

**Report to Bowie City Council
on Education Priorities**

Bowie Education Committee

November 17, 2008



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INTRODUCTION

Things are moving in the right direction, if the measure one seeks is MSA scores. Prince George's County schools still lag behind other jurisdictions when it comes to test scores, but are making up ground. The School System has also been awarded grants to assist with the implementation of initiatives such as financial incentive awards for experienced teachers in high poverty and low performing schools.

Significant concerns, however, may overshadow the good news. With students required to pass the HSAs to graduate, and graduation rates at a much lower level than hoped, there is much to do, especially at the middle and high school levels to increase the success of students.

Fiscal concerns continue to grow as this economy threatens what education funding is currently available, and may not allow for proposed initiatives, some of which are currently in pilot study stages. What will happen with these initiatives, new school construction, and renovations needed to keep our old schools in operation, in an attempt to provide appropriate environments for student learning?

Amidst the positives and possibilities, pilot programs and fiscal concerns, Dr. Deasy's announced departure from the school system this winter adds another dimension to the frequently asked question, "What will happen next?"



PRIORITIES

Maryland School Assessments and No Child Left Behind

For the second consecutive year all Bowie-area elementary and middle schools passed state benchmarks for proficiency on the Maryland School Assessments (MSA) and made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as required under the federal *No Child Left Behind* law (NCLB). This year, 84 percent of students grades 3-8 in the Bowie area scored proficient or better on the tests, compared to 68 percent countywide, with Tulip Grove and Heather Hills Elementary Schools reaching 100 percent of students in at least one grade level on at least one subject test (*Prince George s Gazette*, ‘Bowie schools continue to make gains,” 8/21/08).

Prince George s County schools saw an increase in the percentage of students scoring proficient or better on the MSAs to 71.6 percent in reading and 64.4 percent in math, compared to 64.7 percent and 60 percent, respectively the previous year. As a result, 14 Prince George s County elementary and middle schools were taken off the list of schools in need of improvement” (for missing AYP for two straight years) while four were added to the list, dropping the total number of schools in improvement from 56 to 46. (*Gazette*, “Fourteen schools exit state watch list, 8/21/08). A major reason for this improvement was that nearly nine of 10 classes at Title I schools, those with high numbers of students from low-income families, are now filled with teachers who meet the state's definition of ‘highly qualified,’ the School System announced in May (*Washington Post*, ‘Scores Lift School System s Spirits, Hope” 7/31/08)

Maryland was selected by the U.S. Department of Education this year as one of only six states to pilot a differentiated accountability system under NCLB that provides new flexibility for schools that have fallen short of AYP in a few subgroups. Under the pilot initiative, schools in improvement are now placed in one of two pathways:

Comprehensive Needs schools are those that do not make their progress targets in the ‘all students” category or are having difficulty making targets in three or more subgroups. **Focused Needs** schools have achieved targets in the ‘all students” category



but have not achieved targets in one or two subgroup areas. In addition, the schools will now be further identified as in the Developing or Priority stage of these categories based on the number of years the school has been in improvement. A complete list of the 46 Prince George s schools in improvement and information on other elementary and middle schools can be found at www.mdreportcard.org.

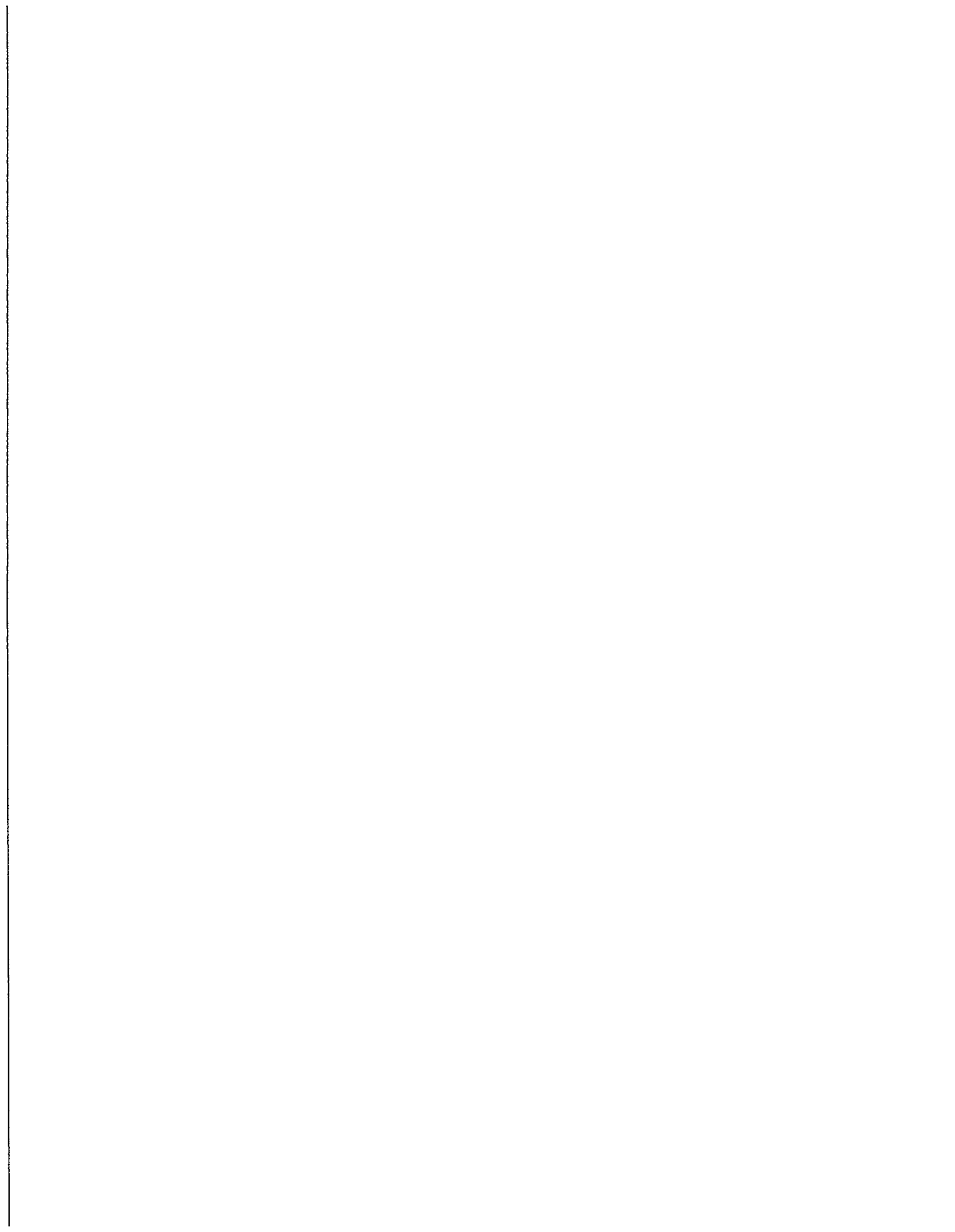
Additional changes to NCLB s accountability system and other requirements may be forthcoming in 2009 when a new U.S. administration takes office and Congress takes up, once again, the reauthorization process that began last year

High School Assessments

The Class of 2009 will be the first required by the State Board of Education to pass the Maryland High School Assessments (HSA) in order to receive a diploma, as well as meet NCLB requirements. Students who do not achieve a passing score on all four tests in English, algebra, government and biology can still graduate if they

- 1 achieve a combined score on all four tests of at least 1602,
2. earn the MSDE-approved score on an HSA-related AP or IB test,
- 3 for eligible students with disabilities, pass Modified HSA exams with an altered question format (the Mod-HSAs were given for the first time in May 2008), and
- 4 for certain students who have not passed an HSA after taking it twice, complete a project in that content area under supervision and subject to approval of the local school system.

The last option, known as the ‘Bridge Plan for Academic Validation, will only be available to students who have participated in locally administered or approved assistance, have passed the HSA-related course, and are otherwise making satisfactory progress towards graduation. Students approved for the Bridge Plan will have to submit a project in that content area to a local review panel and then to the local superintendent for approval. The student’s designated project monitor who must be a teacher-certified professional at that school and receive appropriate training for the role, will meet with the student and parent/guardian to design an Academic Validation Project. More information

