staff.

Recommendation #2:   MCPS should continue to actively seek non-traditional grant opportunities, particularly through partnerships, networking and participating in the congressional earmarking process.

An increasing interest in collaboration and partnerships among grantmakers suggests that MCPS has only begun to tap the potential of these opportunities. MCPS should continue to network and build collaborative relationships.

How MCPS partners with other publicly funded entities, such as the Department of Health and Human Services and the Collaboration Council should be of particular interest to the Council. Given the current fiscal situation and the potential revenues which are available, further work is warranted to improve how publicly-funded agencies respond to grant opportunities that require collaboration.

MCPS should continue to work closely with the County government's Office of Intergovernmental Relations in the congressional earmarking process. Over time, MCPS should work to develop a list of specific program needs to be funded that are consistent with its priorities.

Recommendation #3: **The MCPS' offices which maintain information about grant awards and grant revenues should collaborate to produce a report to track revenue trends from discretionary grant awards over time as one way to monitor the results of MCPS grant practices.**

MCPS should establish a system for tracking information about discretionary grant applications and awards and periodically report this information to the Board of Education and the Council. The grant specialist has a database of supported-projects which might provide a useful beginning to this effort. In addition to the name and purpose of the grant, it would be helpful to include additional fields, such as the starting and ending project date, the total award amount, and the goals and objectives or trendbenders which the grant addresses. These changes would enable MCPS to follow trends for discretionary grants, such as the number of awards or the total amount of revenues from grant awards. It would also establish a system for identifying when certain grants are expected to terminate.

REGULATION   MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: CND, DAA
Responsible Office: Financial Management
                         Management, Budget, and Planning

Seeking and Securing Federal, State, and Private Grants

I.   PURPOSE

To prescribe the procedures for seeking and receiving grants

II.   SCOPE OF THE REGULATION

The grants approval process extends only to MCPS offices, departments, divisions, and schools; the grants approval process does not extend to funds obtained by community-based organizations including PTAs, booster clubs, school foundations, independently chartered student organizations, teachers, or students. Funds from these sources must comply with MCPS Policy CND, *School-Related Fund Raising*.

III.   DEFINITIONS

A.   A *grant* is an agreement with a foundation, government agency, corporation, or other external source that provides funds for a particular purpose over a definite period of time to fulfill the goals and desires of the funding source. MCPS garners grant funding to support projects that address critical unmet needs or supplement existing programs and are consistent with the *Success for Every Student* Plan.

B.   A *supported project grant* is a grant that meets one or more of the following criteria:

1.   Amount of grant is greater than $10,000

2.   Funding source requires restricted annual financial reporting

3.   Grant requires cash or in-kind matching funds or commitment of MCPS resources

4.   Grant funds are used to employ personnel other than substitutes in schools during the school day

C.   A *small grant* is a grant that is less than $10,000, does not require restricted annual financial reporting, does not require cash or in-kind match nor a commitment of MCPS resources, and is not used to employ personnel in the schools during the regular school day.

D.   An *MCPS instituted grant* is a grant that is offered by MCPS or organizations working explicitly on behalf of MCPS. The Office of Financial Management will review the criteria established by MCPS divisions, departments, or organizations working explicitly on behalf of MCPS to determine if the grant program is an MCPS instituted grant.

E.   *A restricted program financial report* is a report that must be filed annually with a grantor agency. Grants funded by the federal government directly or by the federal government through another agency or organization always require restricted annual financial reporting. Grants from the state or a nongovernmental grantor may require a restricted annual financial report at the discretion of the grantor. A nonspecific, general request to inform a grantor of program results, including how funds were expended, does not constitute a restricted annual financial report.

IV.   PROCEDURES FOR SUPPORTED PROJECT GRANTS

A.   Seeking Grant Funds

      1.   The grants specialist is responsible for researching funding opportunities and working closely with program staff to pursue appropriate opportunities. Funding opportunities are identified in a variety of ways, including:

            a)   The grants specialist identifies possible funding sources through outreach and involvement with professional and community organizations; coordination with other school systems, county agencies, and community organizations seeking grant funding; and relationships with federal and state agencies and private funding sources. The grants specialist relays information on relevant funding opportunities to executive staff members and program staff.

            b)   MCPS personnel, including principals and program staff, learn of grant funding opportunities through contact with professional organizations and contact the grants specialist with information about programs and projects for which they desire grant support.

            c)   The grants specialist conducts training sessions on seeking grant funding and encourages participants to develop materials and contacts which will be of assistance in the search for grant support.

2. The grants specialist obtains the grant application or funding guidelines from the funding source to distribute to appropriate MCPS personnel.

3. After receiving information about a funding opportunity and deciding to pursue the grant, the responsible administrator appoints a project manager. The project manager and the grants specialist acquaint themselves with the terms and conditions in the application.

4. The project manager coordinates the involvement of program and other staff in project planning and preparing the grant proposal.

5. The project manager completes MCPS Form 280-60, *Approval to Develop a Grant Proposal,* with guidance from the grants specialist.

6 The management and budget specialist in the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning provides guidance to the project manager on the costs of the proposed project, project audit costs, and indirect expenses. All personnel costs are to be paid at rates determined by DMBP. MCPS employees cannot be paid as consultants.

7. The project manager obtains the signature of the appropriate executive staff member and submits MCPS Form 280-60: *Approval to Develop a Grant Proposal* to the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning who submits it to the deputy superintendent.

8. The grants specialist facilitates contacts between the funding source and MCPS personnel. The project manager, relying on the guidance of the grants specialist, is the primary MCPS contact with the funding source.

9. The project manager and grants specialist may garner letters of support from community organizations to be included in the proposal or application. These letters are reviewed during the MCPS approval process along with the final proposal.

10. If the proposal is for a grant of more than $10,000 that is not an entitlement or formula grant, a renewal of an existing grant, or resubmission of an approved project, the project manager, with guidance from the grants specialist and management and budget specialist, prepares a Board of Education resolution requesting permission of the Board of Education to submit the grant application.

11. The project manager with the assistance of the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning, submits the proposal, signed by the superintendent, to the funding source and, if required, to the State Single Point of Contact.

B. Receiving Grant Funds

1. Supported Project Grant funds are received and expended under the following mechanisms:

    a) Budgeted Grant

        The Board of Education approves budgeted grants as part of the annual operating budget request.

    b) Grant Funding Not Provided for in the Annual Operating Budget

        (1) Provision for Future Supported Projects

           This lump-sum appropriation allows MCPS to establish supported projects without having to request a supplemental appropriation from the County Council. The Board of Education advises the Council and the county executive in writing of each approved project. To be eligible a project must: not require local matching funds now or in the future; be within the dollar limit for future supported projects as set by the County Council (currently $100,000 or less); or have received grant funding the year before.

        (2) Request for Supplemental Appropriation

           Grant awards that do not meet the Provision for Future Supported Projects must receive a supplemental appropriation by the County Council as well as approval by the Board of Education. For these projects, the Board resolutions will be forwarded to the county executive and County Council for approval.

2. The project manager with guidance from the grants specialist and management and budget specialist prepares a Board resolution to receive and expend grant funds.

