


Office of the Chief Operating Officer
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

December 4, 2008

MEMORANDUM

To: Principals

From: Larry A. Bowers, Chief Operating Officer 

Subject: Additional Budget Expenditure Restrictions

Since September 16, 2008, when expenditure restrictions were imposed, staff has cooperated and provided the support that will enable us to identify savings to be used to fund the FY 2010 operating budget. Unfortunately, the outlook for the county's economy and potential operating budget revenue has become significantly worse. The County Council requested all agencies, including Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), to identify greater savings for the current year that can save jobs and services next year. MCPS has been asked to save at least \$19.4 million.

As a result of these economic and fiscal forecasts, it is necessary to take additional steps to reduce both short-term and long-term fiscal commitments. The additional restrictions detailed below are effective immediately. Previous expenditure restrictions remain in effect through the end of the fiscal year.

A summary of the new restrictions on schools follows:

Summary of New Restrictions

- Classroom teacher and elementary counselor vacancies may be filled by long-term substitutes. Other teacher vacancies, including secondary counselor positions, are frozen and require a freeze exception to be filled with a long-term substitute.
- Special education teacher, speech pathologist, and occupational/physical therapist positions are not frozen.
- Security assistants in middle schools, special education paraeducators, interpreters, and lunch hour aide positions may only be filled with temporary employees.
- Building service managers, school administrative secretaries, and security team leaders may be filled by higher level assignments, but backfilled vacancies are frozen.
- All other positions are frozen.
- Staff development substitute time is frozen. Staff development substitutes cannot be paid after December 5, 2008.

- Supplemental employment other than that guaranteed by the contract and stipends other than extracurricular (Class 1, 2, or 3) are frozen. This includes hours allocated by the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs for signature, magnet, or special projects. Teachers who have been allocated these hours must be informed of the freeze so that no additional hours are worked. All hours completed prior to December 5, 2008, must be reported by the December 19 payroll.
- Collaborative planning time in the 11 middle school reform schools requires an approved exception.
- Spending of instructional materials funds allocated to schools can continue for purchasing instructional materials for students, media materials, textbooks, and training materials.
- Building services supplies are exempt from the freeze.
- All Copy Plus orders are exempt from the freeze.
- All School Improvement Plan (SIP) and Professional Learning Communities Institute (PLCI) expenses, including substitutes, stipends, and materials, are frozen. All work completed prior to December 2 must be submitted for payment by the December 19 payroll. Materials expenses that have already occurred must be submitted for reimbursement by December 19, 2008.
- Travel expenditures that are the result of negotiated agreements may proceed only if specific travel commitments have been made. Other requests will require an approved exception. No additional commitments can be made prior to obtaining approval.
- All other travel and conference commitments, including those paid by SIP and PLCI funds, are frozen. Employees must not arrange travel expenditures or make commitments to participate in out-of-state conferences unless the travel has been previously authorized. Any arrangements made after this notification will not be honored.
- Expenditures for dues, registrations, and subscriptions require an approved exception.
- All furniture and equipment purchases are frozen unless there is an approved exception.
- All existing approved activity bus requests will continue as planned. No additional requests for activity buses will be approved.

Grants

1. Expenditures for nonbudgeted grants (i.e., competitive grants that have no local component) are exempt from expenditure restrictions. These grants must be spent according to the terms of the grant. Project managers should check with their budget specialist to determine if a grant falls within this category.
2. Budgeted grants that have a local component (i.e., grants that include locally funded expenditures as part of the budgeted program) are subject to expenditure restrictions. These grants also must be expended according to the terms of the grant, but all expenditures not otherwise exempt under the provisions listed above must be scrutinized for opportunities to shift local expenditures to the grant. Grant managers must request exceptions to authorize

expenditures in these grants, unless otherwise exempt, and show why it is not possible to shift locally funded expenditures to the grant.

Exception Process

The process for obtaining freeze exceptions remains the same. Principals must submit requests to their community superintendent. Until exceptions are approved, no expenditure should be made that would conflict with these criteria.

I want to thank you for your cooperation. These expenditure restrictions are absolutely essential to maintain the high quality of instruction for all of our children despite continuing severe fiscal constraints.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Nicola Diamond, executive assistant, Office of the Chief Operating Officer, at 301-279-3463 or me.

LAB:vnb

Copy to:

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Ms. Woodburn
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