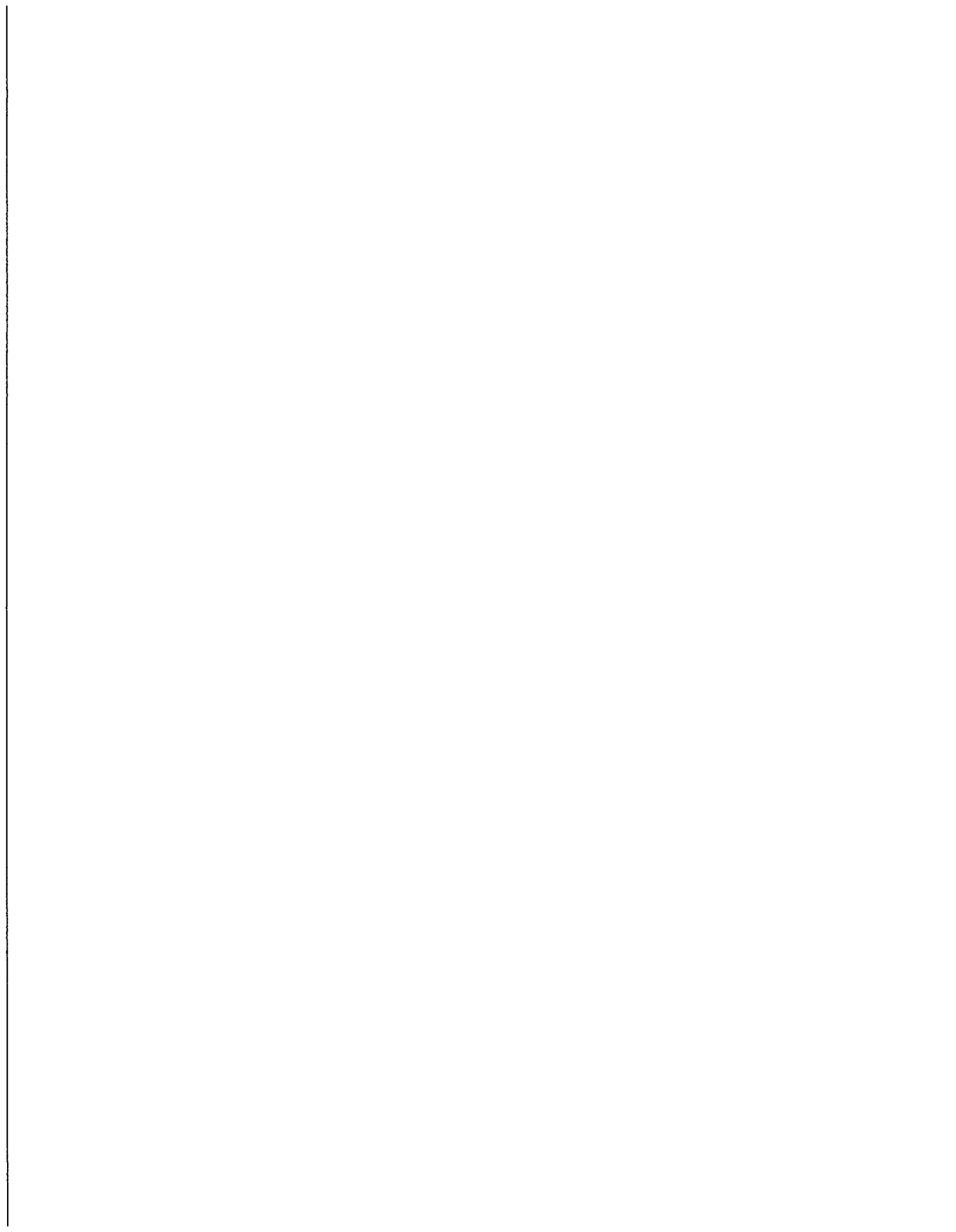


on the HSA Bridge Plan may be found in the Appendix and at http://hsaexam.org/img/bridge_plan.

A recent report by the D C.-based Center on Education Policy (CEP) noted that as of January 2008, 88 percent of Maryland students in the Class of 2009 had passed all the tests or posted a high enough combined score average to graduate, but only 74 percent of African American students, 73 percent of low-income students and 53 percent of special education students had reached the same level (CEP *State High School Exit Exams*, 8/13/08, www.cep-dc.org). According to just released HSA results from the Maryland Report Card, 72.5 percent of Bowie High School's Senior class has done the same, compared with 64.5 percent county wide and 83.4 percent statewide.

Despite the existence of various alternatives, the HSA exit exam requirement continues to be highly controversial. members of the State Board of Education and certain advocacy groups have raised concerns about large numbers of minority low-income, and students with disabilities failing these tests and expressed a desire to postpone graduation requirement for at least another year, although the Board voted 7-4 last month not to postpone the requirement. Legislation is again likely to be proposed in the next General Assembly session to postpone the HSA implementation date, modify the requirement, or eliminate the requirement altogether

Last year's report to Council indicated that Bowie High School had implemented intervention programs for those students who were closest to achieving the required HSA minimum scores. According to Principal, Jane Spence, they continue to provide a variety of 'Extended Learning Opportunities' schoolwide, "for those struggling in general courses" and "specialized tutoring for students who struggle with High School Assessment related material." They also offer Content Enrichment Courses for those who have passed an assessment related course but have failed the Assessment. Students who still fall shy of the scores required for graduation are eligible for the new Academic Validation Program courses. These allow students to complete the 'alternative assessments' provided by the Maryland State Department of Education.



These allow for students alternative ways (projects) to demonstrate their proficiency in state objectives. Courses are also offered for student who “struggled while enrolled in the course and who may be in jeopardy of failing the related Assessment. There is an extensive list of tutoring opportunities offered, which take place before, during and after school. After school and summer programs are offered by the County School System as well.

New Bowie High School

The Committee applauds City Council, as well as Senator Peters, Delegates Holmes, Hubbard and Levi, and Councilwoman Turner for continuing their push for a solution to the overcrowding situation that has existed at Bowie High School for many years. As you are aware, it has been stated by the School Board that the state will not fund a new school because the numbers do not justify the need. Here in Bowie most feel that the need is quite clear! The high school currently has a population of over 2,900 students housed in two buildings, which is over capacity (this includes the capacity of the modular units). The state capacity for the two buildings adds up to 2,734 Growth for the greater Bowie area, which includes approximately 10 000 homes planned, in or under construction, will generate the need for about 900 additional students. Moreover, the population of Bowie has grown from 50,269 (2000 Census) to a January 2008 estimate of 55,831

Moving this school to number 50 on the School Board Priority list in the CIP for Funding Years 2010-2015 is a real blow to the City The School Board has included \$1 million in the CIP for planning, which hopefully will open discussion for consideration of a variety of workable plans that make sense. With budget cuts at all levels, this will have to be watched very carefully as the process continues, with the CIP moving through the county and the state levels. According to the CIP timeline the County CIP should currently be under review by the State Interagency Committee for recommendations, prior to final submission in early December

The focus should continue to be on reducing the overcrowding sooner than waiting to see if a larger school might be funded some time after 2015 The suggestion for bringing a



school to Bowie through the "Small Schools Initiative," may be a way to bring seats to Bowie, especially if it offers an attractive specialty program. The potential for providing a unique learning opportunity with one or more specialized programs may provide a highly beneficial alternative, one that is a far better solution than shifting boundaries and busing populations of high school students to distant schools.

SCHOOL SYSTEM INITIATIVES AND CHANGES

FIRST Program.

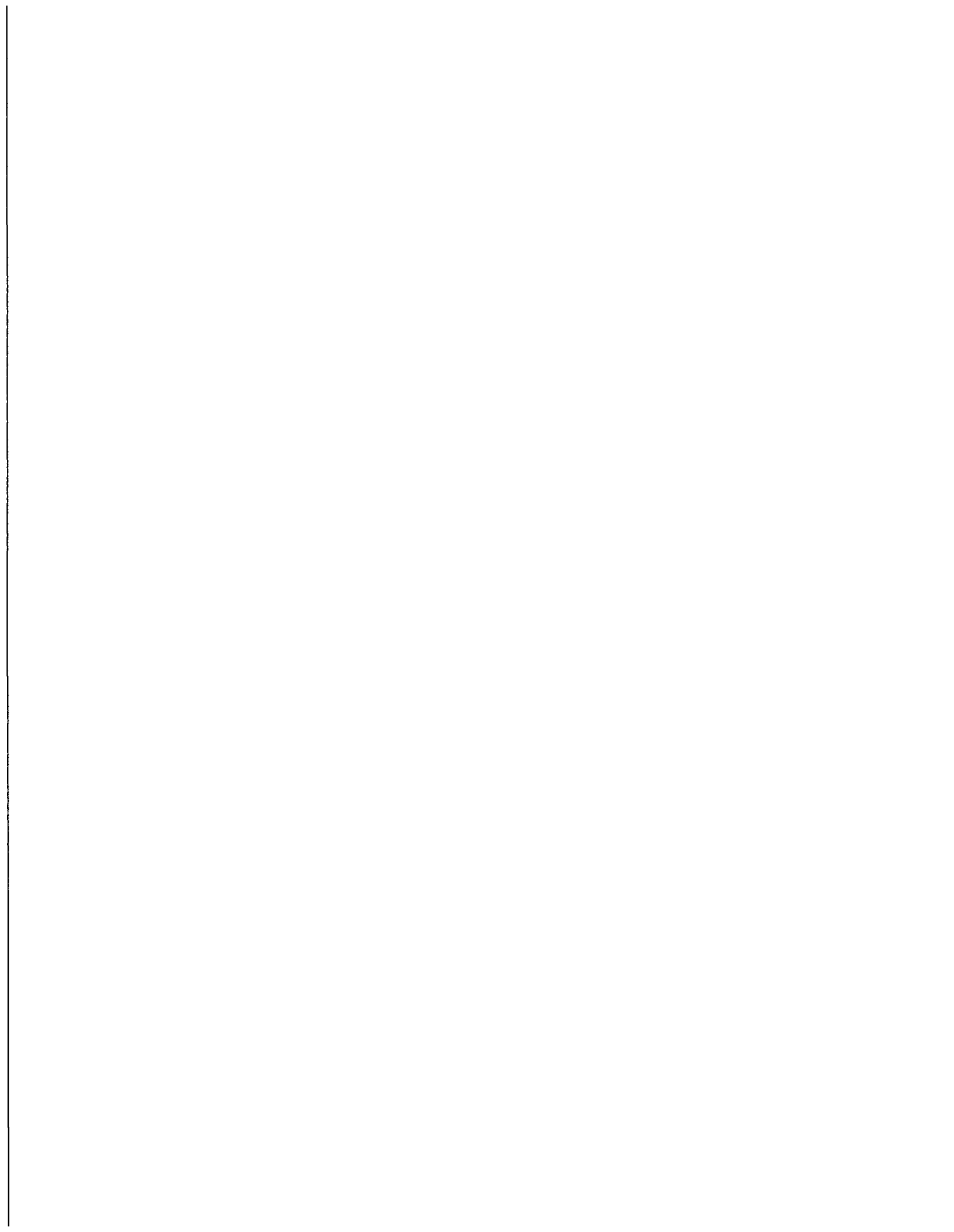
Prince George's County Public Schools were awarded a \$17.1 million federal Teacher Incentive Fund grant to plan and implement a voluntary performance based financial incentive system. The implementation of the pilot study will occur in schools located in high poverty areas or that have a history of low student achievement. According to Dr. Deasy the FIRST program will allow PGCPs to recruit and retain the most qualified teachers available. The goals are:

- raising student achievement by increasing teacher and administrator effectiveness (which will be done through professional development)
- increasing the number of effective teachers working with our most impacted students and schools.