3.   The project manager in cooperation with the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning, completes MCPS Form 280-59: *Data to Establish MCPS Project Number for Supported Programs* and MCPS Form 210-1: *Request and Authorization for Movement of Operating Budget Funds and/or Positions.*

C.   Administering Grant Funds

   1.   The project manager:

      a)   Is responsible for staff assigned to the project

      b)   Ensures that the tasks and terms set forth in the grant are completed in accordance with the budget and timeline

      c)   Ensures the quality and timeliness of products, reports, financial statements, and other materials to be delivered under the terms of the grant

      d)   Coordinates with other MCPS staff the completion of required evaluations, reports, billings, and audits

   2.   Unless otherwise specified, all positions funded by grants are conditional upon future grant funding. The project manager works closely with the Department of Personnel Services which provides guidance to temporary and permanent employees about their rights and responsibilities regarding employment with MCPS upon termination of the grant.

   3.   The project manager ensures that the terms of the grant are not changed without the written authorization of MCPS and the funding source and informs the appropriate management and budget specialist of proposed fiscal and program changes.

   4.   In cooperation with the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning, the project manager oversees the smooth continuation of a multiyear project and the proper termination of a completed project by ensuring that grant funds are expended or seeks and receives written authorization from the funding source to extend the life of the grant.

   5.   The Department of Management, Budget, and Planning in cooperation with the Division of Accounting monitors project spending during the life of the project. The Department of Management, Budget, and Planning will provide

notice of termination of a grant supported project to the project manager 90 days before the scheduled conclusion of the grant funding.

V.   **PROCEDURES FOR SMALL GRANTS**

    A.   Seeking Small Grant Funds

        1.   The grants specialist is responsible for researching the funding opportunities and working closely with program staff to pursue appropriate spending sources. Grant sources and funding opportunities are identified in a variety of ways, including:

            a)   The grant specialist identifies possible funding sources through outreach and involvement with professional and community organizations, coordination with other school systems, county agencies, and community organizations seeking grant funding, and relationships with federal and state agencies and private funding sources. The grants specialist relays information on relevant funding opportunities to appropriate program staff.

            b)   MCPS personnel, including principals and program staff, learn of grant funding opportunities through contact with professional organizations and contact the grants specialist with information about programs and projects for which they desire grant support.

            c)   The grants specialist conducts training sessions on seeking grant funding and encourages participants to develop materials and contacts that will be of assistance in the search for grant support.

        2.   The grants specialist or MCPS personnel obtain the grant application or funding guidelines from the funding source.

        3.   The interested applicant serves as project manager and coordinates involvement of program and other staff in project planning, preparing the grant proposal, and implementing the grant supported project.

        4.   The management and budget specialist provides guidance to the project manager on the costs of the proposed project. All personnel costs are to be paid at rates determined by the MCPS Department of Management, Budget, and Planning. MCPS employees cannot be paid as consultants.

5. The grants specialist facilitates contacts between the funding source and MCPS personnel. The project manager, relying on the guidance of the grants specialist, is the primary MCPS contact with the funding source.

6. The project manager completes the grant application incorporating feedback from the grants specialist and key program staff where appropriate.

7. The project manager and grants specialist may garner letters of support from community organizations to be included in the proposal or application. These letters are reviewed along with the final proposal.

8. All grants that focus on school-based programs require the approval of the principal on the grant application or proposal. The principal reviews the proposal including letters of support from community organization. Upon approval by the principal, the project manager submits the proposal to the relevant OSA director or associate superintendent for approval.

9. The OSA director or associate superintendent reviews the grant application and/or award letter to ensure that the grant meets none of the four established criteria for a supported project.

10. If the grant does not meet any of the criteria for a supported project grant, the associate superintendent or OSA director initials the proposal to signify approval.

11. The OSA director or associate superintendent forwards a copy of the proposal to the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning. The project manager submits the proposal to the funding source.

12. If the grant meets any of the criteria for a supported project grant, the associate superintendent or OSA director will require the project manager to follow the procedures noted above for a supported project grant.

B. Receiving Small Grant Funds

1. If a small grant is for a school-based program or project, the principal is responsible for overseeing the project, accounting for grant funds, and ensuring that financial and program reports are completed and submitted to the funding source. If a small grant is not for a specific school, the project manager is responsible for overseeing the project, accounting for grant funds, and ensuring that financial and program reports are completed and submitted to the funding source.

2. Upon receipt of grant funds the principal or project manager notifies the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning of the award. The Department of Management, Budget, and Planning maintains this information for inclusion in the status report on small grants provided to the Board of Education semi-annually.

3. Upon receipt of grant funds the principal or project manager places the funds in an account following the procedures outlined in the *Manual of Policies and Procedures for Administering Independent Activity Funds* and forwards funds budgeted for MCPS personnel (including stipends and substitutes) to the MCPS Division of Accounting along with the appropriate forms.

4. Funds from small grants cannot be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in the schools during the school day.

C. Administering Small Grant Funds

1. The project manager supervises staff assigned to the project and ensures that the tasks and terms set forth in the grant are completed in accordance with the budget and timeline. The project manager ensures the quality and timeliness of products, reports, financial statements, and other materials to be delivered under the terms of the grant. The project manager is also responsible for the completion of required evaluations, reports, billings, and audits.

2. The project manager ensures that the terms of the grant are not changed without written authorization of the grantor and that changes do not require the establishment of a supported project.

3. The project manager oversees the smooth continuation of a multiyear project and the proper termination of a completed project by ensuring that grant funds are expended or seeks and receives written authorization from the funding source to extend the life of the grant.

4. Standard MCPS procurement procedures are to be followed.

VI. **PROCEDURES FOR MCPS INSTITUTED GRANTS**

A. Seeking MCPS Instituted Grant Funds

1. The department or division of MCPS or the organization working explicitly on behalf of MCPS will announce MCPS instituted grants.

2. Grant applicants will follow procedures outlined in the grant application and announcement materials.

B. Receiving MCPS Instituted Grant Funds

1. If the MCPS instituted grant is for a school-based program or project, the principal is responsible for overseeing the project, accounting for grant funds, and assuring that financial and program reports are completed and submitted to the funding source. If the grant is not for a specific school, the project manager is responsible for overseeing the project, accounting for grant funds, and assuring that financial and program reports are completed and submitted to the funding source.

2. Upon receipt of grant funds the principal or project manager places the funds in an account and forwards all funds budgeted for MCPS personnel (including stipends, salaries, benefits, and substitutes) to the MCPS Division of Accounting along with MCPS Form 460-2: *Request for Temporary Employment* and MCPS Form 430-12: *Temporary Part Time Computer Generated Individual Voucher*. Payment of substitute teachers is completed by use of MCPS Form 430-1: *Leave Request*.

3. Funds from MCPS instituted grants cannot be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in the schools during the school day.

C. Administering MCPS Instituted Grant Funds

1. The project manager supervises staff assigned to the project and ensures that the tasks and terms set forth in the grant are completed in accordance with the budget and timeline. The project manager ensures the quality and timeliness of products, reports, financial statements, and other materials to be delivered under the terms of the grant. The project manager is also responsible for the completion of required evaluations, reports, billings, and audits.

