

CLARKSBURG CLUSTER

Clarksburg High School
Rocky Hill Middle School (split articulated)
Neelsville Middle School (split articulated)

Clarksburg Elementary School
Fox Chapel Elementary School
Little Bennett Elementary School
Capt. James E. Daly Elementary School
William B. Gibbs, Jr. Elementary School
Cedar Grove Elementary School (split articulated)

Thank you President Brandman, Members of the Board of Education (BOE) and Dr. Starr, for giving us this opportunity to provide input on the Superintendent's recommended FY 2013 Operating Budget on behalf of the Clarksburg Cluster.

The Clarksburg Cluster supports the recommended budget from Dr. Starr. We feel that it is critical to meet Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements, so that the quality of education provided to MCPS students does not erode further. We also understand that creating this budget was extremely challenging considering the difficult economic circumstances we face. Therefore, we truly appreciate Dr. Starr and his team's efforts and hard work.

On the other hand, we are not satisfied with simply meeting MOE level which has been "rebased" at an even lower level. We all know that MCPS has earned the reputation of being one of the best school districts in the nation and as State Senator Raskin said in a recent article in the Gazette, "education is the lifeblood of Montgomery County." Therefore, we hope and trust that the BOE members and Dr. Starr will continue to do their best to uphold our well-earned reputation and we, parents, will continue to work with you all.

Regarding the Superintendent's recommended FY2013 Operating Budget, we understand that the reductions affected mainly Central Services and not school-based staff. We are somewhat relieved by this since it minimizes the direct impact on the classroom. However, we still have some concerns. One major fact has to be considered for our cluster - we have grown 490% since 2000 based on the most recent US Census data, causing 3 of our 9 schools to be grossly overcrowded and more than 50% of our schools are currently over capacity. Therefore, besides the importance of having new schools in Clarksburg, we also need appropriate allocations of staff to support our growing student population. I have attached a table showing you the current enrollment numbers as of Jan. 10th and the projected enrollment as reported on the most recent published Capital Budget and 6-year Capital Improvement Programs master plan.

Based on the feedback we got from our cluster schools, we are all very concerned that if additional cuts are made, the following positions may be at risk: staff development teacher, guidance counselor, reading specialist, our high school APPS/specialty programs staff, and School Resource officer (SRO).

Staff Development Teachers are very important to implement a rigorous curriculum and to maintain onsite, ongoing professional development. For all grade levels, the recent implementation of the Common Core Standards and the recent rollout of Curriculum 2.0 at the elementary schools are major concerns. We do agree that the Curriculum 2.0 and the Common Core Standards are steps in the right direction of having a rigorous curriculum that fosters student engagement, which will hopefully lead to high-order learning. According to Phillip Schlechty in the book he wrote “Creating Great Schools, Six Critical Systems at the Heart of Educational Innovation”, this high-order learning is absolutely required for effective living in the 21st century. However, we are disappointed with how the rollout of Curriculum 2.0 is being implemented. The classroom teachers are essentially learning how to teach Curriculum 2.0 on the job as they teach our children, making everyone involved “guinea pigs”. All six elementary schools in our cluster are maximizing their current resources in implementing Curriculum 2.0, and 2 out of the 6 schools are very concerned about how they will effectively implement it next year with the addition of this new curriculum in the second grade when they only have a part-time (0.5 FTE) staff development teacher.

Another concern is non-classroom, school-based support staff such as **Guidance Counselors**. We believe the counselor plays a crucial role in creating a positive “school climate” and without adequate school counseling services, many children who struggle with overwhelming anxiety; depression and other emotional difficulties will not be able to cope with the demands of an academic environment, which will significantly hinder their learning.

A final concern of the Clarksburg Cluster remains the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. Recent events like the flash robberies in Germantown should be seen as an early warning sign of issues to come. We need the SROs on our school grounds to help prevent similar occurrences in the future. *(Please see below for a detailed list of our cluster schools’ concerns and needs for FY2013)*

In closing, we all agree that the quality of education in Montgomery County is its lifeblood, and so we should focus our efforts on constantly improving MCPS and the education it provides, which benefits all sectors of the county primarily both current and future generations of our residents.

Respectfully submitted-
Janet Sanchez, Todd Powell, and Seenu Suvarna
MCCPTA Clarksburg Cluster Coordinators

Clarksburg Cluster's List of Operating Budget Needs/Concerns for FY2013

Clarksburg ES

- Increase Staff Development Teacher (currently 0.5 FTE) to support rollout of Curriculum 2.0
- Increase Reading Specialist to support increased ESOL population

Cedar Grove ES

- Increase Staff Development Teacher to 1.0 FTE to support rollout of Curriculum 2.0 to 2nd grade

"Cedar Grove Elementary requests an increase in staffing to support increased enrollment and continued implementation of 2.0. Presently, the school has no Assistant Principal and only a 0.5 Staff Development Teacher and a 0.5 Reading Specialist. The Staff Development Teacher and Reading Specialist both support the K and Grade 1 teachers in their planning for Curriculum 2.0. This involves previewing content and materials, facilitating extended planning sessions, securing additional books and other materials, and developing assessments and monitoring systems, since those are not part of the new curriculum. As we moved to a half-time staff development teacher, we were charged with prioritizing her responsibilities. Curriculum 2.0 was our first priority and takes up quite a bit of her 20 hours/week. The reading specialist also helps plan and create materials, etc.

when the cut in staffing was initially implemented in FY 2010, Cedar Grove Elementary had 300 students. Presently the enrollment is over 400 and is expected to go over 500 for the next school cycle. If Cedar Grove is to successfully implement 2.0 into the 2nd and 3rd grades, the staff needs to be increased to support the Initiative and increased school population.

