

BOE Work Session Follow-Up Questions January 15, 2020

Board of Education

- No additional questions

Office of the Ombuds

- No additional questions

Office of the Superintendent

- No additional questions

Public Affairs

Question: When are we moving to high definition broadcast?

Response: FCPS is due for a High Definition broadcasting channel later this year in accordance with an Agreement between Comcast and Frederick County Government, signed on May 30, 2018. In the Agreement, Comcast is to provide an Access Channel in High Definition (HD) Digital format to the County within 90 days of the Agreement date. This was completed in 2018. During the second anniversary, which is effective May 30th of this year, Comcast will provide a 2nd HD Access Channel which will be used by FCPS. Comcast will have up to (120) days from written notice from the County to provide the HD Channel for FCPS.

Office of the Deputy Superintendent

- No additional questions

Accelerated Achievement & Equity

- No additional questions

Special Education

Question: Are we requesting new 504 software?

Response: Yes. On page 13 of the FY2021 BOE Work Session Report, you will find the following line item:

72024	Computer Tech Contract Svcs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$49,353	\$49,353
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This line item is designated to purchase a 504 Student Information System to maintain the plans for the over 2,500 students with 504 plans in Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS). The district currently uses a system which was built by FCPS technology staff several years ago. However, the number of students who have 504 plans has significantly grown since that time and the current system is no longer sufficient to efficiently maintain the volume of FCPS student 504 plans. This new 504 student data system will interface seamlessly with our current student data systems in our System Accountability and School Administration (SASA)

and our Department of Technology Infrastructure (DTI) Departments. The new system will further strengthen compliance with student data privacy expectations.

Question: Rise program – How many students were we able to return to their general education classroom during the first year?

Response:

<i>School Year</i>	<i>Percent of students mainstreamed less than 10% of their day</i>	<i>Percentage of students mainstreamed between 10-50% of their day</i>	<i>Percentage of students mainstreamed 50-100% of their day</i>
<i>2018 – 2019</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>2019 – 2020</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>25%</i>

Organizational Development

Question: Expectations into Action Program – How many are people are participating in the program? How many are retained?

Response: Expectations into Action is a three-year, multi-phase credit course for new teachers. There are currently 264 teachers participating. Expectations into Action is just one of the components in our comprehensive new teacher induction program. There are a variety of factors that influence teacher retention; however, we do know that high-quality induction support is a very significant factor in both recruitment and retention of new educators. Data from the 2018-19 school year shows that of 169 participants in the first-year teacher Expectations into Action course last year, 92% are still employed with Frederick County Public Schools.

Question: Teacher mentorship – 1 to 10 ratio; are we looking to change the ratio?

Response: Based on early projections, our number of first-year teachers for the 2020-21 school year is likely to increase. As a result, we do not anticipate that we will be able to reduce the new teacher to mentor ratio.

Question: Do we have a mentor program for new administrators?

Response: There is currently no formal mentoring program for new administrators. Part of the future expansion plan for the ELITE program calls for an administrative mentoring program designed as a collaborative effort between Organizational Development and other departments in the ACTS division.

Question: Support Employee Growth Manager – is the position focused just on instructional support or all support staff?

Response: The Support Employee Growth Manager position is focused on all support employees, both instructional and non-instructional.

Question: Maintenance Support Leadership Program – is organizational development supporting or taking over the current program?

Response: The Maintenance and Operations Department’s professional growth programs are planned and executed in collaboration with the Department of Organizational Development. This collaboration is a model for the way that the best practices, specific needs, and content of individual departments can be elevated through the lens of effective learning for adults.

Question: Leadership roles – are they in the support category?

Response: There are many leadership roles in our Support Employee Professionals group. One such example is lead custodians. However, there is a need for high quality employee leadership in all departments.

Question: When we invest in professional development, are we insuring that FCPS retain employees?

Response: There are many factors that contribute to employee retention. We know that access to supportive learning and leadership opportunities is one of the conditions that promotes retention. In the most recent perceptual survey, 84% of school staff and 89% of central staff indicated that professional growth opportunities are a significant factor in their decision to continue employment in Frederick County Public Schools. Of those, 29% of school staff and 64% of central staff said that those opportunities are “extremely significant” or “quite significant.”

Question: What is our retention of SEIAs?

Response: Of the five hundred and nine (509) benefited SEIAs who were active from September 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, sixteen (16) ultimately resigned.

Question: How many SEIAs do not know their placement when the school year ends?

