

The Budget... What Does It Mean for You?



The Board of Education's proposed operating budget for the 2006-07 school year covers important items ranging from FCPS salaries and benefits to staffing ratios, instructional materials, transportation and much more. Among other items, the proposed \$400,753,028 budget—from county, state and federal funds—will provide:

- a salary resource pool to address competitive salaries
- funding sufficient to maintain the existing level of programs and services for 40,076 students expected to enroll in August 2006
- startup funds for the new Middletown Primary and Urbana Middle schools and a major addition at Brunswick Middle
- the 4th phase of the full-day kindergarten program mandated by

the Maryland Bridge to Excellence legislation

- and additional programs and services to eliminate the achievement gap for all students and meet other Master Plan goals and NCLB requirements.

The complete proposal is online for staff and public review at www.fcps.org/fy07.pdf.

The budget timeline, going forward from the February 8 BOE public hearing, is:

March 1: BOE forwards its request to the Board of County Commissioners

May 2: BOE and Commissioners hold a joint public hearing

June: Commissioners adopt the final county budget and set the BOE allocation

July 1: Budget becomes effective for the 2006-07 school year ★

Your perspective and priorities are important!

PLEASE SPEAK OUT
Tuesday, May 2: 7 PM
Urbana High

Public hearing jointly sponsored by the BOE and County Commissioners:

WRITE

Email: boe@fcps.org
115 E. Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701
Fax: 301-696-6950

Board of County Commissioners
Email: FirstInitialLastName@fred-co.md.net
12 E. Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701
Fax: 301-694-1849

First Class STAFF

Thanks to you,
public education works
in Frederick County!

(L to R) North Frederick ES counselor **Carla Thomas** used her own funds to visit the hurricane-devastated Jackson County, Mississippi, school district to deliver \$23,500+ collected by 14 of our elementary schools (more on page 3). With ready smiles for all they meet, custodians **Rose Davis** and **George Zinkhan** keep 7630 Hayward facilities running smoothly. No one represented "First-Class Staff" better than Print Shop assistant **Brian Stottlemeyer**, who passed away February 5 and is sorely missed after more than a decade of dedicated service.



Can They Start School?

Students in grades 5-8 face new vaccine requirements to enter grades 6-9 in the coming 2006-07 school year. They will need documentation of hepatitis B and chickenpox (varicella) vaccines (or the month/year they had chickenpox).

More than 5,000 local students must submit additional paperwork to the school nurse before they can start the next school year. To process this large volume, school nurses request documentation from parents by April 3 or as early as possible.

Please take every opportunity—including parent orientation nights, parent-teacher conference sign-up visits and conference dates—to urge parents of this year's 5th-8th graders to:

- schedule an appointment with a health-care provider if a child hasn't had the required vaccines
- submit vaccine documentation to the school nurse

Families that do not have health insurance or are underinsured may contact the Frederick County Health Department for immunization, 301-631-3312. Encourage them to direct all other questions to the school nurse.

Schools are publishing newsletter articles on this topic in English and Spanish. Notice also went out via Find Out First email and is posted on FCPS TV and the web. Staff with questions may contact FCPS Health Specialist Helen.Monk@fcps.org. ★

New Faces in Key Places

We welcome **Paul Dunford** back to FCPS as instructional director for middle schools, following **Bruce Brown's** retirement. Mr. Dunford left to serve as principal at a middle school in Baltimore City at the request of the Maryland Department of Education. Until he arrives March 1, **Hal Mosser** is acting instructional director.

We also welcome back **Bonnie Ward** as executive director of Technology Services, following **Pat Kelly's** retirement. Dr. Ward left her position as our math curriculum specialist for grades 6-12 in 1998 to serve as Kent County Public Schools assistant superintendent until 2002 and superintendent since then.

Upon **Nancy Slovicosky's** retirement, Human Resources has assigned teacher certification responsibilities to **Cindy Stull** and **Sally Smith**, with Ms. Stull handling current staff and Ms. Smith reviewing new-hire credentials. New to HR, handling secondary teacher hiring and MSDE incentive programs: certificated personnel officer **Kathryn Crawford**, formerly language arts teacher at Middletown MS. ★



ASK THE SUPERINTENDENT

This section features questions to and answers from Superintendent **Dr. Linda Burgee**. Please send your questions for future issues to Marita.Loose@fcps.org.

Q: What is the status of the new central office building?

A: The BOE is committed to consolidating central offices. After several cost studies, they have decided against renovating 7630 Hayward in favor of constructing a new facility in downtown Frederick. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) gave support to the project last February and agreed to offset the cost with the sale of existing FCPS-occupied buildings. Negotiations and a contract are complete, and we have hired a consultant to write specs for bidding design and construction.

Q: What's it going to cost?