2. The project manager oversees the smooth continuation of a multiyear project and the proper termination of a completed project by ensuring that grant funds are expended or seeks and receives written authorization from the funding source to extend the life of the grant.

3. Standard MCPS procurement procedures are to be followed.

VII. **REPORTS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

    A.   The director of the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning will provide the superintendent and the Board of Education status reports on supported project grants quarterly. The summary will contain information such as source of funds, summary of the project, and the grant amount.

    B.   The director of the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning will provide the superintendent and the Board of Education status reports on small grants and MCPS instituted grants semi-annually. The summary will contain information such as source of funds, the school or office responsible for administering the grant, summary of the project, grant amount, and duration of the grant.

VIII. **COOPERATION WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS SEEKING GRANT SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT MCPS STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES**

MCPS may issue letters of support for proposals submitted by well respected community organizations for projects that benefit MCPS students, families, and communities. All letters of support will be reviewed by the grants specialist and approved by the superintendent.

APPENDIX B: GRANT PROCEDURES BOOKLET

Seeking and Securing Grant Funds
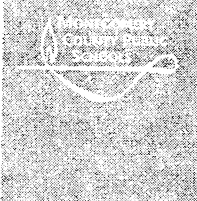
Office of the Deputy Superintendent
Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland 20850

This booklet is to inform principals and directors of processes and procedures when seeking and securing grant funds. There are two distinct processes—one for school-based small grants and one for supported-project grants.

SCHOOL-BASED SMALL GRANTS

A school-based small grant is a grant that meets ALL the following criteria:

- Activities will be fully aligned with the goals and objectives of your school improvement plan, and must be aligned with school-system priorities.

- Amount of the grant is equal to or less than $10,000

- Funding source does NOT require restricted annual financial reporting

- Grant does NOT require cash or in-kind matching funds or commitment of MCPS resources

- Grant funds are NOT to be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in schools during the school day

SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANTS

A project supported grant is one that is aligned with school system-priorities and meets **one or more** of the following criteria:

- Amount of the grant is more than $10,000

- Funding source requires restricted annual financial reporting

- Grant requires cash or in-kind matching funds or commitment of MCPS resources

- Grant funds are to be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in schools during the school day

1

School-based Small Grants

3

Schools desiring assistance and guidance in seeking and securing grants may—

- Refer to the MCPS Grants Web site at http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/grants

- Contact the MCPS grants specialist, via e-mail at Patricia_N._Marks@mcpsmd.org

- Telephone Dr. Marks at 301-517-5889.

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SCHOOL-BASED SMALL GRANTS

A school-based small grant is one that meets all the following criteria:

- Activities will be fully aligned with the goals and objectives of your school improvement plan, and must be aligned with school-system priorities
- Amount the grant is equal to or less than $10,000
- Funding source does NOT require restricted annual financial reporting*
- Grant does NOT require cash or in-kind matching funds or commitment of MCPS resources
- Grant funds are NOT to be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in schools during the school day

Schools desiring assistance and guidance in seeking and securing school-based small grants may refer to the MCPS Grants Website at http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/grants The website contains a searchable database of small grants, helpful information on developing a grant proposal as well as information about grants that schools have successfully secured. The website is maintained by the MCPS Grants Specialist, Dr. Patricia N. Marks.

Schools may seek and secure school-based small grants and place the grant funds in their Independent Activity Fund (IAF). Program and fiscal oversight is the responsibility of the principal. When a school is notified that it has received a school-based small grant the principal is to complete MCPS *Information on School-based Small Grant Award* (see page 6).

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*So, you wonder what is meant by "restricted annual financial reporting?"

Grants funded by the federal government, either directly or through another agency or organization, always require restricted annual financial reporting. Grants from the state or a nongovernmental grantor may require a restricted annual financial report at the discretion of the grantor. A nonspecific, general request to inform the grantor of program results, including how funds were expended, does not constitute a restricted annual financial report. The application or your grant award letter will tell you if restricted annual reporting is required.

5

Information on School-Based Small Grant Awards

To Be Completed by the School Receiving the Grant

Last Name: [   ]   **First Name:** [   ]

School Name: [   ]   **School Level:** O Elementary O Middle O High

School Num: [   ]   **School Cluster:** [   ]

Funding Source Name: [   ]

Funding Source Address: [   ]

Award Beginning Date: [   ]   **Award End Date:** [   ]

Award Amount: [   ]

Project Name: [   ]

MCPS Contact Person: [   ]   **Contact Phone Number:** [   ]

Description of how the grant and grant activities are linked to the school's improvement plan:

[   ]

Fifty word description of the project, including the number of people served:

[   ]

Roles and responsibilities of any community organizations involved in the project:

[   ]

Primary use of the funds (e.g., stipends, equipment, supplies)

[   ]

Supported-Project Grants

SUPPORTED-PROJECT GRANTS

A supported-project grant is one that is aligned with school system priorities and meets **one or more** of the following criteria:

- Amount of the grant is more than $10,000

- Funding source requires restricted annual financial reporting (See page 5 for definition.)

- Grant requires cash or in-kind matching funds or commitment of MCPS resources

- Grant funds are to be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in schools during the school day