Response:

Benefited SEIAs

SEIA staffing is always dependent upon student needs. At the end of the 2018-2019 school year, twenty-five (25) of the five hundred and twenty-eight (528) benefited SEIAs were excessed from their placements. Placements were eventually available for these twenty-five (25) SEIAs; however, three (3) resigned instead of accepting a new placement. The remaining twenty-two (22) benefited SEIAs were placed in a new position before the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

Non-Benefited SEIAs

All non-benefited SEIAs are informed at the time of hire that their placements terminate at the end of a school year. SEIAs who work six hundred and thirty (630) hours or more and have a successful evaluation are granted benefits the following year—if a position exists. For the 2018-2019 school year, one hundred and forty-one (141) non-benefited SEIAs earned benefits. Of that number, one (1) SEIA accepted another position with FCPS, three (3) were hired as teachers with FCPS, and twenty-nine (29) either resigned or wished to remain as a

substitute with FCPS. In total, one hundred and eight (108) SEIAs earned benefits, and their placements were made prior to July 1, 2019.

Question: What's the breakdown of the \$3957 breakdown?

*Response: \$2000 – recording studio and associated equipment
 \$1957 – Adobe Professional licenses for the staff*

Student Services:

Question: Why is adding psychologists at the elementary level viewed as more impactful than middle and high schools?

Response: Partially because the number of special education initial screening and assessments are higher at the elementary level. However, I believe school psychologists are the best investment based on the expectations of timely assessments (mandated), and what we want them to do based on their training. Other school systems in Maryland have convincing data on the impact of a school psychologist dedicated to an elementary school. This would also allow FCPS to begin with student needs assessments in kindergarten. Research is clear that the earlier interventions are provided the greater the results by building foundational skills (executive functioning & resilience) needed to be successful as a student. School psychologists are certainly needed at middle and high schools as well, but with limited resources, I would lean toward implementation first at the elementary level.

Question: PPW – how many do we currently have? What is the primary role of the PPW? Do we have data to demonstrate that the PPW role in supporting attendance is effective? Should they be used for more direct mental health services?

Response:

- We have 9 PPWs, plus 2 that are assigned to Concentration of Poverty (COP) schools, through the Kirwan funding. If you remove Hillcrest Elementary and Heather Ridge (COP schools) this didn't change our PPW to Student ratio.*
- Because of how we are staffed, the primary role of the PPW is attendance support and linking families to resources in the community. Typically, PPWs have a mental health background and their skillset is much greater than the way we are able to utilize them now because they are serving so many schools.*
- The FCPS overall student attendance rate is very good. PPWs currently provide attendance support to schools and families after multiple school-based interventions are utilized. There is more we could ask PPWs to do based on their skills and training, but a more manageable caseload is crucial for increased expectations of the role of the PPWs.*

Question: Are you reviewing the roles of the various mental health positions to determine the best placement of our various positions?

Response: Since the mental health supports realignment, we have been working as a department to reduce redundancies and on how we can better streamline the supports that we provide. I've asked Lynn Davis, Coordinator of Mental Health Supports for FCPS, to review the role of the social workers and the model that we use for the CASS workers, and to make recommendations as to the best model to maximize their skills and impact on student performance.

School Accountability & School Administration

Question: Materials of Instruction – are we providing appropriate funds for teachers for classrooms?

Response: All schools receive a school-based foundation allocation based upon enrollment for materials of instruction, managed print services, media collection, front office supplies and medical supplies. Secondary schools receive an additional allocation for school counseling and CTC supplies. The school-based foundation budget is managed by the principal. In addition to those Materials of Instruction monies, when new resources and/or materials are required in schools, central departments ensure all students/teachers are resourced according to how the materials are recommended for use. For example, if there is a new curriculum resource purchased, a new technology software, or a new assessment tool determined centrally, central department monies cover all of the costs required to fund the resource.

Question: Why is there a social worker/CASS worker (account 61036) in the elementary budget?

Response: Per the administrative and support staffing model, schools with a Behavior Support position may select a counselor, behavior support specialist, psychologist, or a licensed social worker. North Frederick ES has selected to utilize a licensed social worker as the school's behavior support position.

Question: For enrollment bands, do we make staffing changes each year?

Response: Foundational school-based staffing – classroom teachers and administration and support staffing – is assigned by enrollment band as defined in the budget book. Schools may change enrollment bands each year based upon the projected enrollment. The staffing workgroup is considering an adjustment to this current practice in future school years. These details will be shared with our Board of Education in conjunction with a proposal for a Three Tier Staffing model.

Question: For staffing based upon complexity factors, when do schools change tiers?

Response: In order to enter or exit a tier, schools must show a two-year trend prior to entering or exiting.

Question: Please provide additional information on the Digital Learning Lab Mentors.

Response: Digital Learning Lab Mentors support students in our comprehensive high schools who are scheduled for Virtual in School (VIS) courses. This is a programming option that is growing in demand as it allows for students to have another flexible alternative to meeting their graduation requirements, and is often a good solution for courses that are not offered due to number of overall course requests and/or the school's staffing. While the programming is expanding, it has never been accounted for in our school-based staffing model. Schools are forced to use existing Instructional Assistant (IA) staffing, which pulls those staff away from other duties. These positions best implemented require special training to ensure students successfully navigate the online courses

Question: Ticket taker & game managers – when was the last time the pay rate changed?