A: Contrary to media reports, the project cost has not doubled. FCPS refines cost estimates for all projects as additional information becomes known and as we refine the scope and timing of a project. In March 2004 we estimated design and construction at \$14.1 million; today the consultant puts that figure at \$16.1 million. That's less than a 10% increase for the "bricks and mortar" cost compared with almost 2 years ago. Cost estimates for furniture and equipment, project management and contingencies—all subject to re-evaluation during the design phase—have yet to be finalized. The sale of 7630 Hayward and 115 E. Church Street, rental income, operational savings and financing will reduce our annual cost to less than ¼ of 1% of the FY '06 operating budget.

Q: How can we afford it? Aren't new schools more important?

A: We plan to pay for the project from the operating budget so it will not compete with capital funding for new schools and renovations. The BOE expects long-term benefits and savings in addition to owning the building at the end of a 30-year, publicly financed, long-term lease-purchase, with no taxes and a 10-year payment deferral from the City of Frederick. It's not "either schools or central office" but both, as schools require services that central office provides such as payroll, human resources and communications. The new facility will house about 266 accountants, technicians, curriculum specialists, secretaries, teacher recruiters and trainers plus other personnel vital to the success of our schools and 40,000 students. It is costly for central office staff to work from 6 buildings, in outmoded space that requires ever-increasing maintenance. No matter what, the BOE cannot avoid spending money on central office workspace. The wisest investment is a new facility.

Q: Some describe the proposed office building as a "Taj Mahal." Will it be luxurious?

A: The BOE and FCPS staff have no desire and no plans to build a Taj Mahal. Our goal is a well-built, functional structure that is a good value for the dollar and will last many years in the future. We intend its price tag to illustrate that we are good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

Q: What are the next steps?

A: The BOE must coordinate logistics of the sale of existing buildings with the BOCC and finalize property lines and costs related to the planned parking deck with the City. Next we finalize bid documents, put the project out to bid, complete the financing and procurement process and start design. Construction should take about 18 months, with completion by the end of 2008.

Details are on the FCPS Intranet at <http://insidefcps/centoffice.cfm>.

★★★ ACCOLADES ★★★

NATION'S BEST Facilities Services senior executive secretary **Sue Heller** serves as webmaster for the Maryland Association of Educational Office Professionals, which for the 3rd year running earned a 1st place web site award from the National Association of Educational Office Professionals. Also among the nation's best: **Catoctin High's** Earth Systems Science Research program, taught by **Lisa Bruck** and fostering student collaboration with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. And presenting at this year's National Staff Development Conference, technology teacher specialist **Katie Grubb**.

1ST CLASS PERFORMANCE The FCPS Maintenance Department announces employees of the month: plumber **Washington White** for January, electrician **Charles "Butch" Roser** for February and HVAC technician **Dennis McKenzie** for March.

PUBLISHED February's "Junior Scholastic" magazine featured **West Frederick Middle's** anti-bullying program—kudos to school counselor **Nicole Fortson** and assistant principal **Bernard Pond**. Also making national news: the FCPS "Save 5%" campaign in February's National School Public Relations Association "Network" newsletter.

AWARDS The Maryland Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education presented 3 awards to FCPS staff: foreign language curriculum specialist **Susan Murphy** for outstanding work with the 2006 Maryland Summer Centers for Gifted and Talented Students, supervisor of counseling **Sharon Boettinger** for increasing AP participation and exam performance by historically under-represented populations, and **Donna Chesno** for coordinating gifted and talented education programs.

A BETTER WORLD 14 elementary schools "United for Change" by their school counselors raised more than \$23,500 for hurricane relief in Mississippi: Kudos to counselors (left to right) **Harriet Click, Diane Fike, Heather Quill, Kathy Leber, Nikki Kline, Vikki Reap, Sandy Johansen, Amanda Lewis-Ervine, Carla Thomas and April Miller** (not pictured: **Sarah Barbour, Virginia Covington, Laura Jones, Beth Myers and Jan Welty**). Also making the world a better place:



Thurmont Middle life skills teacher **Gina Lindahl** and tech ed teacher **Kevin Trigger** by helping students collect 130 coats and make 100 winter hats and scarves for donation throughout the Catoctin community; Walkersville MS Guidance Department Chair **Dona Manry** by coordinating a holiday letter-writing campaign to troops in Iraq; and all **FCPS staff** who donated to this year's Combined Charities Campaign total exceeding \$83,700.

DYNAMIC The 1st Frederick County teacher accepted into the Maryland Discovery Education Network: **Cristina Runkles** at Oakdale ES. The Maryland Department of Education named Middletown Middle social studies teacher **Linda Caron** a 2006 Service-Learning Fellow. Another dynamic educator, **Sue Metzger** coordinates Sabillasville Elementary's Accelerated Reader program. For details about Sue's project and more 1st-class staff: <http://www.fcps.org/content/firstclass.cfm>.