The FIRST program will be piloted in 8 to 10 schools during the 2008-09 school year. None of the schools are located in Bowie, however as they did not meet the selection requirements. Teachers and administrators who participate in FIRST will use the new evaluation systems and growth over time models to document student achievement and professional growth. Participants will also generate data through surveys, reflections and interviews to assist in improving the program for future years. Additional schools will be selected during the second year from the Teacher Incentive Fund Eligible Schools to participate in the second year of implementation.

The reward components of FIRST include:

- Administrator Incentives: Principals and Assistant Principals will engage in all aspects of the program. Principals are eligible for up to \$12,500 and Assistant



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Principals are eligible for up to \$11,000. The award categories are based on student achievement, rigorous evaluation and professional growth.

- Teacher Incentives: Teachers will engage in all aspects of the program. Each participating teacher is eligible for up to \$10,000. The award categories are based on student achievement, hard-to-staff subjects, rigorous evaluation and professional growth.

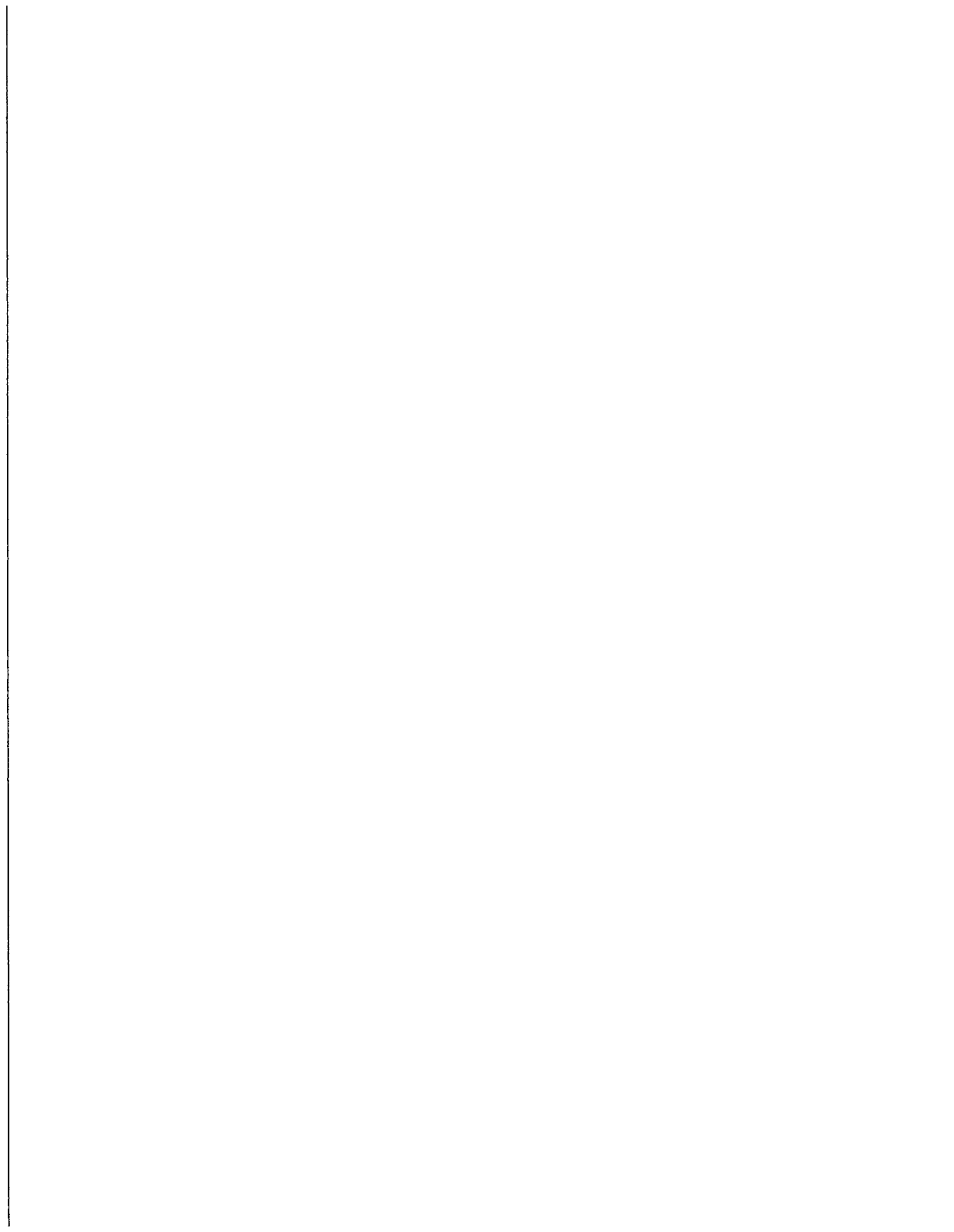
This program shows promise for those hard-to-staff schools in need of teachers and administrators with more experience. However, given the lack of a clear track record for performance-based incentive programs and the lack of sufficient specifics so far about exactly how the program will work and progress will be measured, we recommend monitoring its design and implementation. In addition, given the budgetary outlook at all levels, we are concerned that across-the-board salary increases for teachers at all county schools may not be implemented.

New Small Schools, Smaller Learning Communities

Last Year's Discussion Continues

Last year the Priorities Report included the following: There has been some discussion in the School System about 'Community Contract Schools. At the September 20, 2007 School Board Meeting Dr. Deasy gave a presentation related to the development of 'New Small Schools, or Community Contract Schools. The Board voted their approval to 'move forward with a process for developing" models and themes related to these schools with community input. These schools would 'provide additional choice schools options with specialized programs focusing on quality of instruction, academic rigor, and improved student academic performance.

Contract schools are similar in nature to charter schools. An application is submitted to Maryland State Department of Education, funds are requested for the number of pupils planned to attend. However the differences occur with the implementation and ownership of the curriculum. Entities entering into a contract agreement with PGCPs apply for funding through the Maryland State Department of Education to operate the

