

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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PROPOSED FY2022 OPERATING BUDGET Responses to Board Members' Questions - Set #2 Received January 17, 2021

FY 22 OPERATING REQUEST

28. Is the new special education cabinet member's salary under special education or administration?
The position of Executive Director of Special Education is not a cabinet member. Cabinet consists of chiefs and equivalent designations. The position is charged to activity 0006, special education.
29. With respect to salaries and wages, I couldn't find a clear definition of who falls under administration, mid-level administration, instructional (classroom teachers, I assume others?), special education, and health services (school nurses, I assume others?). Can someone provide this for me? For example, where do social workers, psychologists, counselors, OTs, SLPs, etc. fall?

0001- Administration	0007 STUDENT PERSONNEL SERVICES
CLASSIFIED	CLASSIFIED
CLERICAL	PROFESSIONAL STAFF
PROFESSIONAL STAFF	PUPIL PERSONNEL WORKER
SECRETARY	SECRETARY
SUPPORT STAFF	SOCIAL WORKER
0002 Mid-Level Administration	0008 Health Services
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	HEALTH ASSISTANT
FISCAL ASSISTANT	NURSES
PRINCIPAL	PROFESSIONAL STAFF
PROFESSIONAL STAFF	SECRETARY
SECRETARY	0009 Student Transportation Services
SUPPORT STAFF	BUS ATTENDANTS REGULAR
0003- Instructional Salary and Wages	BUS DRIVERS REGULAR
COUNSELOR	DISPATCHER
FACILITATOR	MECHANICS
HOME/HOSPITAL TEACHER	PROFESSIONAL STAFF
LIBRARIAN	ROUTING ASSISTANT
PARAEDUCATORS	SECRETARY
PSYCHOLOGIST	SUPPORT STAFF
RESOURCE TEACHER	TRAINERS
ROTC INSTRUCTOR	WAREHOUSE DRIVER
TEACHER	0010 Operation of Plant
TEACHER GIFTED AND TALENTED	CLASSIFIED
0006 Special Education	CUSTODIAN-SCHOOLS
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	GROUNDSMEN
AUDIOLOGIST	MAINTENANCE - GENERAL
FISCAL ASSISTANT	PROFESSIONAL STAFF
INFANTS and TODDLERS TEAM LEADER	SECRETARY
LIBRARIAN	SECURITY GUARDS
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST	WAREHOUSE DRIVER
OT/PT ASSISTANTS	WAREHOUSEMAN

OTHER TEACHER	0011 Maintenance of Plant
PARAEDUCATORS	CLASSIFIED
PHYSICAL THERAPIST	CUSTODIAN-SCHOOLS
PRINCIPAL	FISCAL ASSISTANT
PROFESSIONAL STAFF	GROUNDSMEN
RESOURCE TEACHER	MECHANICS
SEC/CLERICAL SCHOOL	PROFESSIONAL STAFF
SECRETARY	SECRETARY
SPEECH/LANG PATHOLOGIST	WAREHOUSEMAN
SUPERVISOR	0015 Capital Outlay
TEACHER	CLASSIFIED
TEACHER ITINERANT	PROFESSIONAL STAFF
TRANSITION FACILITATOR	SECRETARY
TRANSLATOR	

30. There are 11 FTEs budgeted for the BOE (one fewer than past years). Besides Tracy, who are the other 10? I thought maybe the board members, but the numbers and math didn't add up (I imagine I should know this!)- page 5
 The other 10 positions are in Internal Audit.
31. I found the superintendent's budget (pages 58-61) very confusing. The categories in the pie chart do not match the categories in the table. In the pie chart, "other charges" account for nearly 81% of the budget. The table on page 58 partially answers my question #2 above, but are the titles listed individual FTEs or salaries for an entire office? For example, does the Chief of Climate and Safety make \$624,360 per year (nearly double that of last year)? Or, is this the budget for the whole office?
 The categories in the pie chart exactly match the categories in the table. Other charges primarily consist of fringe benefits, which are budgeted for the entire organization in Human Resources and falls under the superintendent. Those names refer to entire offices, not individual positions.
32. Generally, I feel that more detail is needed in each of the appendices. When there are increases and decreases from year to year, it is difficult to know how or why. Also, seeing a raw number without knowing what it means (people, number of people, etc.) is difficult to understand.

Specific Questions:

33. Why is the "FY21 adjusted" budget not accurately reflecting our pandemic savings and costs? We found out last week that we saved ~\$17 million on bus contracts, for example. Where is that savings in the budget? The Office of Food and Nutrition Services has line items for sales of meals when no meal has been sold all year. Also, with buildings not being fully used, there must be a savings on electricity, maintenance, water, etc. What is the plan for more accurately portraying our FY21 adjusted budget?