\$\$\$ Students at **Middletown Middle** working with **Lana Early** and **Allison Weese** will benefit from a partnership with the Catoctin Center for Regional Studies through a History Channel \$9,552 "Save Our History" grant. Brunswick ES 2nd-year teacher **Emily Pollack** secured a Maryland Initiative for New Teachers (MINT) grant to support a Book Café for parents and children in grades 2-5. Custodial support specialist **Darrell Foreman** won a Maryland Association of Boards of Education scholarship to attend "Tools for Schools" in Washington, DC.

NEWS TO USE

Share It! FCPS staff does good work, and it shows each year when many of the best Summer Institute presenters are home grown. Launch the process to share your successful strategies in a 90-minute workshop August 8-9 by completing a brief online proposal at <http://fcps.org/sip.pdf>. Suggested topics are on the form. Present solo or with a friend. 10-month employees receive extra pay. Apply by March 15 to Ann.Hummer@fcps.org.

As Close As Your Keyboard Technology Services unveiled our redesigned FCPS intranet—the “staff-only” web site, accessible from any FCPS-networked computer. Better navigation features are: a consistent menu bar plus search options for the staff directory, form finder and I-Know instructions. I-Know even has instructions for our newly launched PeopleSoft HR 8.8 system. Check out the convenience: <http://insidefcps>. To add a form: Michelle.Brammer@fcps.org, correct the phone directory: Paula.Hadden@fcps.org, make other suggestions or just say thanks: Charles.Helfenstein@fcps.org.

Ergonomics At the computer, optimal keyboard height is low enough to let your arms hang naturally at your sides with elbows close to your body and forearms parallel to the floor. Put the mouse next to your keyboard, same height. Directly in front of you, place the monitor, allowing your eyes to gaze at a 90-degree angle and slightly down. With thighs parallel to the floor, hips and knees aligned at 90 degrees and feet on the floor, keep your back straight with a chair or cushion that supports your lower back. Avoid eyestrain with fonts at least 12 points, monitor at right angle to a window and as bright as everything else in your field of vision. To rest your eyes, blink and look away from the monitor.

Seminar The Maryland English Language Learning Family Involvement Network invites interested persons to attend “Language & Culture: Tools for Connecting with ELLs and Their Families” June 2, 8:30 AM-noon at the Faulkner Ridge Center in Howard County. For details: Joanne.Harrington@fcps.org.

SAMMY Know seniors with outstanding academic performance, athletic excellence, leadership and community service? Recommend they apply by March 3 for the \$7,500 Scholar Athlete Milk Mustache of the Year scholarship at www.whymilk.com.

Restricted Based on enrollment projections, the following schools will exceed 100% capacity in August and are limited to enrollment only by students who reside within the attendance area: **Centerville, Green Valley, Kempton, Liberty, Monocacy, New Market, North Frederick, Oakdale, Parkway, Thurmont Primary, Tuscarora, Walkersville and Whittier Elementary; Middletown Middle; Linganore, Middletown, Tuscarora, Urbana and Walkersville High.** New schools are also restricted their 1st year of operation: **Middletown Primary and Urbana Middle.**

**March 6 & 7: Parent-Teacher Conferences,
Pre-K/Kindergarten Registration**

March 13-22: Maryland School Assessments

**March 30: End of Term Teacher Work Session,
2-Hour Early Dismissal for Students**

**March 31: Professional Development,
Schools Closed for Students**

April 12-17: Spring Break



FCPS FACTOID

How does the FCPS dropout rate stack up against other Maryland districts?

A: At 0.73%, our dropout rate remains the lowest in Maryland for the 2nd year running. Find more stats in the recently published FCPS School Report: www.fcps.org/content/publications/SR2006pdf, also available by calling 301-696-6900.



Tune to channel 18 for FCPS news:

School Talk – 2:30 & 7:30 PM

Newsbreak – 9:30*, 10:30 & 11:30 AM
12:30, 5:30, 8* & 9:30 PM

Inside Look – 2 & 7 PM

Health Matters – 11 AM & 9 PM

BOE Meetings – Wednesdays: 6 PM (live)
Calendar Handbook lists meeting dates
Re-broadcast the following evening

Bulletin Board – Menus, closing info, etc.
To submit news, fax: 301-696-6958 or
email Dian.Nelson@fcps.org.

Classic Arts – 11 PM to 5 AM*
10 PM to 10 AM Sat. & Sun.
6 to 8 PM Sunday

*weekdays only

www.fcps.org/cable18.htm

Schedules are subject to change

Inside FCPS is produced by the
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Your news, ideas and suggestions are welcome.
Please fax 301-696-6958. Call 301-696-6900.
Email Dian.Nelson@fcps.org. Or courier to the
Communications Office, 115 E. Church Street.



Frederick County Public Schools

Working Together to Educate Each Child and Promote Success

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