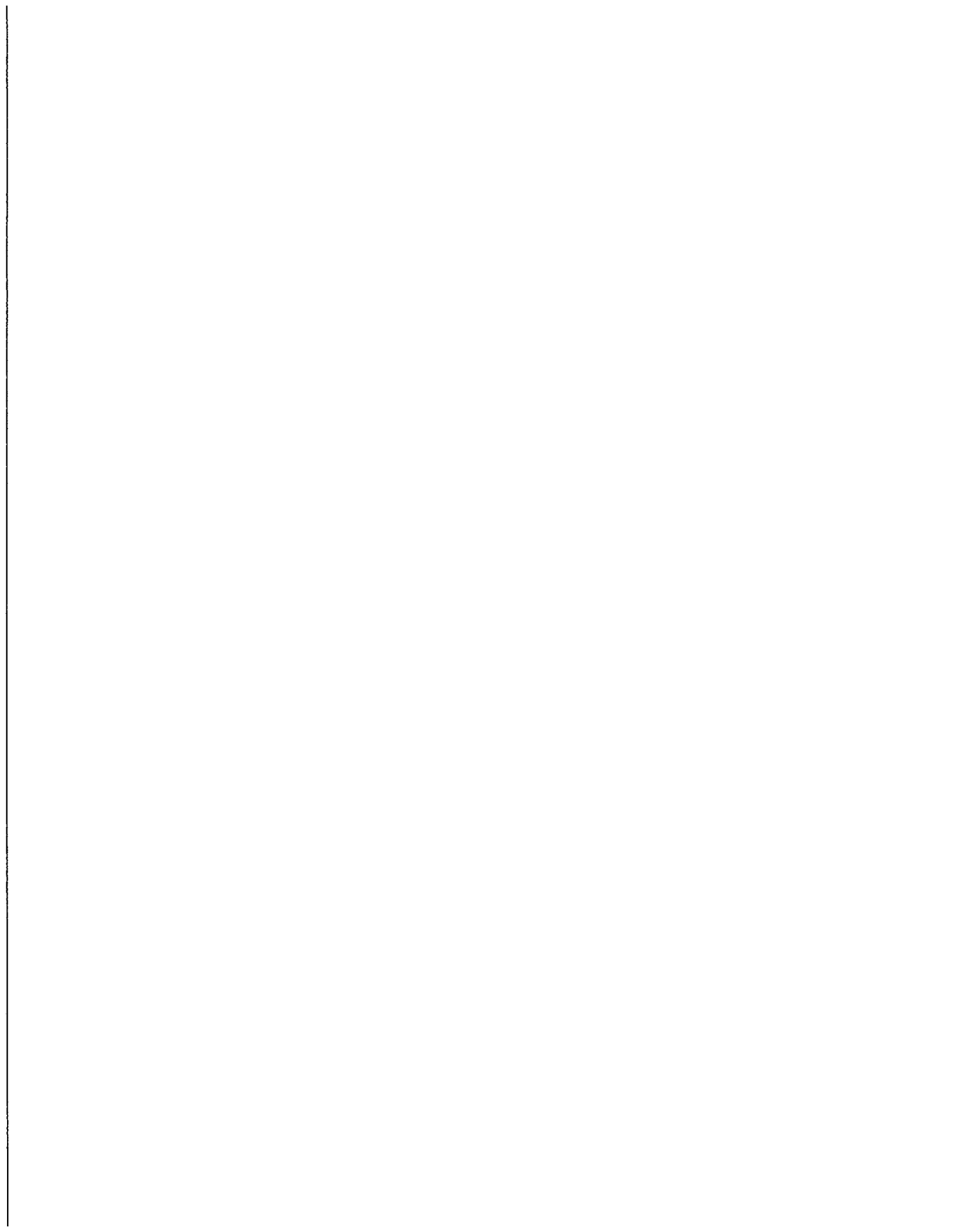


contract schools; however, the responsibility of implementing the curriculum and hiring of the staff is the sole responsibility of PGCPs.

This year the discussion continues. With budgetary constraints there is much question as to how any of these might be implemented, although the School Board seems to feel strongly that this is a sensible way to accomplish a shifting of populations from those high schools that are overcrowded to those where seats are available. This is seen as a better solution, with the cost of new construction for high schools being roughly \$90 million. Here in Bowie the possibility of a new smaller high school at the Mitchellville site, or in an existing building, might offer a focus on a specialized program of interest to students. This would likely draw students to another school, located in Bowie, thereby lowering Bowie High School's population.

The School System has awarded a five year \$6.5 million grant from the U S Department of Education for Smaller Learning Communities, according to a press release dated September 26, 2008. The first \$3.4 million will be spent for the implementation of the initiative launched this school year. According to Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John Deasy "The Smaller Learning Communities initiative will focus on providing the extra attention that some students need to prepare them for on-time graduation and postsecondary opportunities. Following a performance evaluation after the third year the system may be eligible for an additional \$2.6 million to continue their efforts in this area. The School System is attempting to redesign a cluster of five large high schools, Crossland, DuVal, Potomac, Oxen Hill and Suitland, into smaller units to provide a more personalized education for students, through smaller learning communities. These will.

- create a 'stronger sense of community'
- close achievement gaps
- increase student achievement overall
- focus on 'providing the extra attention that some students need to prepare them for on time graduation and post-secondary opportunities'
- 'provide ongoing support and continuity of services during high school'



School System Reconfiguration. Theory of Action

School Board Policy 0119 Theory of Action, encapsulates tenets fundamental to continued improvement in schools across the country. On the local level, the County School System's "Managed Performance Empowerment," implemented this school year, "provides a framework to drive and align goals, strategic plans, policies, budget, administrative actions and the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan. Accountability is to be balanced with empowerment "according to needs and performance of individual schools. "This Theory of Action holds tight standards, measures, and outcomes while providing earned discretion over budget, staffing and other identified areas once principals meet school performance targets and receive training specific to leading autonomous schools." (Dr. Deasy's Memorandum to Chiefs, Elementary and Middle School Principals, Zone Executive Officers and Zone Staff, dated August 8, 2008.)

The newly developed Zones include:

Autonomy Zone: Includes schools likely to "flourish as a result of increased autonomy over key aspects of school operations. Autonomy is "awarded" to schools that have demonstrated high degrees of academic success" by meeting set criteria, among which are "not designated beyond Year II School Improvement" and meeting or exceeding specified growth targets.

Autonomy Zone Schools located in Bowie include

- Heather Hills ES
- Kenilworth ES
- Pointer Ridge ES
- Rockledge ES
- Tulip Grove ES
- Whitehall ES

Opportunity Zone: based on options provided for students, which require an application and selection process, such as Charter Schools, Montessori and French Immersion programs. There are no schools in Bowie currently in this Zone.



Schools in Zones One through Six are those not included within the autonomy or opportunity zones. These are designated geographically Schools located in Bowie which are not included in the Autonomy Zone, are in Zone 3 They are:

- Chapel Forge ECC
- High Bridge ES
- Yorktown E S
- Samuel Ogle Middle

C. Elizabeth Reig and Northview are included in Zone 4

This new system should be monitored to determine whether these zones continue to move the schools forward with increased success for students. If the goal is to award schools for their successes, we should see all schools (other than those with program options) strive to move to the autonomy zone. One might wonder how this might be handled, as all but the specialized programs would be together in one Zone. Further discussion and clarification may be required to explain the anticipated progression.

Boundaries

The School Board passed a resolution on September 16th that includes the following language:

The ‘Superintendent of Schools is hereby directed to conduct a review of all of the school attendance areas and boundaries in the Prince George s County Public School System, specifically evaluating those boundaries to determine whether they are as equitable as practicable and as financially efficient as they can be, in light of (a) historical inequities; (b) over utilization of each facility and (c) underutilization of each facility

‘The Superintendent is directed to report his findings and conclusions to the Board of Education no later than **3 months (January 8, 2009)** from the date of this Resolution, along with any proposals or recommendations for modifying the current attendance areas and boundaries. The Superintendent is further directed to provide the Board with periodic updates prior to the deadline.



Boundary changes often cause concern among parents who may have purchased homes based on the schools their children would attend. This will have to be watched to determine the impact on Bowie students.

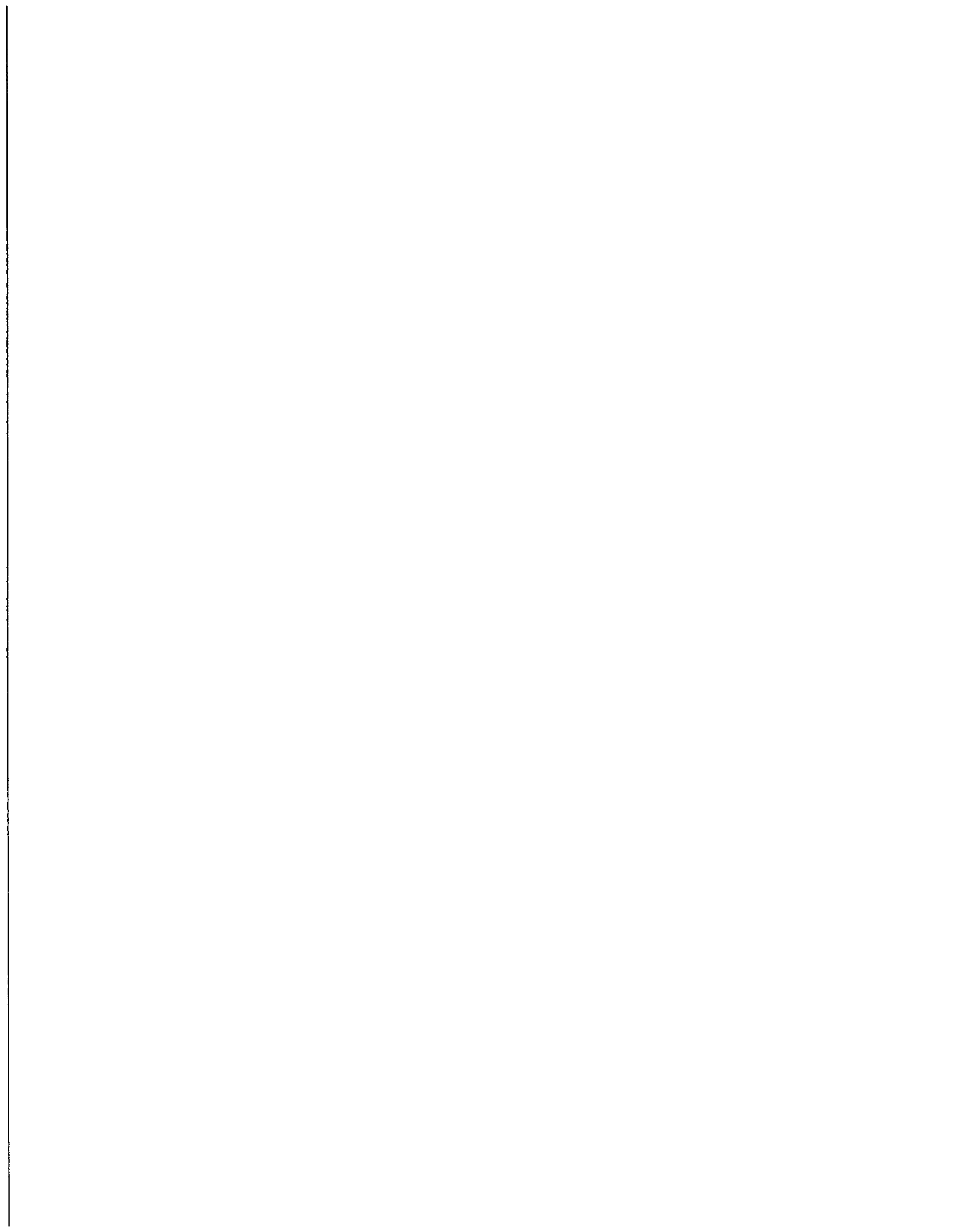
Truancy

This is an ongoing issue, especially with high school students. The School Board recently implemented Truancy Walks to draw attention to this concern. "The Prince George's County Board of Education launched an anti-truancy campaign in August and has joined members of the community in a series of "community walks" to place anti-truancy posters in local businesses and encourage citizens to report students who are not in class during the school day. Posters encourage the community to assist in the Board's anti-truancy initiative and provide a phone number (301 333-4000) to anonymously report students who are truant from school. The initiative is also being promoted through public service announcements on television and radio. "(School System web site, www.pgcps.org)