The MCPS grants specialist will research opportunities and provide relevant information to the deputy superintendent.
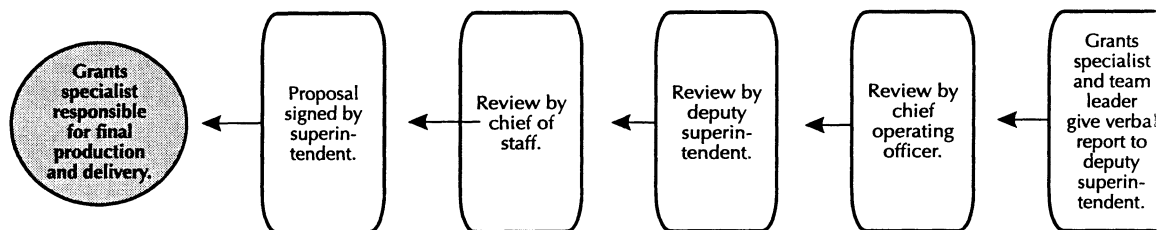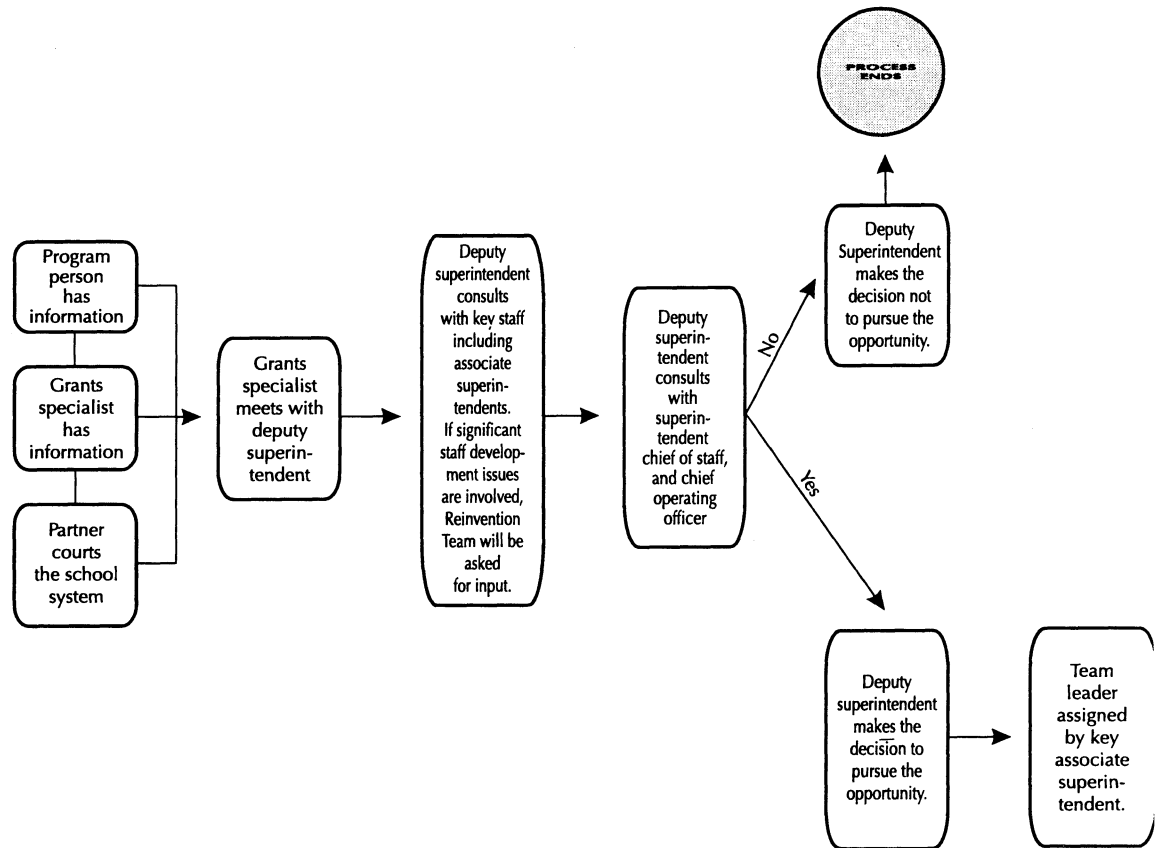
NOTIFICATION/DECISION BY DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

In consultation with key staff, including the Reinvention Team, when the grant will involve significant staff development activities, the deputy superintendent will determine if MCPS will pursue the opportunity. The deputy superintendent may also consult with the superintendent, the chief of staff, and the chief operating officer in making a determination.

- If the deputy superintendent determines that MCPS will not pursue the grant, the process ends.

- If the deputy superintendent determines that MCPS will pursue the grant opportunity opportunity, an MCPS office or department will serve as the lead for the development of the proposal. If the deputy superintendent determines that MCPS will pursue the grant, staff will proceed with the following steps (see flow chart on pages 10 and 11).
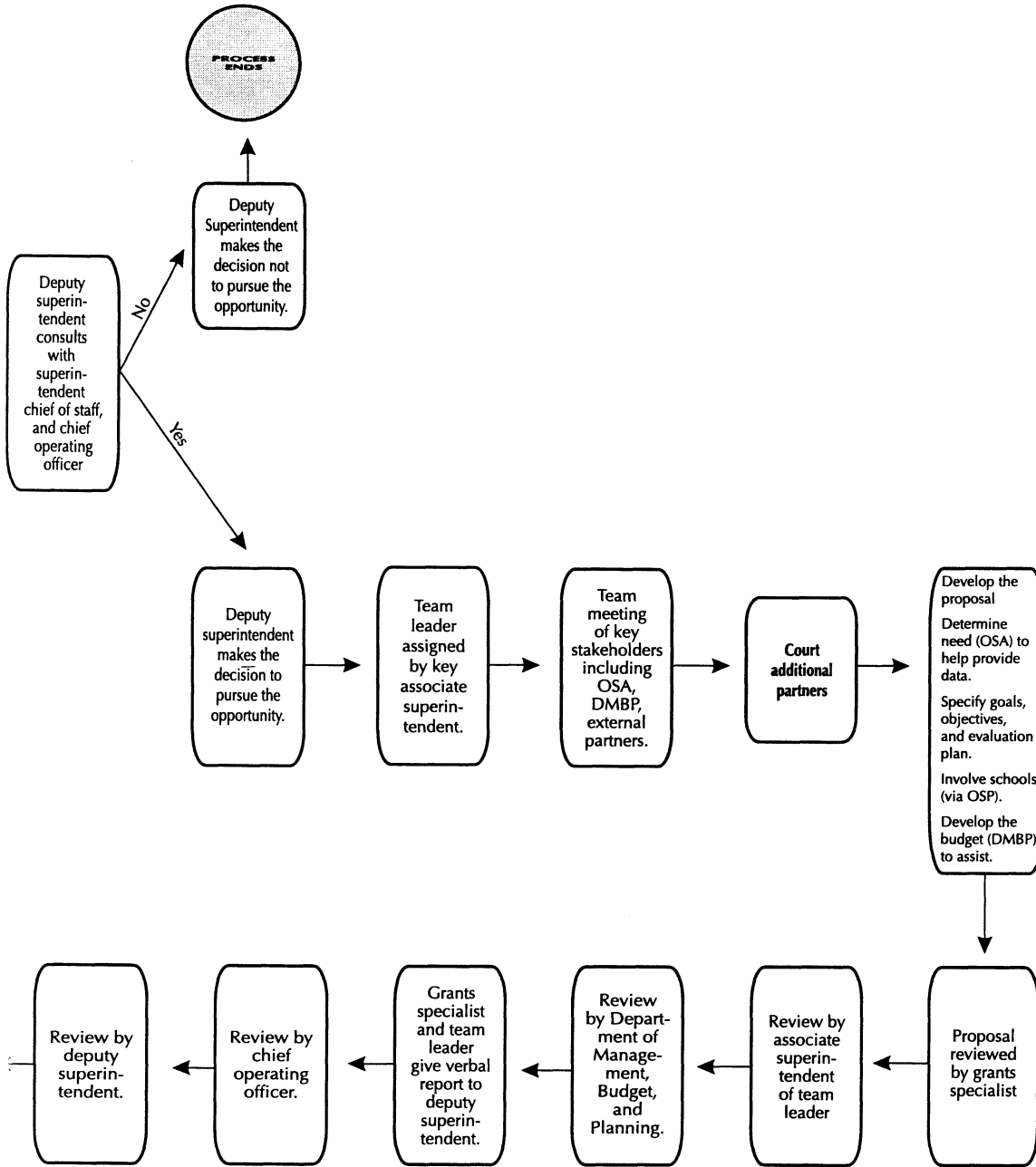
9

PROCESS ENDS

Program person has information

Grants specialist has information

Partner courts the school system

Grants specialist meets with deputy superintendent

Deputy superintendent consults with key staff including associate superintendents. If significant staff development issues are involved, Reinvention Team will be asked for input.

