



Committee: Joint
Committee Review: At a future date
Staff: Craig Howard, Deputy Director
Purpose: To receive testimony – no vote expected
Keywords: MCPS

AGENDA ITEM #6
July 21, 2020
Public Hearing

SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the FY21 Operating Budget, Montgomery County Public Schools, \$250,000 for the Mental Health Program to Support Schools (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

The County Council will hold a public hearing on a special appropriation to the FY21 Operating Budget, Montgomery County Public Schools, \$250,000 for the Mental Health Program to Support Schools. The source of funds is General Fund Reserves.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- The Board of Education requested this appropriation on June 29, and it was introduced by the Council on July 14.
- On June 18, Councilmembers Rice and Albornoz sent a letter to the Superintendent of Schools requesting that MCPS examine funding and programmatic options to increase mental health services to students as it works on the 2020 school year recovery plan.
- As part its approved FY21 budget, MCPS plans to implement a pilot program to provide mental health services to identified students. MCPS is planning a service model in which school-based staff members, including the school counselor and psychologist, may refer students who require additional mental health services to a community agency with which MCPS has an established partnership and agreement. MCPS anticipates providing these services at no cost to students.
- This appropriation will be used to expand the planned pilot program and double the number estimated number students who will receive services, from 270 to 540.
- A joint Education & Culture and Health and Human Services Committee worksession is scheduled for July 23.

This report contains:

Draft Special Appropriation Resolution	©1-2
Board of Education Request (June 29, 2020)	©3-5
Letter from Councilmembers Rice and Albornoz (June 18, 2020)	©6

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Resolution No.: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

By: County Council

SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the FY21 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Public Schools
Mental Health Program to Support Schools, \$250,000
Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves

Background

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. The Board of Education has requested a special appropriation of \$250,000 for the Montgomery County Public Schools' FY21 Operating Budget for a Mental Health Program to Support Schools:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000	General Fund

3. This appropriation is needed to provide additional mental health support to students during the 2020-21 School Year.
4. Notice of public hearing was given and the public hearing was held.
5. The County Council declares this request is in the public interest to be acted upon without delay as provided for under special appropriation requirements described in Article 3, Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

A special appropriation to the FY21 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Public Schools is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000	General Fund

This is a correct copy of Council action.


Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

June 30, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Marc Elrich, County Executive
The Honorable Sidney A. Katz, President,
Montgomery County Council

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Transmittal of Board of Education Agenda Item #9.16

Recommended Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Appropriation for the Mental Health Program to Support Schools

BOE Meeting Date:	June 29, 2020
Amount:	\$250,000
Type of Action:	Approval

JRS:MVN:RR:ear

Attachment

Copy to:


Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

June 29, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Jack R. Smith, Superintendent of Schools 

Subject: Recommended Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Appropriation for the Mental Health Program to Support Schools

Recommendation in Brief

Authorization is requested to receive and expend, subject to County Council approval, a Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 supplemental appropriation of \$250,000 for Montgomery County Schools to expand planned support for promoting and fostering mental health.

Background

MCPS recognizes the increasing need for additional and more intensive mental health supports for students in schools. The COVID-19 pandemic causing school closures has led to more than 164,000 Montgomery County students being isolated in their homes. The need for mental health services likely is to increase and the effects of the resulting trauma will be felt for years. MCPS acknowledges the need for greater access to mental health services for students and families who may not have the independent means to acquire such supports.

MCPS is proposing a model of service in which school-based staff members, including the school counselor and psychologist, may refer students who require additional mental health services to a community agency with which MCPS has an established partnership and agreement. Referrals to this agency will be based on objective, systematically collected baseline and progress data to ensure that students are appropriately referred. Referrals for service will be made after students receive MCPS Tier 1 and Tier 2 services, resources, and intervention with no significant effect on their progress. Based on specific, identified data points, school-based staff members may make an informed decision for Tier 3, or targeted interventions as such intensive supports cannot be provided by student services personnel or existing partner service agencies.

In collaboration with other local education agencies, staff in Office of Student Support and Family Support and Engagement is developing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit bids from community agencies to provide mental health services to identified students, beginning fall 2020, for a specified contracted amount. Currently, OSFSE staff is considering use of a portion of the Contractual Services funds budgeted for FY 2021 in the amount of \$250,000 for the payment of these services, allowing

families to receive services at no cost to them or to supplement costs for families who do not have Medicaid or private insurance. In addition, some areas of the county continue to be underserved by community mental health providers and the need for support is compounded by the lack of public transportation. MCPS will begin with a pilot number of schools in various areas of the county, where students are in most need of additional services that may not be readily accessible to their families. Identified and contracted agencies would be assigned to a school, to reduce the impression or reality of competition amongst agencies for students as patients. Currently, MCPS is working through logistics, such as student privacy and coordination with special education services to ensure a comprehensive approach to providing the mental health services.

Use of Funds

Funds will be used for a pilot program to provide targeted mental health services to students. Based on the typical caseload of a therapist and the average number of sessions needed per student, it is estimated that the per student cost for therapy services is approximately \$750 to \$1100, allowing MCPS to provide an additional 270 students with much needed intensive mental health services with the supplemental appropriation of \$250,000. These additional funds from the Montgomery County Council would allow for additional schools to be partnered with a mental health agency and double the number of students served beyond the MCPS budgeted funds.

Recommended Resolution

WHEREAS, The need for increased mental health services is likely to rise as a result of COVID-19-related school closures; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools will be able to provide targeted mental health supports to approximately 270 additional students who would not otherwise be able to access such services; and

WHEREAS, An initiative has been developed to contract services with an approved, licensed mental health agency to provide mental health services to students in schools; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the superintendent of schools be authorized to receive and expend, subject to County Council approval, a supplemental appropriation of \$250,000 for the award of contracts for targeted mental health services for students; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the county executive and County Council; and be it further

Resolved, That the county executive be requested to recommend approval of this resolution to the County Council.

JRS:MVN:RR:ear



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

June 18, 2020

Dear Dr. Smith:

We know that over these last few months, our school system and our students have had a significant amount of change and upheaval thrust upon them in a very short time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, we are in the midst of a very powerful and impactful time as we address the systemic issue of racism and the need for reform. Both can exacerbate feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, and isolation amongst our students.

We applaud MCPS for recognizing and enhancing its mental health services within our schools. Be Well 365 is an example of emphasizing the need for promoting and fostering mental health as well as physical health and the expansion of services. While tremendous strides have been made, we know more will be needed to adequately address the needs of our students.

To this end, we would like to work with you on this effort to enhance our mental health personnel in our schools. As MCPS works on its 2020 school year recovery plan, this seems a good time to address this need and increase our cohort of mental health professionals in our schools in order for our students to have the services they need to support their academic growth.

We look forward to hearing from you in regard to what MCPS feels is needed to increase our counselors and other mental health personnel in our schools for this Fall, and the funding that would be required.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Craig Rice in black ink.

Craig Rice
Councilmember, District 2

Handwritten signature of Gabe Albornoz in black ink.

Gabe Albornoz
Councilmember, At-Large