A flyer (Appendix) has been distributed listing County Executive Jack B. Johnson, the County Fire and Police Departments, the Board of Education and School System and the County Chamber as sponsors. The flyer warns, "Go to School-it is the law!" It also states that, "Unlawful absences may result in jail. All students have to attend school until they turn 16 years.

Graduation Rates 2007

Maryland Report Card data from 2007 indicates that Bowie High School's graduation rate of 82.0 was not nearly as high as many would like it to be, especially as compared with other schools. According to Bowie High School's Principal, Jane Spence, the graduation rate is based on what has happened to freshmen over the four years they have been enrolled, not how many actually graduated. Calculations of graduation numbers depend on how they are reported, as students transfer, move out of the area, etc. If they are listed as "withdrawn," rather than transferred, it may appear in the overall numbers, as having dropped out!



Last year of 712 students in the senior class at Bowie High School, 704 graduated.

Further the Maryland Report Card data indicated that, Eleanor Roosevelt High School had a 90.33 percent rate in 2007 This site shows many other county schools with rates above Bowie's, with the state average, at 85.24 percent. Prince George s County's graduation rate is listed at 84.88.

Graduation rates in nearby counties for 2007

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Anne Arundel | 87.78 |
| Frederick | 96.22 |
| Howard | 94.79 |
| Montgomery | 90.37 |

Other Prince George s County High School rates.

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| DuVal | 82.86 |
| Friendly | 94.17 |
| Fairmont Heights | 88.20 |
| Frederick Douglas | 85.38 |
| Largo | 92.22 |
| Laurel | 88.02 |

Bowie High School is working on the reporting of students transferring vs. withdrawing or dropping out, as well as increasing the numbers graduating. Keeping track of and improving graduation rates will be a challenge all across the state with the HSA scores counting toward graduating. In addition, caution must be exercised in interpreting the numbers as there seem to be reasons, such as those mentioned above, why the rates do not tell the whole story

Communications

'HOW TO Address Questions and Concerns, a guide for parents and Guardians, was mailed before the start of the school year, providing appropriate offices and personnel



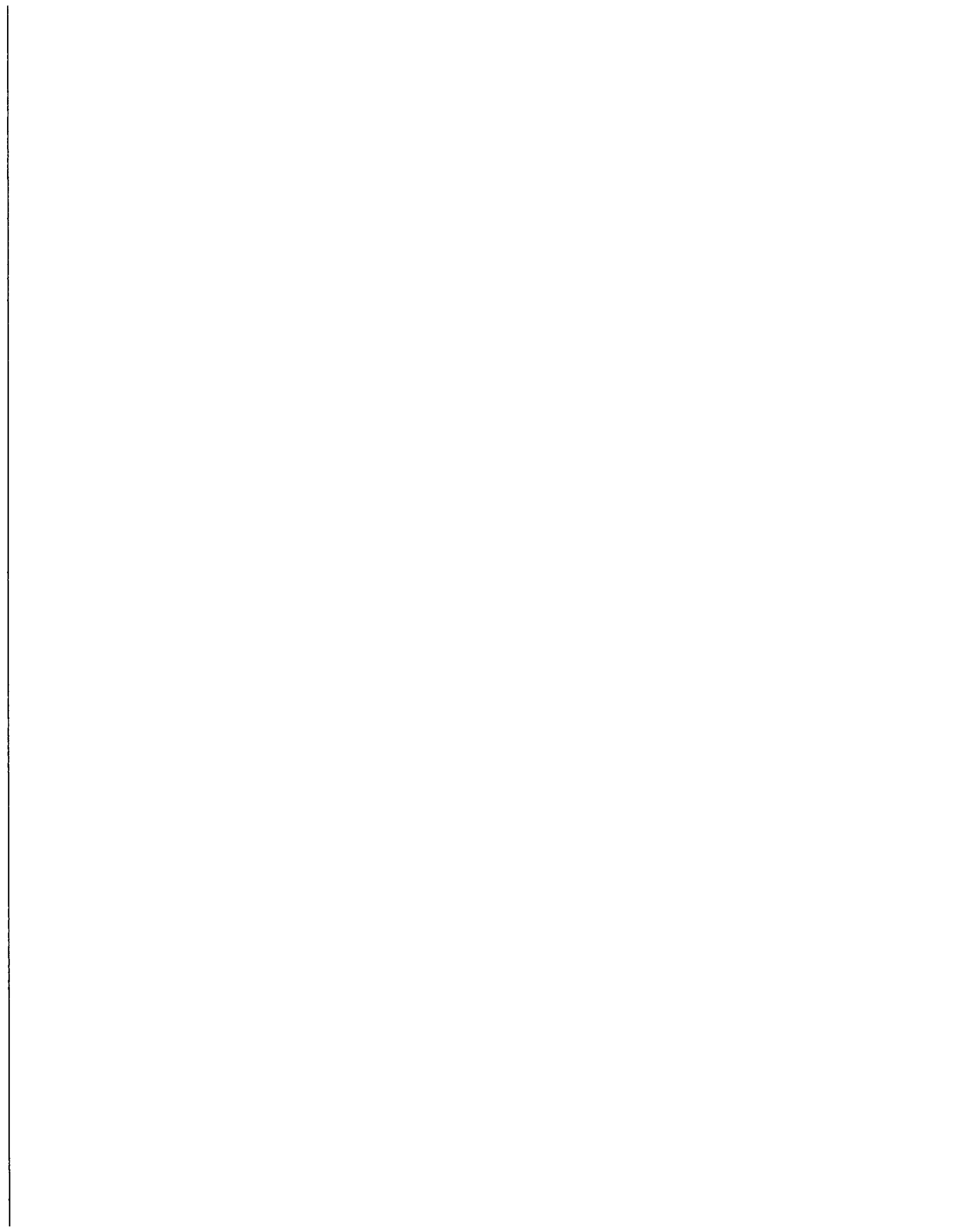
contact information for addressing issues and finding solutions to problems and concerns.(Appendix) This document, available in English and Spanish, is a big step in opening communications, offering a list of offices to call for specific types of concerns, with steps to take from one level to the next.

While this is certainly a helpful tool, we hope to see continuing efforts by the School System to involve parents and the Community in major decisions, with information communicated in several different ways and in a timely fashion, rather than last minute notification, making it impossible to respond before the decisions are made. Some schools are beginning to use 'School Max, a computer program that, once implemented, will provide parents with student grades, homework and other information of value to them. In this day of sophisticated communication devices, it would be helpful to feel that the lines of communication are not only open, but also welcomed.

Funding

The weak national economy and housing crisis has had a significant effect on income, and property tax revenues available for public schools. The State of Maryland now projects an annual \$800 million per year budget deficit over the next five years, despite roughly \$1.5 billion in tax increases and \$1.5 billion in spending cuts made by the Governor and General Assembly over the last few years. As a result, the Board of Public Works trimmed more than \$300 million in state funding in October, with an additional round of mid-year cuts likely to come at its December meeting- this time with education likely to be affected more deeply- even before the General Assembly begins the difficult work of deciding where to trim next year's budget (*Baltimore Sun*, 'Maryland budget cut by \$300 billion, 10/16/08 and 'Slots no longer seen as fiscal fix. 10/19/08, *Washington Post*, 'Maryland may face \$1 Billion shortfall 8/29/08, *Gazette*, 'Franchot paints bleak economic picture, 9/9/08).

In addition, the Prince George s County School System has seen an \$8.8 million increase in food supply costs over three years and is experiencing rising transportation and utility costs. During this year's budget cycle, the School System eliminated more than 280



vacant positions, and had to cut \$14 million from its budget to cope with the county's revenue shortfall. In addition, schools have been required to stick more closely to a strict student-per-teacher formula (22.1 in pre-K through 1st grade, and 25.1 from 2nd through 12th grade), have raised the prices of breakfasts and lunches, and bus drivers have been encouraged to prevent buses from idling. (*Gazette*, "School system feels the pinch of food, fuel prices," 8/28/08 *Washington Post*, "Scores Lift School System's Spirits, Hope," 7/31/08.)