Deputy superintendent consults with superintendent chief of staff, and chief operating officer

No

Yes

Deputy Superintendent makes the decision not to pursue the opportunity.

Deputy superintendent makes the decision to pursue the opportunity.

Team leader assigned by key associate superintendent.

Grants specialist responsible for final production and delivery.

Proposal signed by superintendent.

Review by chief of staff.

Review by deputy superintendent.

Review by chief operating officer.

Grants specialist and team leader give verbal report to deputy superintendent.

orted-Project Grants
ıposal Development Process

PROCESS ENDS

Deputy superintendent consults with superintendent chief of staff, and chief operating officer

No → Deputy Superintendent makes the decision not to pursue the opportunity.

Yes ↓

Deputy superintendent makes the decision to pursue the opportunity. → Team leader assigned by key associate superintendent. → Team meeting of key stakeholders including OSA, DMBP, external partners. → Court additional partners → Develop the proposal

Determine need (OSA) to help provide data.

Specify goals, objectives, and evaluation plan.

Involve schools (via OSP).

Develop the budget (DMBP) to assist.

↓

Review by deputy superintendent. ← Review by chief operating officer. ← Grants specialist and team leader give verbal report to deputy superintendent. ← Review by Department of Management, Budget, and Planning. ← Review by associate superintendent of team leader ← Proposal reviewed by grants specialist

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

[Date]

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Larry A. Bowers, Chief Operating Officer
             Dr. Frieda Lacey, Chief of Staff

From: James A. Williams, Deputy Superintendent

Subject: Preparation of a Grant Proposal to **[name of funding source]** under the **[name of grant]**

The **[name of funding source]** is making funding available for **[purpose]**. If awarded these funds, MCPS will receive approximately **[dollar amount]** for a **[period of time]**. This is a **[new or continuing]** opportunity which **[does or does not]** require matching funds. **[If matching funds are required stipulate the conditions.]**

The activities to be supported by grant funding will support **[link to trendbenders]**.

A team of MCPS staff under the direction of **[name appropriate associate superintendent or key person]** will be preparing a proposal **[in collaboration with institutions of higher education or other organizations]** due to **[name of funding source]** on **[due date]**.

I look forward to keeping you apprised of the team's progress.

JAW:pnm

Copy to:
   Dr. Weast

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STEP 1: CREATE A TEAM

- The deputy superintendent (or his designee) and the grants specialist will meet with the staff that will take responsibility for the development of a plan and creation of the proposal. The deputy super-intendent (or his designee) will appoint a team leader to oversee the writing of the grant application— including a program plan, time lines, a description of methods of implementation, and a plan for program evaluation. After the meeting, the grants specialist will put information about the opportunity in a memo (see page 12). This memo will be distributed to the chief operating officer and the chief of staff for their concurrence, before it is presented to the superintendent.

- The grants specialist, team leader, and content specialist will attend technical assistance meetings. Also they will meet with program staff of the funding source.

The following offices are often involved in the creation of grant proposals, and provide specific services:

- Office of Shared Accountability regarding evaluation

- Office of Staff Development regarding professional development

- Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs regarding curriculum

- Office of School Performance regarding involvement of schools

- Office of Global Access Technology regarding the use of technology

- Office of Student and Community Services regarding community involvement and coordination with community organizations

- Department of Management, Budget, and Planning regarding the development of the budget

- Office of Human Resources regarding staff positions

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STEP 2: CREATE THE PLAN AND DEVELOP THE PROPOSAL

- The grants specialist will create an outline of the criteria and expectations of the funding source, based on the request for proposals (RFP) and a tentative time line for completion of the proposal.

- The deputy superintendent (or his designee), the grants specialist, and the team leader will convene a kick-off meeting of all key stakeholders to discuss the grant opportunity and initial concept. Representatives from the Office of Shared Accountability and the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning will attend the meeting. The team leader will present the grant concept at the initial meeting. The team will review and, and if need be, modify the time line for completion of the proposal.

- If the plan contains a staff development component, the team leader and the grants specialist will inform the Reinvention Team about the proposed project.

- The grant team will identify and plan for the inclusion of partner organizations and agencies, including local organizations and institutions of higher education.

GRANT WRITERS AVAILABLE ON CONTRACT

The MCPS Grants Specialist maintains a list of qualified grant writers who will develop and prepare funding proposals to federal and state agencies as well as foundations on a per project basis. Grant writers are selected based on their experience and knowledge. The MCPS Grants Specialist will assist program staff in developing criteria for selecting the grant writer and serve as the liaison between program staff and the grant writer. Payment of the grant writer is the responsibility of the MCPS Office or department serving as the lead for the development of the proposal.

Office of the Superintendent of Schools MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS Rockville, Maryland 20850	OFFICE OF SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY REQUEST FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION SERVICES

PART I: TO BE COMPLETED BY REQUESTOR

Requestor/contact _____ Date submitted ___/___/___

School/office _____ Phone _____-_____-_____

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM TO BE EVALUATED

Program objectives

Scope of program (e.g., pilot or systemwide, no. of schools/classrooms involved)

Types of data collected by program

Resources available for the evaluation (e.g., staff, dollars)

Approval: _____ ___/___/___
      Signature, Associate Superintendent or Community Superintendent   *Date*

MCPS Form 365-53, 5/02

PART II: TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY IN CONSULTATION WITH REQUESTOR

Service requested:
- ☐ snapshot evaluation
- ☐ summative evaluation
- ☐ technical assistance for program monitoring
- ☐ consulting on grant proposal (evaluation design)
- ☐ other (specify) _____

- ☐ implementation evaluation
- ☐ student outcome evaluation

Focus of evaluation:
- ☐ satisfaction
- ☐ formative
- ☐ quality of professional development
- ☐ other (specify) _____

- ☐ student progress/achievement
- ☐ quality of instruction

Instruments/tools:
- ☐ surveys
- ☐ interviews
- ☐ focus groups
- ☐ other (specify) _____

- ☐ document review
- ☐ observation
- ☐ standard data files

PART III: TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY IN CONSULTATION WITH REQUESTOR

Existing data collection instruments available?	☐ yes	☐ no
Existing student data files available?	☐ yes	☐ no
Special data collection needed? (specify below)	☐ yes	☐ no
Special data analysis needed? (specify below)	☐ yes	☐ no
Formal report of findings needed?	☐ yes ___/___/___	☐ no
Informal briefing/presentation of findings needed?	☐ yes ___/___/___	☐ no

Specifications (i.e., type of data, anticipated response burden):

PART IV: TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

Estimated person days to complete major tasks _____ Estimated cost _____

Proposed project team leader _____

PART V: APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION

☐ Recommend Approval   Expected date of completion ___/___/___

☐ Do Not Recommend Approval

Comments:

_____ ___/___/___
Signature, Office of Shared Accountability   *Date*

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STEP 3: WRITE THE PROPOSAL

- The MCPS grants specialist will guide the team through the requirements and format of the specific RFP.

- The grants specialist and team leader will coordinate with all appropriate MCPS offices, including completing MCPS Form 365-53: *Request for Program Evaluation Services* as a way of ensuring that all grant activities are evaluated (see pages 15 and 16). The grants specialist will provide information, including copies of the RFP, to each cooperating office and department.

