

# Response to Questions on the FY 2014 Budget

**Request By:** Supervisor Foust

**Question:** What are the costs and benefits of maintaining, reducing or eliminating the following:

1. Administrative Intern Program (\$1 million)
2. “Locally funded” portion of the video production group (\$3.8 million)
3. eCART
4. Extended teacher contracts (\$3.5 million)
5. Consulting and other expenses for professional training, facilitators, and speakers (over \$10 million).

**Response:** The following response was prepared by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS):

## **1. Administrative Intern Program**

The Administrative Intern Program is a key part of FCPS’ Administrative Succession Plan. Under the guidance of highly-qualified mentor principals, each of the ten interns serve as a member of a school-based administrative team at two schools during a school year. This job embedded professional development provides real-life, real-time experiences for the intern and provides additional support for schools.

The administrative intern curriculum is designed and delivered by Professional Learning and Accountability’s Office of Leadership Development, in collaboration with the principals of host schools. Interns are selected through a competitive panel process and leave their schools or central office positions to assume the duties of an intern. Nearly all the cost of the Administrative Intern Program is to pay 10 teachers to replace each intern for the year of his/her internship.

FCPS has hired 261 administrators from October 2009 through April 2013 (177 Assistant Principals; 84 Principals), indicating an ongoing need for highly qualified leaders in FCPS’ schools. The Administrative Intern Program has a 10-year history of producing successful assistant principals, principals, and assistant superintendents.

This program is designed following the research of Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos, 2009. With the “graying” of the baby boomer generation, now more than ever, FCPS must continue to prepare administrators for its leadership positions.

## **2. “Locally funded” portion of the video production group**

The Multimedia Services program in the Department of Information Technology provides enterprise-wide services in video production, cable television distribution, multimedia design, logistics and event support, online and face-to-face training, multimedia content for instruction, and media outreach to schools. It should be noted that the \$3.8 million for the “locally funded” portion of the video production group referenced

in the question in fact reflects the entire Multimedia Service Center's operating budget. The video production group represents funding in the amount of \$0.3 million.

The description of the services provided with the \$3.8 million from the operating fund and the impact of eliminating these funds follow:

### **Digital Media Production**

- Television and video production services to meet the requirements of the instructional, public information, and staff development programs. Some of this programming is distributed nationally and attracts major grants. More than 780 video projects are produced annually.
- Live coverage of School board meetings and work sessions. Archived video streams of past meetings and work sessions
- 24/7 live streaming of FCPS Channel 21. In FY 2012, FCPS video streams were accessed 259,058 times (school board meetings accessed 63,041 times)

Without operating funds, live video streaming of FCPS Channel 21 (public information programming, school board meetings) and archived (on-demand) streaming of board meetings, work sessions, public information programs, and Best Practices for Teaching and Learning videos would be cut. Additionally, support video production for public information, instruction and staff development would be reduced by 25%.

### **Multimedia Design**

- Professional design services for more than 1,500 projects annually including those for instruction, assessment, and professional development
- Video graphics for public information, instructional and staff development and training programming including online courses
- Presentation graphics for meetings, in-service training, conferences, school board meetings
- Photography services for all Multimedia products; photography support for events

Without the operating budget, Multimedia Design services would be reduced by more than 80 percent. Photography support would no longer be provided for design, event or web support. Services impacted would include design and creation of instructional and assessment materials, public information material, custom online courses for teacher training, and support for the FCPS public web and intranet sites.

### **Multimedia Engineering**

- Support for the design, specification, procurement, installation, repair, and support services for video infrastructure, production equipment, video streaming, fiber, satellite, and mobile systems.
- Management of all televised School Board meetings and engineering for special events is also provided. Support is provided enterprise-wide for major video infrastructure and school production facilities.

Without the operating funds, support to the technical FCPS production and cable distribution facilities would be reduced by 40 percent. Support to schools for design and installation of TV production facilities, and support for videoconferencing would not be provided. Support for remote production facilities at Luther Jackson MS, Gatehouse Administration Center, and the electronic classroom at Hayfield Secondary School would be reduced.