Other recent casualties of funding shortfalls at the county level were proposals by Superintendent John E. Deasy to create several pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade schools and to replicate the language immersion and Montessori programs in additional county schools (*Gazette*, "Language program expansion put on hold," 9/4/08)

With the General Assembly highly unlikely to raise additional taxes in the near future, the only major source of new state revenue currently on the horizon will be as a result of the slots referendum passed by voters on November 4th. The referendum amended the state constitution to allow the placement of up to 15,000 government-licensed and regulated slot machines in five locations around the state. The initial \$90 million in fees from licensing agreements that are expected to be finalized in the spring, will be dedicated to public education, and roughly half of all future revenues—estimated by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) as more than \$600 million once the machines are fully implemented with three years—will be dedicated to an Education Trust Fund to pay for school construction, higher education costs, and additional per pupil spending on top of the existing Thornton formula.

However, there are still zoning hurdles to overcome in a few of the slot destination sites. In addition, opponents of the referendum question the amount of revenues that education will receive and argue that the General Assembly could use any additional revenues that do come in to replace rather than supplement existing levels of education funding.



Condition of School Buildings

According to the Washington Post, on May 10 2008, the 'Prince George's County School System requires \$2.1 billion to fix its aging buildings, according to a study that found many schools running on antiquated equipment and deteriorating inside and out. The study by Parsons 3D/International, ordered in September, looked at 184 schools across the county and found that, although they were generally well kept and clean, many were using equipment long past its prime.

The article went on to say that 'many mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are out of date and inefficient, and food-service equipment is in 'poor condition. 'Most buildings do not comply with federal guidelines for accessibility It does not get better as 'the buildings themselves -- most are 30 to 50 years old -- are showing signs of water damage and wear and tear Among the nine buildings in 'the worst condition,'" was Tulip Grove Elementary School in Bowie. Although we have been made aware of the deterioration of school buildings, the repairs will be very costly This is another serious concern, with fiscal challenges at the State and County levels.

Superintendent Change

Dr Deasy's announcement that he will be leaving the School System is of great concern, given the School System s recent progress. Changes are being implemented, and he and the School Board have researched numerous additional possibilities for improvements. Student success has clearly increased in a number of areas. What may remain or change will completely depend on the next Superintendent and other officials in the top administrative offices. Having Dr William Hite, current Deputy Superintendent, move into the Interim Superintendent position in December should help with the transition and successes during the remainder of this school year No doubt there will be some changes, and these will certainly have to be watched!

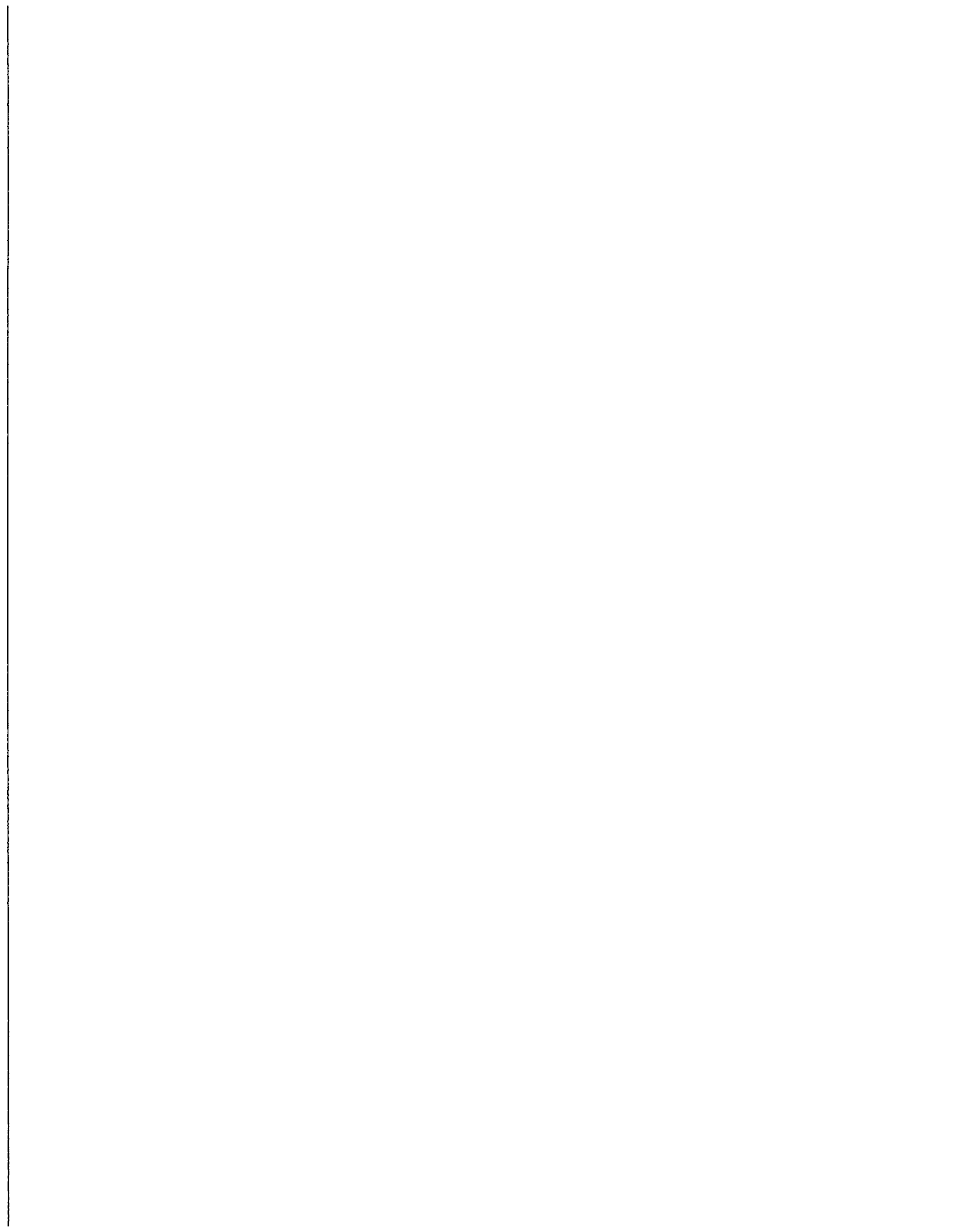


CONCLUSION

A number of priorities mentioned in this report indicate that changes have been implemented or are needed, with the recommendation to ‘watch” for improvements, successes and/or challenges. The system has been looking into reconfigurations and redevelopment of programs, especially targeted to raising achievement at the middle school level, but with the change in Superintendent, and the current fiscal climate, many proposals may be on their way back to the drawing table. The funding issues are pressing and not likely to go away in the near future, as the economic situation across the country is extremely serious, and will definitely influence what happens with education decisions at all levels.

The passage of the slots referendum should, presumably mean fewer cuts down the road but will not, by any means, solve the current funding crisis. It will be very important for the City to be watchful of the direction fiscal issues will take at all levels, and how these will effect the education of our students. The Superintendent Search process needs to be monitored in the hope that the successful candidate will move the system forward with continued positive programs and needed improvements.

The City’s positive support for local schools is greatly appreciated by them. The bottom line, locally is that schools located in Bowie are making progress and will, hopefully continue to do so, in spite of the many challenges that face them!



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November 17, 2008

Appendix





Meeting the Maryland Testing Requirement for Graduation & the Bridge Plan to Academic Validation

Marylanders want it. Teachers built it. Students can do it!

What is the Maryland testing requirement?

For a student who entered the 9th grade in or after the 2005-06 school year to graduate from high school with a Maryland High School Diploma, he/she must meet the testing requirement as well as meet the State course requirements, service learning requirements, and local graduation requirements.

How can a student meet the testing requirement?

There are three options to meeting the testing requirement, as follows:

- 1) **Pass each of the four High School Assessment (HSA) tests** – algebra/data analysis, English, biology and government. These tests are generally taken in the 9th and 10th grade. There are two potential substitutions:
Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) Tests – For students who have earned a score approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on the HSA-related AP or IB test
Modified HSA – An alternative test for students with disabilities who meet the specific participation criteria based on their IEP process
- 2) **Combined-Score Option** – A student would need to earn a combined total of 1602 points across the four exams to meet the testing requirement. This option allows students to offset lower performance on one test with higher performance on another.
- 3) **Bridge Plan for Academic Validation** – A student who has not passed an HSA after taking the test twice and meets eligibility criteria, including locally-administered or approved assistance, can complete one or more project modules in the content area. The projects modules will be submitted to a local review panel and the local superintendent for approval.

What criteria will a student have to meet to be eligible for the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation?

A student who has not passed an HSA test after two attempts would be eligible for the Bridge Plan if he/she:

- ♦ participated in locally-administered or approved assistance;
- ♦ passed the HSA-related course;
- ♦ is making satisfactory progress toward graduation.

When can a student begin the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation?

Local school systems determine when a student may begin work on a Bridge Plan.

Will the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation be easier than taking an HSA test?

No. The Bridge Plan is a series of challenging projects linked to the Core Learning Goals tested by each HSA. Once a student is deemed eligible by the local school system to participate in the Bridge Plan, he/she must complete one or more projects as determined by the student's highest HSA score in a specific content area.

What happens once a student is eligible for the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation?