STEP 4: REVIEW BY GRANTS SPECIALIST—

- **At least 10 days before the deadline**—the grants specialist will review the draft of the completed proposal to ensure that the proposal articulates a coherent program, in alignment with MCPS priorities. The grants specialist will provide feedback and, if necessary, additional assistance to the team. The grants specialist will provide a copy of the proposal for review by the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning and the associate superintendent of the team leader. It is the responsibility of the grants specialist to incorporate comments and suggestions from these sources and work with the team leader to create a final product.

- **At least seven days before the deadline**—the grants specialist and the team leader will provide the deputy superintendent with a verbal briefing on the status of the proposal. The grants specialist will draft a courtesy cover letter for signature by the superintendent and an informational memo that summarizes the proposal (see pages 17 and 18). The informational memo will accompany the proposal for review by the chief operating officer and chief of staff. A copy of the memo will be distributed to members of the Board of Education.

STEP 5: REVIEW BY CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

At least five days before the deadline the grants specialist and Team Leader will present the completed proposal and documents for signature by the Superintendent to the Chief Operating Officer and then the Deputy Superintendent for their review.

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

[Date]

To: Dr. Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools

From: James A. Williams, Deputy Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Request for Signature on Grant Proposal

Please review and sign the attached grant proposal to be submitted to the **[name the funding source]** requesting **[dollar amount]** for a period of **[time]** to **[purpose of the project]**.

The grant activities will improve the way MCPS serves students by **[articulate expected changes in student knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors that will occur as a result of the proposed project. If appropriate also state how grant activities support teacher training or staff development. If appropriate note how grant activities impact student and staff use of technology.]** **[Students, staff, and/or the community]** in **[name the schools or programs or throughout the county]** will be directly served. The project **[will or will not involve partners, if so state who they are and their roles and how and why the partners were selected.]** The effectiveness of the project will be evaluated by **[state methods of evaluation]**. The evaluation **[will or will not]** require the direct involvement of the Office of Shared Accountability.

The proposed program is aligned with the following Board of Education Academic Priorities: **(check all that apply)**

_____ Improve the educational design and delivery of instruction and curriculum by utilization of proven best practices
_____ Develop, expand, and coordinate literacy-based birth to kindergarten initiative
_____ Create unique, innovative family- and community-friendly partnerships to improve academic results
_____ Organize and optimize assets for improved academic results
_____ Analyze and measure teachers' and principals' effectiveness in improving student performance and results

The proposed program is aligned with the following "Trend Benders": **(check all that apply)**
_____ Workforce Excellence   _____ Literacy
_____ Early Success   _____ Family and Community Partnerships
_____ Organizational Excellence   _____ Shared Accountability

18

Dr. Jerry D. Weast   2   [Date]

The proposed program is aligned with the following Staff Development Areas: (check all that apply)

	Reading and Writing		Mathematics
_____	Reading and Writing	_____	Mathematics
_____	Technology	_____	Skillful Leadership
_____	Skillful Teacher	_____	Curriculum Skill Building
_____	Competency Training	_____	Contingency Requirements

The proposed project [will or will not] fund [existing or new, and number of] positions. [If yes, note the ongoing role of those positions.] The funding source [does or does not] require matching funds. [If yes, note how the requirement will be met.] The funding source [does or does not require] or the commitment of MCPS resources. [If yes,] MCPS resources used to support the proposed project specifically include [state the details]. At the end of the grant period, the proposed project will [select one of the following responses: be fully completed and the project goals will be fulfilled (or) continue only if additional grant support is available (or) will require MCPS support.]

JAW:pnm

Attachment

Copy to:
  Members of the Board of Education

Concur _____   Mr. Larry A. Bowers, Chief Operating Officer
Concur _____   Dr. Frieda Lacey, Chief of Staff

STEP 6: SIGNATURE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

At least three days before the deadline the completed document will be forwarded from the deputy superintendent to the chief of staff who will present it to the superintendent for final review and signature.

STEP 7: FINAL PRODUCTION AND DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

The grants specialist will be responsible for the timely delivery or mailing of the proposal and distribution of copies, including to key MCPS personnel, partners, and, when appropriate, notification of the single state point of contact.

COLLABORATION WITH ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES, AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
SEEKING GRANT FUNDS
FOR PROJECTS OF BENEFIT TO
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Only the Superintendent of Schools is authorized to issue a letter of support or commitment to accompany a funding proposal which involves Montgomery County Public Schools. To receive a letter of commitment or support, the organization, agency, or institution of higher education must provide the MCPS Grants Specialist with information about the proposed project at least three weeks prior to the grant deadline. The organization, agency, or institution of higher education will begin the process of seeking a letter of commitment or support by completing a memo similar to the one used internally by MCPS staff in developing grant proposals for MCPS. The MCPS Grants Specialist will consult with MCPS program staff expert in the area most closely related to the proposed project to determine how the proposed project aligns with school system priorities and existing programs.

For additional guidance and assistance contact the MCPS grants specialist, Dr. Patricia N. Marks, at 301-517-5889 or via email at Patricia_N._Marks@mcpsmd.org.
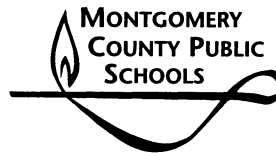
20

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE BOE MEMORANDUM

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

February 11, 2003

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jerry D. Weast, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Utilization of the FY 2003 Provision for Future Supported Project Funds

Authorization is requested to receive and expend, within the FY 2003 Provision for Future Supported Projects, a total of $651,700 in grant awards for the following new and continuing projects:

New Project

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Advanced Placement Incentive Program	$15,000	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: The purpose of this grant is to cover expenses of two Building Success workshops for teachers in high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools across the county. The ultimate focus of these workshops is on increasing the participation and success of all students in advanced placement (AP) courses. By attending the AP Building Success workshops, teachers build up their capacity to support the success of traditionally underrepresented students in AP courses. This year, our dual goals are to
  - increase the number of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students enrolled in one or more AP courses by 20 percent (from 10,612 to 12,735), with an emphasis on increasing enrollment among traditionally underrepresented student populations and
  - raise the number of AP courses offered by all MCPS high schools by 10 percent (from 403 to 443), with an emphasis on increasing the number of AP course offerings in schools that traditionally have offered fewer AP course opportunities to their students.

In addition, one vertical articulation workshop will be funded for selected guidance counselors from various middle and high schools and other MCPS staff involved in the articulation process.

Evaluation: Part of the ongoing evaluation will be to monitor the impact this training has on enrollment and instructional or procedural practices at the participating schools. Staff in the High School Instruction Unit will contact participating teachers to determine the extent to which they are applying new strategies and will disseminate effective practices to all MCPS high schools.

Continuing Projects

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Governor's Class Size Reduction/Reading Initiative Program	$237,000	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: The Class Size Reduction/Reading Initiative Program is grounded in current research indicating that effective instructional programs during children's early learning years lead to higher levels of success in school in later years. As reported by Slavin and Madden (1989), all children who have sufficient access to high-quality reading instruction can achieve in reading. Additionally, children who do not learn to read early in their schooling tend to remain poor readers throughout their school careers. MCPS will use the $237,000 appropriated through state funding to purchase additional developmentally appropriate reading material for use in Grades K–2, under the Class Size Reduction/Reading Initiative Program.