Cedar Grove just can't successfully add two more grade levels to the new 2.0 curriculum with our current resources."

- Have our Reading Specialist restored to 1.0 FTE for curriculum and intervention needs.

Fox Chapel ES

- Keep the Staff Development Teachers
- Keep the SRO program

William B. Gibbs, Jr. ES

- Maintain the Staff Development Teacher to support rollout of Curriculum 2.0
- Increase Counselor support due to increased enrollment and student needs, we currently have 756 students. To help better understand the situation, here's a list of some of the things our counselor does:

1. One guidance lesson per class per month (28 classes total)
2. Social Skills, Divorce, and other student groups that he meets with weekly
3. Lunch Bunches with Students
4. Individual student counseling daily
5. Attending staff meetings monthly
6. Supporting teachers and collaborating with them on social skill development of students and ways to maintain positive classroom environments
7. Attending instructional leadership team meetings twice per month
8. Chairperson of the PBIS team that meets monthly
9. Created and is monitoring a walking/jogging club at recess for students K-5 with incentives and necklaces with tokens
10. Collaborating with classroom teachers on creating behavior contracts and collecting and analyzing the contract data to determine effectiveness.
11. Supports families in need economically and emotionally by constant communication, arranging for Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and gifts.
12. Organizes donation of gifts, food, and clothing and drops off these items at Germantown Help throughout the school year.
13. Coordinates all 504 programs that students have within the school and chairs those meetings.
14. Presents 504 information and process at staff meetings to all staff.
15. Attends IEP screening meetings (two days per month) and presents the parent questionnaires.
16. Coordinates and attends the Gator Academy one time per week after school to provide tutoring for students in grades 3-5 that have not demonstrated proficiency on the MSA or are projected to not meet proficiency.

Little Bennett ES

- Keep full-time Staff Development Teacher
- Keep 1.5 FTE counselor allocation to support our increasing enrollment
- Need an additional 0.5 FTE attendance secretary to support our rapid growing enrollment and additional record keeping responsibilities. Current enrollment is 882 students.

Rocky Hill MS

- Keep Staff Development Teacher - crucial to the continued success of the teachers and of student success
- Keep and increase SRO program

“I understand the fiscal restraints that the county is under and my request would be that we be able to retain the programs we currently have without additional cuts. My biggest resource is

my staff development teacher. My goal is to help students engage themselves in rigorous education. We need to help students apply their knowledge. The staff development piece helps me give teachers the capacity to transform the way students learn and how they apply what they learn.”

Clarksburg HS

- Keep Staff Development Teacher - crucial to the continued success of the teachers and of student success

- Continue support for the signature programs and coordinator/.4 FTE (CAPS and APPS) - without these programs and the coordinator we cannot continue to increase student academic success and the success of the special education program/students

- Obtain a dedicated SRO for the High School - crucial to maintaining a safe and healthy environment and providing on-site deterrent for students

- Continue support for maintenance staff - as enrollment increases the maintenance staff is challenged to keep up with the demands of maintaining the building in the great condition currently in existence, any cut would be detrimental to this effort

School	Actual	2011-12 Projections		Capacities		%	Projected 1 year		2 year		3 year		4 year		5 year	
		Projected	Diff	Capacity	Diff											
Clarksburg HS	1,892	1,818	74	1,566	326	121%	1916	122%	1970	126%	1950	125%	1843	118%	1885	120%
Rocky Hill MS	995	1,024	-29	944	51	105%	963	102%	1004	106%	1048	111%	1203	127%	1275	135%
Neelsville MS	861	865	-4	897	-36	96%	856	95%	857	96%	871	97%	905	101%	976	109%
Clarksburg ES	265	263	2	290	-25	91%	273	94%	291	100%	323	111%	343	118%	372	128%
Cedar Grove ES	431	422	9	423	8	102%	427	101%	468	111%	513	121%	558	132%	575	136%
Capt. Daly ES	566	579	-13	473	93	120%	597	126%	610	129%	611	129%	612	129%	624	132%
Fox Chapel ES	590	592	-2	601	-11	98%	592	99%	599	100%	604	100%	597	99%	603	100%
Wm Gibbs ES	756	741	15	747	9	101%	722	97%	720	96%	732	98%	722	97%	724	97%
Little Bennett ES	884	886	-2	673	211	131%	956	142%	1018	151%	1057	157%	1058	157%	1066	158%
Totals	7,240	7,190	50	6,614	626	109%					New ES		HS Addition		New MS	