A designated school staff member will meet with the student and parent/guardian to design an Academic Validation Project Package. The Academic Validation Project Package includes a number of forms that indicate which project module(s) the student must complete, the assigned work period, and the assigned project monitor. The forms also verify that the student's Academic Validation Project Package will meet the core values of academic integrity.

Who will review and approve the individual student project?

Once a student completes his/her Academic Validation Project Package, a local review panel, established by the local school system, will review the materials and provide a recommendation to the local superintendent. The local superintendent will conduct a final review for approval or refusal of the student's work.

How does the local superintendent's decision effect the student?

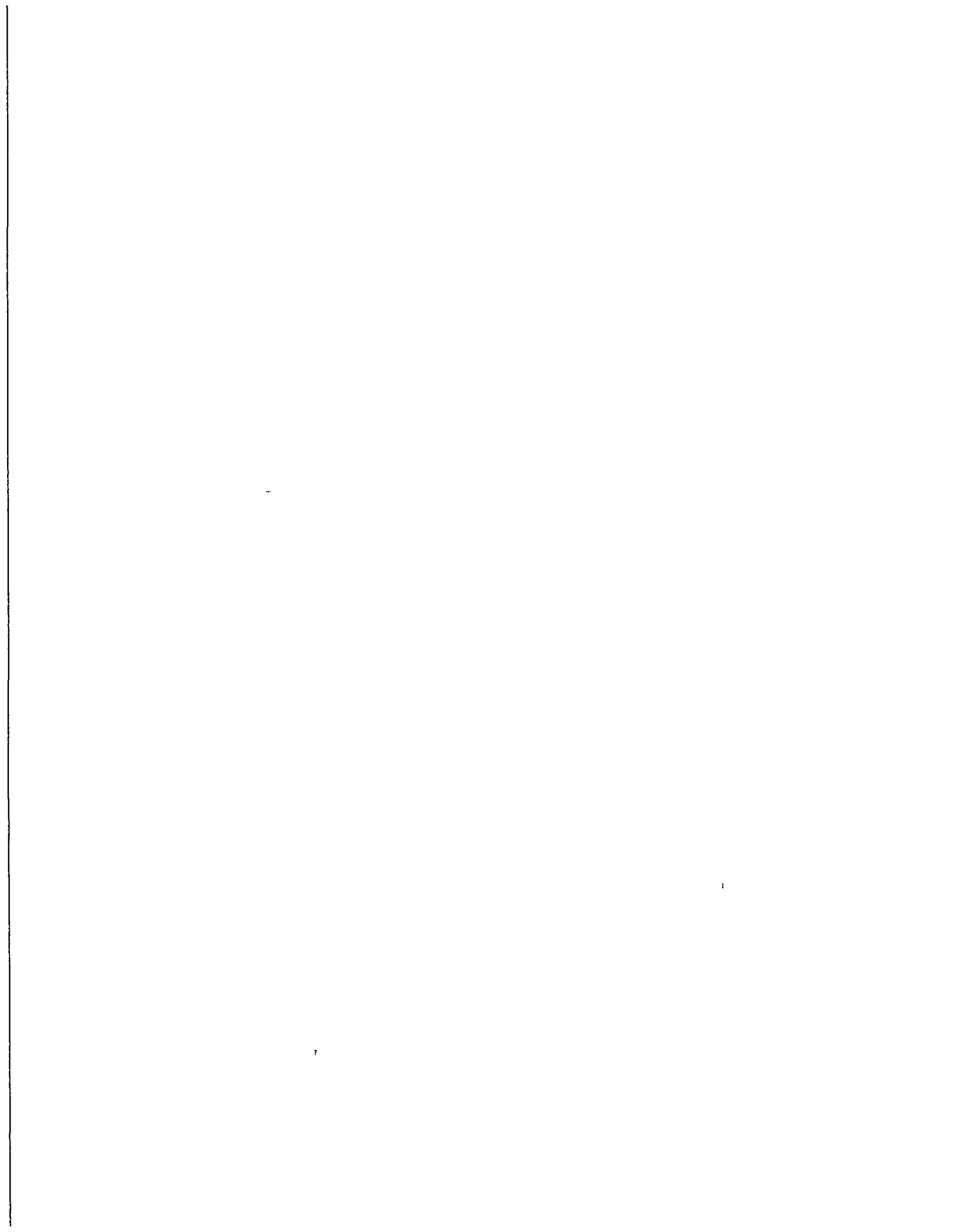
If the Academic Validation Project Package is approved, the student will have met the testing requirement for the specific HSA. If the Academic Validation Project Package is refused, written feedback will be provided to the student so he/she can continue work on the Project Package and resubmit at a later date. A student can also submit an appeal of a local superintendent's refusal in writing to the State Superintendent.

Are there alternative paths to meeting the testing graduation requirement?

Yes. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recognizes that Maryland has a diverse population of students with diverse needs. The Modified HSAs (Mod-HSAs) are being developed for a small portion of students with disabilities. The Mod-HSAs are based on the same course content as the HSAs, but the question format may be altered.

Visit **HSAexam.org** for more information or call **1-877-HSA-EXAM**







John E. Deasy, Ph.D
Superintendent of Schools

August 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO All Chiefs
All Elementary and Middle School Principals
All Zone Executive Directors
All Zone Office Staff

FROM John E. Deasy *John E. Deasy*

RE New Zone Office Reconfigurations

The Board of Education has adopted a Theory of Action for change. "Managed Performance Empowerment," Board Policy 0119 provides the framework to drive forward and align goals, strategic plans, policies, budget, administrative actions, and the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan.

Within this Theory of Action, central administration must accept responsibility for directly managing the district's core business, teaching, and learning, within flexible parameters that balance accountability with empowerment according to the needs and performance of individual schools. This Theory of Action holds tight standards, measures, and outcomes while providing earned discretion over budget, staffing, and other identified areas once principals meet school performance targets and receive training specific to leading autonomous schools. Believing in the value of empowerment by all schools and by all stakeholders, we will substitute the term autonomy for empowerment.

The Autonomy Zone will include schools that are likely to benefit and flourish as a result of increased autonomy over key aspects of school operations. Mrs. Kathleen Kurtz and her staff will collaborate with schools to develop a vision for this type of leadership. This office will also use the information learned from this effort to strengthen our work with all principals through the School Leadership and Professional Development Office.

Autonomy is awarded to elementary and middle schools that have demonstrated high degrees of academic success by meeting the following criteria.

- School is not designated beyond Year II School Improvement;
- A school that met or exceeded 66.7% (or 67%) of its growth targets for both SY2007 and SY2008,
- A school that met 50% of its growth targets in SY2007 and at least 66.7 (or 67%) of its growth targets in SY2008,
- A school that had an average of 66.7% (or 67%) when the targets for SY2007 and SY2008 **were averaged** and trending upward (that is, the lower score was in SY2007).

2

The following schools have met the criteria.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Kathy Kurtz Nancy Gean, Secretary Gwynn Park MS 8000 Dyson Road, Room 100 Brandywine, MD 20613 301-372 3431/301-372-3435 (fax)</p> | |
| <p>Avalon ES Beltsville ES Berkshire ES Berwyn Heights ES Bond Mill ES Brandywine ES Columbia Park ES Flintstone ES Francis Scott Key ES Forest Heights ES Fort Washington Forest ES Gladys Noon Spellman ES Glenarden Woods ES Heather Hills ES Hollywood ES Indian Queen ES James Ryder Randall ES Kenilworth ES</p> | <p>Kingsford ES Marlton ES North Forestville ES Oakcrest ES Phyllis E. Williams ES Pointer Ridge ES Potomac Landing ES Rockledge ES Scotchtown Hills ES Seabrook ES Seat Pleasant ES Skyline ES Suitland ES Tulip Grove ES University Park ES Whitehall ES William W Hall ES</p> |

Another group of schools receive a designation because of the options they provide for students. These schools require an application and selection process. The classification for schools within this category is the Opportunity Zone. The Office of New Small Schools will support schools within this zone. Dr Derek Mitchell will provide leadership for the Opportunity Zone. This office will also contain the responsibilities for pupil accounting and school boundaries.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Derek Mitchell Sharon Mack, Secretary 14201 School Lane, Room 211 Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 301-952-6772/301-952-7891 (fax)</p> | |
| <p>EXCEL Public Charter Imagine Foundations Public Charter John Hanson French Immersion John Hanson Montessori Judith P. Hoyer ECC</p> | <p>Lincoln Public Charter Robert Goddard French Immersion Robert Goddard Montessori Thomas G Pullen Turning Point Academy</p> |