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Title V Innovative Education Program	$8,577	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: MCPS has received notice of an increase in funding for the Title V Innovative Education Program that is administered by the Office of Global Access Technology. The Title V Program supports the provision of instructional materials and technology to both public and nonpublic schools, implementation of the Technology Modernization Program, and technology research and development in areas such as online student courses. The revised Title V amount for FY 2003 is $641,256, which is $8,577 more than the $632,679 originally budgeted. The additional funds will be used for employee benefits related to salaries in the project.

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Emergency Immigrant Education "2003"	$77,873	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: The Emergency Immigrant Education project ensures that English Language Learners in MCPS will attain proficiency in English and meet the same high academic standards required of all children. The emphasis of this project is on providing appropriate language instructional materials, parental involvement, bilingual student assessments, and bilingual counseling.

Additional funding of $77,873 has been received and will be used to purchase materials to support new English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) curriculum and to cover some of the costs for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Proficiency Test (IPT) assessment materials. Funds also will provide part-time salaries for ESOL teachers for IPT and other training initiatives.

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
HHMI Student Inquiry Project	$133,250	None	Howard Hughes Medical Institute

Purpose of the grant: The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Student Inquiry Project began in September 1999 to expand the elementary school inquiry-based curriculum. This award is for a one-year extension of the original three-year grant to further expand this program. The project centers on training a core of 120 master science teachers to develop their skills and ability to teach inquiry-based science. Three cohorts of teachers have been trained, and the First Annual Student Inquiry Conference was held last spring. Teachers participate in training focused on curriculum, assessment, and instruction, using local, state, and national materials. Teachers also work with the scientific community to collaborate on their mini-units and develop a deeper understanding of how to think and act like a scientist. Teachers are encouraged to present their action research and mini-units to colleagues at a state and national level through conferences, magazine articles, and the MCPS Web site.

Funds will be used for part-time salaries and related employee benefits, contractual services, instructional materials, travel, dues and registration, and fees.

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Online Technology Assessment for Teachers and Administrators	$10,000	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: The Online Technology Assessment Consortium was formed, with Baltimore County Public Schools as the lead agency, to apply for a grant from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) under Title II, Enhancing Education Through Technology, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This grant was awarded to Baltimore County and $10,000 has subsequently been awarded to each member of the consortium, including the MCPS Office of Global Access Technology. The purpose of the project is to develop, pilot, and evaluate online, performance-based technology assessment tools to determine technology competencies of teachers and administrators. The actual assessment criteria will be based on state technology standards for teachers and administrators, as identified in *The Maryland Plan for Technology in Education: 2002–2005*. The assessment will provide teachers and administrators with the information they need to develop individual professional development plans to improve their competencies in using technology to support instruction. Funds for the first year of this three-year grant will be used by MCPS to provide teachers and administrators with information about the grant and the state technology standards for teachers and administrators. The project will include funds for part-time salaries and related employee benefits, contractual services, and travel.

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Maryland Students Online	$20,000	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: The Maryland Students Online Consortium was formed, with Baltimore County Public Schools as the lead agency, to apply for a grant from the MSDE under Title II, Enhancing Education Through Technology, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This grant was awarded to Baltimore County and $20,000 subgrants have been awarded to each member of the consortium, including the MCPS Office of Global Access Technology. The purpose of the grant is to review, pilot, evaluate, modify, and recommend online courses for students.   With the expert guidance of the Maryland Virtual Learning Opportunities (MVLO) program within the MSDE, consortium members are identifying online courses that meet individual school district needs and participating in the review, piloting, evaluation, and modification of these online courses. In addition, the consortium members are reviewing local

policies and regulations related to the use of nontraditional delivery of courses for students. Funds for the first year of this three-year grant will be used by MCPS in two ways. Approximately half of these funds will be used for staff development, including contractual services to provide teachers and instructional specialists with courses on how to develop and teach online courses, stipends for teachers to develop an online SAT course, and stipends for teachers being trained to deliver online courses. The other half of the funding will be used to provide student participation in an MVLO-approved course and to subsidize the cost of summer school participation for low-income students in the MCPS-developed SAT summer course.

Funds will provide for part-time salaries and related employee benefits, contractual services, and course fees.

Name of Project	Amount	Positions	Original Funding Source
Classroom Curriculum Management	$150,000	None	Maryland State Department of Education

Purpose of the grant: The Office of Global Access Technology was awarded a $150,000 grant from the MSDE under Title II, Enhancing Education Through Technology, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This award was made with the goals of reviewing and evaluating a classroom curriculum management system. The purpose of the grant is to determine whether a product called *Microsoft Class Server: Daily Curriculum Manager* will improve our ability to meet educators' needs for classroom-level curriculum management tools. This product is being studied to determine how it will support the current Instructional Management System. The grant funds will be used to purchase, test, and pilot *Class Server*, pay stipends to teachers in pilot schools to attend vendor training; and provide for a formal evaluation to be contracted by the Office of Shared Accountability.

Recommended Resolution

WHEREAS, The above-noted grants qualify for a transfer of appropriation from the Provision for Future Supported Projects pursuant to the provisions of County Council Resolution No. 14-1270, approved May 23, 2002; and

WHEREAS, The above-noted programs do not require any present or future county funds; and

WHEREAS, Sufficient appropriation is available, within the FY 2003 Provision for Future Supported Projects, to permit the above-noted transfers within state categories; now therefore be it

Members of the Board of Education   6   February 11, 2003

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized to receive and expend, within the FY 2003 Provision for Future Supported Projects, as specified below:

Project	Amount
Advanced Placement Incentive Program	$ 15,000
Governor's Class Size Reduction/Reading Initiative Program	237,000
Title V Innovative Education Program	8,577
Emergency Immigrant Education "2003"	77,873
HHMI Student Inquiry Project	133,250
Online Technology Assessment for Teachers and Administrators	10,000
Maryland Students Online	20,000
Classroom Curriculum Management	150,000
Total	$ 651,700

