

Response to Questions on the FY 2013 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Cook

Question: What is the expenditure for the Middle School After-School Program, and what fee would need to be imposed to make it budget-neutral?

Response: The County-funded expenditure for the Middle School After-School (MSAS) program totals \$3.26 million. The Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) funds another \$0.78 million, bringing the total program expenditure to \$4.04 million.

FCPS offers Middle School After-School programs at all 26 public middle school in the County. The program was initiated as a core component of the Board of Supervisors' efforts to reduce gang presence in the community. The MSAS program is a key element in both the school and County's initiatives to not only combat gangs but to improve student behavior, improve academic performance and develop healthy and successful youth. As such, significant effort was put into encouraging participation among as many middle school youth as possible. The decision not to implement a fee from the beginning of the program was a part of those efforts.

The 2011-12 school year MSAS registration totals 23,437 students. Of that number, 12,234 students attend the program at least twice per week and are considered regular attendees.

To make the MSAS program budget-neutral for both the County and FCPS given current registration levels, an approximate fee of \$172 per student per year would be required. To recover the County-funded expenditure, an approximate fee of \$139 per student per year would be required.

However, given roughly half of those registered students attend on a regular basis, it is prudent to utilize the regular attendees to provide a glimpse of what may occur if a new fee is implemented. Assuming only those that attend regularly would remain in the program post-implementation of a new cost recovery fee, an approximate fee of \$330 per student per year would be required to fully recover the cost of the program. To recover the County-funded expenditure, an approximate fee of \$266 per student per year would be required.

Please note that fee collection would be an issue as the system is not set up currently to administer program membership fees. This would need to be discussed by both partners (County government and FCPS) to determine the specifics of creating the process of collecting revenue, determining who collects it and deciding where it goes, etc. Additional administrative resources would be needed.