Schools not listed in the autonomy or opportunity zones will be designated geographically into one of six zones. The following provide the names and contact information for each zone office and Executive Director

| | |
|---|--|
| Marilyn Moreno, Zone 1 Cathy Croley, Secretary 6251-A Ammendale Road Beltsville, MD. 20705 240-264-1700/240-264-1710 (fax) | |
| Adelphi ES Buck Lodge MS Calverton ES Carole Highlands ES Cesar Chavez ES Cherokee Lane ES Chillum ES Cool Spring ES Frances R. Fuchs ECC Hyattsville ES Hyattsville MS | Langley Park-McCormick ES Lewisdale ES Martin Luther King, Jr MS Mary Harris "Mother" Jones ES Mt. Rainier ES Nicholas Orem MS Ridgecrest ES Rosa L. Parks ES Thomas S. Stone ES Vansville ES |

| | |
|--|---|
| Andy Zuckerman, Zone 2 Maxine Hall, Secretary 6251-A Ammendale Road Beltsville, MD 20705 240-264-1700/240-264-1710 (fax) | |
| Beacon Heights ES Bladensburg ES Carrollton ES Charles Carroll MS Deerfield Run ES Dwight D Eisenhower MS Greenbelt ES Greenbelt MS James E. Duckworth James H. Harrison ES Lamont ES Laurel ES | Margaret Brent Montpelier ES Oaklands ES Paint Branch ES Port Towns ES Riverdale ES Robert Frost ES Rogers Heights ES Springhill Lake ES Templeton ES William Wirt MS |



| | |
|--|--|
| Helen Coley, Zone 3 Marsha Bowie, Secretary 1801 McCormick Drive, 3rd Floor Largo, MD 20774 301-618-4540/301-614-4550 (fax) | |
| Ardmore ES Carmody Hills ES Catherine T Reed ES Chapel Forge ECC Cooper Lane ES Cora L. Rice ES Dodge Park ES G James Gholson MS Gaywood ES Glenn Dale ES Glenridge ES High Bridge ES Highland Park ES | James McHenry ES John Carroll ES Judge Sylvania W Woods, Sr ES Kenmoor ES Kenmoor MS Magnolia ES Matthew Henson ES Robert R. Gray ES Samuel Ogle MS Thomas Johnson MS William Paca ES Woodridge ES Yorktown ES |

| | |
|--|--|
| Michael Glascoe, Zone 4 Melissa Covington, Secretary 1801 McCormick Drive, 3rd Floor Largo, MD 20774 301-618-4810/301-618-4821 (fax) | |
| Andrew Jackson MS Benjamin Tasker MS Bradbury Heights ES C. Elizabeth Rieg Capitol Heights ES Concord ES District Heights ES Doswell E. Brooks ES Drew Freeman MS Edgar Allan Poe ES Ernest Everett Just MS H. Winship Wheatley ECC John Eager Howard ES | John H. Bayne ES Kettering ES Kettering MS Lake Arbor ES Longfields ES Northview ES Perrywood ES Samuel P Massie ES Thomas Claggett ES Walker Mill MS William Beanes ES Woodmore ES |



| | |
|--|--|
| David Scuccimarra, Zone 5 Linda Knott, Secretary Oxon Hill Staff Development Center 7711 Livingston Road, Suite F Oxon Hill, MD 20745 301-749-5238/301-749-5246 (fax) | |
| Allenwood ES Arrowhead ES Benjamin D Foulois ES Benjamin Stoddert MS Clinton Grove ES Francis T Evans ES Hillcrest Heights ES J Frank Dent ES James Madison MS Jessie B Mason Mattaponi ES | Melwood ES Middleton Valley ES Morningside ES Patuxent ES Princeton ES Rosaryville ES Samuel Chase ES Stephen Decatur MS Tanglewood Thurgood Marshall MS Waldon Woods ES |

| | |
|---|--|
| Janice Briscoe, Zone 6 Ruth Boyles, Secretary Oxon Hill Staff Development Center 7711 Livingston Road, Suite F Oxon Hill, MD 20745 301-749-5238/301-749-5246 (fax) | |
| Apple Grove ES Baden ES Barnaby Manor ES Eugene Burroughs MS Fort Foote ES G Gardner Shugart MS Glassmanor ES Gwynn Park MS Henry G Ferguson ES | Isaac J Gourdine MS Overlook ES Owens Road ES Oxon Hill ES Oxon Hill MS Panorama ES Rose Valley ES Tayac ES Valley View ES |

Also included, for your information, are maps which show the new configuration of all elementary and middle schools by zone.

JED:WRH.am

Attachments

C Dr William R. Hite





Sponsored by
Prince George's County Executive Jack B. Johnson
Prince George's County Police Department
Prince George's County Board Of Education
Prince George's County Public Schools
Prince George's Chamber of Commerce

Call **301-333-4000** to Report Truant Students

All calls remain anonymous
and confidential



*Go to School -
it is the law!*

Unlawful absences may result in jail.
All students have to attend school until they turn 16 years.





HOW TO

Address Questions and Concerns

A guide for Parents and Guardians

Parents are encouraged to direct their concerns to the persons most closely involved. However, when initial contacts fail to provide resolution, a parent may file a formal complaint and seek review at a higher administrative level.

| TYPE OF CONCERN | STEP 1 | STEP 2 | STEP 3 | STEP 4 |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Academic Concerns Curriculum Materials of Instruction Grading Policies | Classroom Teacher Parent Liaison | Professional School Counselor Assistant Principal Principal | Zone Office or High School Consortium | Division of Academics |
| Administration Concerns & Policy/ Procedures | School Administration (Assistant Principal, Principal) & Support Team (Professional School Counselor, Professional School Nurse, Pupil Personnel Worker, Parent Liaison) | Zone Office or High School Consortium Instructional Specialist Director Executive Director | Deputy Superintendent Superintendent | Board of Education |
| Guidance College Admissions Family Concerns Social/Emotional Concerns Student Transcripts | Professional School Counselor | School Administration & Support Team | Division of Student Services | Zone Office or High School Consortium |
| Health and Medical Concerns | Professional School Nurse (School Based) | Nurse Manager of School Zone | Health Services Specialist for School Zone | Supervisor of Health Services |
| Homeless | Principal | Homeless Office | Office of Appeals | Board of Education |
| School Staff Member Concerns | School Administration | Zone Office or High School Consortium | | |
| Special Education Concerns | Classroom Teacher Special Education Teacher Special Education Chair Professional School Counselor | Assistant Principal Principal | Assistant Supervisor for Compliance Zone Office or High School Consortium | Compliance Officer Director of Special Education |
| Transportation | Assistant Principal Principal | Transportation Office | Zone Office or High School Consortium | |
| Tuition Waivers | Office of Pupil Accounting and School Boundaries | Office of Appeals | Board of Education | |
| LEVELS OF APPEALS | | | | |
| Short Term Suspension | Principal (requests suspension of 1-10 days) | Pupil Personnel Worker (review) | | |
| Long Term Suspension | Principal (requests suspension 10 days) | Superintendent's Designee (holds suspension reference) | Board of Education | |
| Expulsions | Principal (requests expulsions) | Superintendent's Designee (holds expulsion reference) | Board of Education | |
| TRANSFERS | | | | |
| Before & After Care Transfer | Principal | Office of Student Records and Transfers | Office of Appeals | Board of Education |
| General Transfer | Office of Student Records and Transfers | Office of Appeals | Board of Education | |

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION
Help your child to **SPEAK UP** and report potential acts of violence, threats, weapons, or other safety issues. The safety of your school depends on all of us. All calls remain anonymous and confidential. 301-499-9222.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
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Ron L. Watson, Ph.D., *Vice-Chair*
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Amber P. Waller
Edward P. Burroughs, III,
Student Member
John E. Deasy, Ph.D.,
Superintendent of Schools and Secretary/Treasurer

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

| | | | |
|--|--------------|--|-------------------|
| Academics | 301 952-6280 | Security Services | 301 499-7000 |
| Adult Ed./Evening HS | 301 985-2126 | Special Education | 301-817-3142 |
| Alternative Educational Options | 301 985-2126 | Student Affairs/Safe & Drug Free Schools | 301-749-4426 |
| Appeals | 301 952-6196 | Student Services | 301 952-6384 |
| Before & After School Care | 301-408-5593 | Student Records (Copies of diplomas, graduation certification) | 301 952-6366 |
| Board of Education Office | 301-952-6308 | Student Transcripts | 301 952-6024 |
| Bus Transportation | 301 952-6570 | Currently rolled | your school's web |
| Career & Technology Education | 301-749-4519 | Alumni | 301 952-6024 |
| Child Find | 301-808-2719 | Student Transfers | 301 952-6366 |
| Choice/Option Schools | 301-925-2392 | Summer School Programs | 301 985-2126 |
| Council of Prince George's County PTAs | 301-408-5539 | Superintendent's Office | 301-952-6008 |
| Early Childhood Support (PreK - K) | 301-808-4000 | Test Administration | 301 430-5801 |
| English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Prog. | 301-445-8450 | TTD Services/Hearing & Speech Impaired | 301 952-6068 |
| Enrichment & Specialty Programs | 301 952-6044 | | |
| Family & Community Outreach | 301 925-2531 | | |
| Guidance Services | 301 567-8670 | | |
| Head Start | 301 408-7100 | | |
| Health Services | 301-749-4722 | | |
| Homeless Programs | 301 925-2482 | | |
| International Student Guidance Office | 301-445-8460 | | |
| New Schools & Charter Schools | 301 952-6010 | | |
| Pupil Accounting & School Boundaries | 301 952-6300 | | |
| Pupil Personnel Services | 301 567-8669 | | |
| Psychological Services | 301-431-5630 | | |
| | | Executive Directors' Offices | |
| | | High School Consortium | |
| | | (all inquiries regarding your high school) | 301 583-1600 |
| | | Zone 1 | 240-264-1700 |
| | | Zone 2 | 240-264-1700 |
| | | Zone 3 | 301-618-4540 |
| | | Zone 4 | 301-618-4540 |
| | | Zone 5 | 301-618-4810 |
| | | Zone 6 | 301-749-5238 |
| | | Zone 7 | 301-749-5238 |