and be it further

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

JDW:LAB:MCS:jp

Attachment

APPENDIX D: LIST OF GRANT PROJECTS WITH FY 03 REVENUES

	Grant Name	Purpose	Funding Source Name	Revenues for FY 03
		FEDERAL GRANTS		
1	21st Century - Highland View Elementary School	Support school and community efforts to improve the academic performanc of African American and Hispanic students.	USDE	$163,524
2	Aligning Advanced Level Foreign Language National Standards	Develop curriculum framework and instructional guides for levels four and five of modern foreign languages.	USDE	$84,215
3	Aligning Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment with the National Standards for Foreign Language Project	Align the MCPS curriculum with the goals of the national standards for foreign language learning.	USDE	$144,000
4	American Indian Education Grant	Address culturally related academic needs of American Indian students.	USDE	$4,102
5	Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act	Integrate career and technology education.	USDE	$75,806
6	Early Reading First	Create Early Reading First centers at five elementary schools.	USDE	$1,196,806
7	Elementary School Foreign Language Incentive Program	Support foreign language instruction in elementary schools.	USDE	$52,035
8	Head Start	Provide early childhood services to foster the development of basic schools needed for school success.	USDE	$218,189
9	Medical Assistance Project	Reimbursement of health related services.	Fed/MSDE	$1,070,538
10	Meeting National Standards in Immersion Programs - Spanish and French	Support French and Spanish immersion programs in schools.	USDE	$166,648
11	Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers		USDE/MSDE	$335,061
12	Smaller Learning Communities Initiative for the Downcounty Consortium	Establish freshman academies and theme based academies in Montgomery Blair, John F. Kenneday, Albert Einstein and Wheaton High Schools.	USDE	$664,777
13	The Corps of Historical Discovery: Teaching American History content and introduction	Train 4th and 5th grade teachers in American History content and instruction.	USDE	$668,280
			Federal Total	**$4,843,981**
		STATE GRANTS		
1	Advanced Placement Incentive Program	Increase student participation in AP courses.	MSDE	$15,000
2	Class Size Reduction	Provide a 17:1 student teacher ratio in 56 schools.	MSDE	$649,009
3	Classroom Curriculum Mgmt	Review and evaluate a classroom curriculum management system.	MSDE	$150,000
4	Emergency Immigrant Education "2003"	Provide English as a Second Language (ESOL) training.	MSDE	$77,873
5	Emergency Immigrant Education "2003"	Provide appropriate instructional materials for English Language Learners and purchase materials for state mandated tests.	MSDE	$1,058
6	English as a Second Language Trainig Program for Refugees	Provide English as a Second Language (ESOL) training to refugees and asylees.	MD Office of New Americans	$94,000
7	English Language and Civics Education for Legal Permanent Residents	Provide literacy and civics training to permanent residents.	Maryland Office for New Americans	$20,000
8	English Literacy and Civics Instruction	Provide ESOL and civics classes through the Adult ESOL and Literacy GED program.	MSDE	$647,501
9	Even Start Family Literacy Program		MSDE	$154,486
10	Every Child Achieving Academic Intervention	Provide extended day programs on Saturdays and other non-traditional school days.	MSDE	$97,471
11	Fine Arts Initiative	Develop a systemwide plan to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the fine arts.	MSDE	$225,343

	Grant Name	Purpose	Funding Source Name	Revenues for FY 03
12	Gifted and Talented Education Program Development Grant	Increase vertical articulation for rigorous instruction.	MSDE	$250,200
13	Governor's Class Size Reduction	Purchase developmentally appropriate reading materials for grades K-2.	MSDE	$237,000
14	Judith Hoyer Early Child Care and Education Judy Center Grant	Promote school readiness in the Rolling Terrace community.	MSDE	$202,988
15	Judith Hoyer Enhancement Grant	Expands and enhance the services offered to young children and families in the Rolling Terrace community.	MSDE	$100,000
16	Judy Center-Gaithersburg	Provide comprehensive full-day, full-year family support services.	MSDE	$322,000
17	K-12 Digital Library	Create a coalition of Maryland school districts, led by MCPS, to negotiate a single joint contract for an online services provider. Grant activites will provide greater access to electronic resources that support the curriculum.	MSDE	$630,000
18	KIDSET-Kindergartners with Disabilities Special Education Transition	Provide an extension of the half-day preschool program and promote inclusion of children ages three to five with disabilities.	MSDE	$57,822
19	Learning to Write, Writing to Learn: Bringing Assistive Technology to the Inclusive General Education Classroom	Improve the writing performance of students with mild disabilities.	MSDE	$125,000
20	Least Restrictive Environment in Reading	Implement high intensity reading and writing program for special education students in 15 secondary schools	MSDE	$179,681
21	Literacy Experiences and Active Participation (LEAP)	Provide continuity of services to special education students.	MSDE	$59,997
22	Literacy Works	Improve program integration and services for Adult Basic Education, pre-Graduate Equicalency Diploma (GED) and ESOL classes for adults.	MSDE	$137,745
23	Maryland Model for School Readiness	Support transition meetings for all kindergarten, first grade teachers and reading specialists in 119 elementary schools.	MSDE	$118,862
24	Maryland Social Studies Technology Academy - Integrating Technology into the Classroom	Introduce teachers to a variety of different technologies.	MSDE	$28,000
25	Maryland Students Online	Pilot and evaluate online courses.	MSDE	$20,000
26	McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assitance Act	Provide direct assistance to approximately 250 homeless students through tutoring, mentoring and other services.	MSDE	$75,000
27	On Line Technology Assessment for Teachers and Administrators	Develop, pilot and evaluate online assessment tools.	MSDE	$10,000
28	PATI Project Assistive Technology for Inclusion	Increase the knowledge and skill of special and general educators.	MSDE	$41,008
29	School Accountability Funding for Excellence (SAFE)	Purchase instructional materials for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and provide services for dropout prevention, neglected and delinquent youth, provisional teacher support and tobacco prevention.	MSDE	$230,729
30	School Emergency Response to Violence	Fund education related services resulting from the recent sniper attacks.	MSDE	$250,000
31	School Improvement Grant - Year 4	Ensure that students with disabilities in five elementary school in the Seneca Valley cluster receive access and participate in the least restrictive environment.	MSDE	$12,500
32	Student Service Learning, Learn and Serve America Subgrant	Continuous improvement of service learning in MCPS.	MSDE	$8,680
33	Teacher Mentoring Program		MSDE	$790,480
34	Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program	Serve as the lead agency for a statewide consortium to develop, implement and disseminate professional development using technology.	MSDE	$1,824,356

		Grant Name	Purpose	Funding Source Name	Revenues for FY 03
35		Title V Innovative Education Program	Supports the provision of instructional materials and technology, implementation of the Technology Modernization Program and technology research and development.	MSDE	$8,577
36		Widening General Education Teachers Skill Sets	Support a collaborative action process to address the overrepresentation of minority students in special education.	MSDE	$18,000
				State Total	*$7,870,366*
			COUNTY GRANTS		
1		Emotionally Disabled Cluster	Provides therapeutic services to serve all elementary emotional disabilities cluster programs.	DHHS	$65,000
2		Cigarette Restitution Fund	Post no smoking signs in all middle and elementary schools.	DHHS	$60,000
				County Total	*$125,000*
			OTHER GRANTS		
1		Entrepreneurship Training	Create a core of high school teachers who are trained to be change agents.	Coleman Foundation	$24,350
2		Howard Hughes Student Inquiry	Train 120 master science teachers	Howard Hughes Medical Institute	$133,250
3		Howard Hughes Medical Institute Support for Science Education	Support student internships, teacher professional development and the summer biotechnology "Fun with DNA" program.	Howard Hughes Medical Institute	$435,000
4		Saving the Bay Starts Here - Takoma Park MS	Provide educational programming for Takoma Park Middle School students to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay.	National Fish and Wildlife Fdn	$10,170
				Other Total	*$602,770*
55				**Grand Total**	*$13,442,117*

Source: OLO based on MCPS data current as of February 25, 2003.