	FY20 actual	FY 21 adjusted	FY22 proposed

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION 68	72,719,249	82,510,977	84,502,323
OPERATION OF PLANT 94	104,838,085	114,865,035	115,545,436
MAINTENANCE OF PLANT 37	41,690,404	42,759,650	43,180,439

The system is not saving \$17 million on bus contracts. It is unlikely that the entire \$17.5 million FY2021 bus contract budget will be spent this year. Last week the Board was told that approximately one half that amount would be spent this year.

The budget book is not designed to reflect current year expense projections.

The revenue OFNS is receiving is the reimbursement rate for summer food service from USDA and the commodity allotment for our district.

34. Our Special Revenue Funds, which I see are funds allocated for specific grant programs or via external funding, increased by 18.5% (over \$16.6 million) between FY21 and FY22. This was associated with only 7.3 additional FTEs. I find this concerning given the increased needs we are likely to see when children return to school. I read the report, but would like to know if there is an opportunity to use any of these funding sources to support additional teachers and support staff in buildings. The CARES grant was used to retain positions in the Office of Food and Nutrition Services (OFNS).

35. What is the plan if our funding is cut because of reduced enrollment? I heard in the presentation that we did not account for a potential funding change due to reduced enrollment in the Maintenance of Effort budget, however we seemed to account for this by planning for fewer teachers. “The number of teaching positions has been matched to the enrollment drop in the FY2022 proposed budget, resulting in a reduction of 122.3 vacant positions and \$6.9 million.” (page 22). These two concepts do not match.

The FY2022 budget projects that the state and county will hold BCPS harmless for declining enrollment and preserve current staffing ratios. The governor’s budget released January 19, 2021 confirmed that state aid would be held flat to FY2021.

36. Pages 11-12 “No additional special education positions are funded in the proposed FY2022 budget” yet “five-year growth rates through FY2020 of 16.9% for students receiving special education services was much faster than overall student growth.” Also, the Special education budget increased by \$10 million- how will that \$ be spent? What is the plan to meet the increased needs of our students?

General Fund Category	FY21 Adjusted	FY22 Proposed	Budget Difference	% change
Special Education	214,929,106	225,046,976	10,117,870	4.5%

The primary increases in the special education budget cover special education

resources for parent reimbursements, which increase by \$2.1 million and are based on historical costs. The settlements typically reimburse parents for out-of-pocket non-public placement tuition and reduce the fiscal impact for BCPS that would arise if cases were litigated. Private non-public placement tuition increases by \$1.7 million, based on FY2021 projections and an estimated FY2022 increase of 2.5%. The remaining increases cover potential compensation increases.

What is the plan to meet the increased needs of our students?

A district-wide review of programs, program enrollment, and alignment of services and supports will be conducted to determine the needs within BCPS. Modifications and implementation of process, procedures, programmatic adjustments as needed will occur based on identified needs. Enhancement of professional development opportunities will occur to build capacity of school-based staff to support and provides services to students with IEPs on all sites.

37. Regarding our Charter school, can someone point me to our plan for measuring success of this school, and, specifically, if a plan is in place should the school NOT be successful to end our support for a charter school? (I should be clear that I have historically not been a big proponent of charter schools)
- a. *“A new charter school opened in Baltimore County in FY2020 and is planning to add an additional grade which will require 4.0 positions (\$475 thousand) and school based per pupil budgets decrease by \$234 thousand due to the decline in enrollment. Final funding allocations to individual schools will be determined based on September 30, 2021 actual enrollment.”* Page 12

Watershed is in its second full year of operation with grades K-4. BCPS has been in collaboration with Watershed to define the renewal process as specified in the Watershed Charter Contract section 15.1. We are close to finalizing and publishing our Charter Renewal Process. While it is not yet finalized, our approach does include use of quantitative data and qualitative data to develop a recommendation in the renewal process that is similar to Charter School evaluation and renewal in other Maryland LEAs.

38. Why does the cost per student graph on page 22 only include 14/24 public LEAs in MD?
- The chart shows the highest 14 funded LEAs. Cost per student information for all LEAs going back to FY2005 can be found on the MSDE website.

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DBS/SFD/index.aspx>

39. It is certain that the OFNS budget (page 48) will take a HUGE hit in FY21 and that the “adjusted” budget is nowhere near accurate (there have not been any sales thus far). Do we have a plan to support this important department to ensure their financial solvency moving forward? They have worked incredibly hard during this pandemic

and need our support.

The budget book is not designed to reflect current year expense projections.

The CARES grant was used to support the OFNS budget in FY2020 and will likely do so again in FY2021. County funding of \$2.6 million has been requested in the FY2022 budget to support the cost of expanding the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program.

40. I would like the superintendent's budget in a spreadsheet, if possible, aligned with FTEs for each line item.

a. I see a large increase in funding for the "Assistant Superintendent- HR Staffing" (~\$130K). Was a new position added or were significant raises given?