Response:

Position	2017-2018 Pay Rate	2018-2019 Pay Rate	2019-2020 Pay Rate
<i>Ticket Taker</i>	<i>\$10.55</i>	<i>\$10.71</i>	<i>\$11.00</i>
<i>Game Manager</i>	<i>\$21.10</i>	<i>\$21.42</i>	<i>\$21.42</i>

Question: On page 29, line 61044, there's \$97,600 for 2 guidance counselors in high schools. I got wondering why it was in high schools and not student services, and also is that a supplemental amount? It seems on the low side for 2 guidance counselors with master's degrees.

Response: School counselors are part of the Administration and Support staffing model, and are therefore budgeted at the schools. These school-based positions are all supervised by the school principal. There are a number of positions in our schools that receive training and support from the central team members leading and supporting the respective area of work. School counselors are just one of those positions. Other positions similarly situated include academic support (supported by central intervention leaders), literacy and math specialists (supported by central content specialists), user support specialists (supported by central technology infrastructure staff), and custodians (supported by central maintenance and operations staff). These staff implement their job description under the direct supervision of the school principal with support from central departments.

The budgeted amount is based upon a step three in the Lane 020 – MA or 36Hrs of the 10-month teacher pay scale.

Curriculum, Instruction, & Innovation

- No additional questions

Office of the Chief of Staff & Legal Counsel

- No additional questions

Human Resources

Question: Do we have adequate resources to our retirees to help them transition?

Response:

- *At this time, the Human Resources (HR) Department has adequate resources to assist our retirees; however, as the Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) continues to grow, such staffing will need to be revisited in subsequent budgets.*
- *There are five (5) HR retirement coordinators who assist with the completion and filing of paperwork. HR staff hosts two (2) evening Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) events in the fall, and in attendance are HR representatives, a MSRA advisor, and an attorney specializing in elder law. During the spring, FCPS communicates any MSRA-sponsored retirement event(s).*
- *The Benefits Office's website also offers important information about retirement benefits, including a number of State links. Additionally, HR staff recently presented at FASSE's all-day in-service training regarding retirement benefits and the many resources available to assist employees.*
- *Finally, vendor-sponsored retirement sessions, which are advertised through FCPS' FindOutFirst and the Benefits Office's newsletter, are held monthly to discuss 403B and 457B accounts. Vendors also make school-based and central office-based appointments to meet with staff and, upon request, will attend wellness fairs, new employee orientations, and FCPS training.*

Chief Operating Officer

- No additional questions

Capital Programs

- No additional questions

Maintenance & Operations

- No additional questions

Security & Emergency Maintenance

- No additional questions

Transportation

Question: What is our plan for increasing the number of qualified bus drivers?

Response: The transportation department works very hard to recruit school bus drivers. Here are the creative ways we recruit and will continue to do:

1. *Working with HR (Job Fairs and Announcements)*
2. *Working with Communications (FCPS Social Media- Weekly/Monthly)*
3. *Signs and Banners in Frederick County and MVA*
4. *All FCPS forms of Communication (FCPS TV, FCPS Web Site)*

5. *Transportation Only Job Fairs at Workforce and our Hayward Office*
6. *Advertise (in the past we have done Radio and FNP)*
7. *New for February and March we are trying a Facebook/Instagram Advertising Campaign. The transportation ad will be running on all Facebook Family Apps (6) and Instagram (1). There will be 60,000 impressions per month across those apps.*

Question: What is our plan for parking our buses?

Response: Currently the plan is to continue to utilize schools. FCPS is losing 33% of the gravel lot on Thomas Johnson Drive due to the construction of the Fire Dept. We must move 22 school buses to a HS, as well as move 22 buses from the gravel lot to the Hayward Complex. Due to the Rock Creek construction, I reached out to the SHA, and FCPS was given permission (for this school year) to park some buses at the Monocacy Park and Ride. We reached out to a local business this year to see if we can park some buses on their property, but the answer was no. When FCPS can no longer park buses on the gravel lot it, will affect us greatly including personal vehicle parking for our bus drivers and bus assistants.

Question: What is our plan to replace the bus facility?

Response: As Paul Lebo explained, the County has provided FCPS with some land located on Reichs Ford Road (Public Safety Training Facility). Prior to the Winter Break (2019), FCPS had a contractor do some borehole soil testing. We should receive the report within a few months. Also, a Frederick County resident who has land throughout the county reached out to FCPS, and we are also working with them.

Question: Why does transportation pay for help wanted advertising?

Response: FCPS Human Resources department assists all departments with the recruitment and hiring process. As a matter of budget policy, each department is responsible for funding their advertising for positions, so they have budgets assigned to this account.

Technology Infrastructure

- No additional questions

Chief Financial Officer

- No additional questions

Fiscal Services

- No additional questions

Fiscal Services Non-Departmental

- No additional questions