There was no new FTE added. All bargaining units received a 1% COLA in FY2021. Executive staff did not receive an FY2021 COLA. The Board approves all compensation increases for BCPS employees.

Salaries of filled positions in FY2020 were lower than the FY2021 budget, due to position vacancies. For FY2022, the budget was matched to the actual salaries.

b. Same question for Chief Accountability and performance management officer (added \$80K). Was a new position added or were significant raises given?

There was no new FTE added. All bargaining units received a 1% COLA in FY2021. Executive staff did not receive an FY2021 COLA. The Board approves all compensation increases for BCPS employees.

Salaries of filled positions in FY2020 were lower than the FY2021 budget, due to position vacancies. For FY2022, the budget was matched to the actual salaries.

c. Can we be provided with additional information on the large increase in funding for the Chief of School Climate and Safety (page 59)? I imagine it is partially due to a decrease in funding for the Director of School Climate. The budget for the Chief of School Climate and Safety was inadvertently overstated by \$225 thousand. This issue will not affect the BCPS budget in total and will be corrected for the Board adopted version of the budget book.

d. What/how will the \$742,286 be spent on Strategic Planning (page 59... new item)?

This office, which provides enrollment projections, student counts, school boundary studies, etc., moved from under DRAA to Facilities, but the FY2022 budget for the office was inadvertently shown under the superintendent. The office is not taking on additional responsibilities. It

will be correctly placed under Facilities in the next version of the budget book.

41. I saw there was a big increase in retirements (fixed charges). Was this in line with what was expected/forecasted for this year, or did you see an overall higher rate of retirements? – page 61

The Fixed Charges category primarily contains fringe benefits for the entire organization, including health care. “Employee Benefits, Leaves, and Retirements” refers to a department in Human Resources and not a budgetary line item. However, the majority of fringe benefits for BCPS reside in that department.

42. I have a number of questions on Appendix E (curriculum and instruction, starting on page 67):

- a. Why the large decrease in funding for the budget category “world languages”?

The primary decrease was due to the discontinuation of Middlebury digital content for the Passport program, \$300 thousand. The reduction of travel, conferences, supplies and contract services to support the FY2021 systemwide cost of living increase was \$39 thousand.

- b. Why the large decrease in funding for the instructional textbooks and supplies line for ESOL? We all recognize that this is a growing and important area of need in our county.

We are focused on the needs of our English learners. The reduction of travel, conferences, supplies and contract services to support the FY2021 systemwide cost of living increase was \$35 thousand. The office reallocated the remaining budget according to FY2022 plans. New curriculum textbooks are purchased from the Chief Academic Officer’s central textbook account.

- c. Other parts are confusing as well... increased in funding for math and decreased funding in science, for example (under textbooks and supplies). The math office realigned their budget, moving funds from the contract services line. The science office realigned their funds to other categories.

- d. Under “other instructional costs” there was a decrease in math preK-12 from \$511,900 to \$71,715. Why?

Funds for Dreambox software license fees, no longer in use, were removed and redirected to the Chief Academic Officer for the central Textbook account. The remaining funds were redirected to the Instructional Textbooks and Supplies line.

- e. Also, why was there an increase in “athletics office” by nearly \$250K? Built-in transportation costs are increasing by \$155 thousand, based upon historical actual costs and additional funding to transport Western Tech sports during school building renovations.

- f. Under budget by category, library media and digital resources funding dropped from \$1,215,673 to \$674,690. Why?
The office of Library and Media has consolidated digital content and software licensing resources. \$572 thousand has been redirected to the Chief Academic Officer for the central textbook account.
- g. In this budget, funding for Special Education increased by ~\$5 million. What will this money be used for?
The primary increases in the special ed budget are Special education resources for parent reimbursements increase by \$2.1 million and are based on historical costs. The settlements typically reimburse parents for out-of-pocket non-public placement tuition and reduce the fiscal impact for BCPS that would arise if cases were litigated. Private non-public placement tuition increases by \$1.7 million, based on FY2021 projections and an estimated increase of 2.5%. The remaining increases cover potential compensation increases.
43. Why were our Title IV funds decreased so dramatically, from 2.1 million in FY21 to ~450K in FY22—page 88? (**I am aware of this funding line, as other LEAs have used Title IV funding to support stipends for teachers to lead wellness teams in schools to increase compliance with their wellness policy).
BCPS received a notice of grant award for FY2021 Title IV of \$2.1 million on January 8, 2021. This grant year allows us to spend until June 2022 which overlaps, but does not align, with our system's FY2021 fiscal year. The \$450 thousand is an estimate of what we'll have remaining in the FY2021 Title IV grant on July 1, 2021 when BCPS FY2022 fiscal year begins. BCPS plans to continue to apply for this grant and, if successful, will receive addition funding in approximately January 2022.