### **Logistics and Master Control**

- Management of master control for FCPS' six-channel cable network, audio/video duplication, and satellite receive systems. Over 30,000 hours of programming broadcast in FY 2012 including 360 hours of televised Arabic I,II and III classes.
- Master control is also linked to remote studios at the Luther Jackson School Board Room, and distance learning classrooms and videoconferencing systems throughout FCPS, at the National Air and Space Museum's Udvar-Hazy Center, and at Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens.
- Management and oversight of the logistical support for over 200 mission-critical events annually, such as Leadership Conference, enterprise wide in-services, public forums, boundary and other community meetings, staff development conferences, and special commemorative events.

Without operating funds, Logistics and Event support would be cut by 50 percent, reducing support for county in-services, principals meetings, community engagement events, and school events. Audio and video duplication services to the schools would no longer be provided.

### **Media and Training**

- Management and delivery of online educational multimedia content to schools to support instruction. Media and Training budget funds the annual licensing fee for this video service where teachers downloaded over 274,000 videos for classroom use in FY 2012.
- Professional resources to FCPS teachers through outreach operations such as the Teaching Materials Preparation Center (TMPC). This service, which is accessed daily by teachers, provides quality consultation and instruction, as well as access to equipment and materials required to meet individual and school needs. Over 4,200 visits (in person and online service requests) in FY 2012.
- Management and delivery of online technology training for FCPS personnel, a key component in FCPS departmental professional development plans providing skills development training via the Internet that is available to all FCPS employees. The Media and Training budget funds the annual contract with SkillsSoft to provide online courses. Over 46,000 employees accessed these courses in FY 2012.
- Management and delivery of face-to-face technology training for FCPS personnel. Over 100 courses in Microsoft Office and Adobe applications were offered to FCPS staff in FY 2012.
- Cable programming, procurement, and distribution of instructional programming throughout the enterprise, as well as national outreach through the Fairfax Network. FCPS programming was distributed to over 16,000 schools in North America in FY 2012,

Without the operating funds, support to classroom instruction via digital streaming media would not be provided. Teachers would no longer have access to a facility to produce instructional materials such as posters, displays, and classroom videos. Technology integration consulting to schools and support for school TV studios would not be provided. Technology training (online and face-to-face) would no longer be offered to FCPS staff.

### 3. eCART

eCART, which provides teachers with curriculum, assessments, resources and tools for teaching and learning, is a key component of the technology-enhanced instructional model used in FCPS that enables differentiated instruction, reinforces learning, and addresses individual needs of students. eCART also supports the work of collaborative teams. eCART is used to deliver assessments, resources, and programs of studies for more than 170 different curricular areas. Usage of the eCART tool has grown every year since the tool was introduced divisionwide.

eCART includes a Curriculum Repository used to manage and share the program of studies, assessment items, and instructional resources. Currently the repository includes the standards, benchmarks, and indicators for more than 170 content areas (subjects), 13,984 instructional resources (including lesson plans), and 34,492 assessment items. eCART also includes the Horizon assessment system that provides for teacher-created, as well as, district-created assessments. In school year 2011-2012 students completed 3,419,751 assessments—only 16 percent were district mandated assessments. Further, EDSL eCART provides for the longitudinal data reporting of student assessment results in alignment with the standards, benchmarks, and indicators. In 2012, teachers and staff accessed EDSL eCART dashboards and reports 64,520 times.

Elimination or reduction of the program would have the following impacts:

- a) **Teacher work load would further increase:** eCART provides teachers access to curriculum, resources, and assessments that support teaching and learning. Without this tool, teacher work load would increase because teachers would be forced to look multiple places for resources. Additionally, the use of data for formative assessment would require significantly more effort to analyze and respond to. Teacher efficiency and productivity would be reduced because they would be forced to spend time determining if they have the most up to date programs of studies and instructional resources.
- b) **Student achievement may be affected:** eCART provides students with access to information on their performance on eCART assessments. This data helps students to take ownership of their learning and results in increased student learning. Without this tool, student achievement may drop because students would not have easy access to information about assessment results.
- c) **Support for schools would decrease:** With the eCART tool, FCPS is able to easily respond to school need. Recently schools requested Technology Enhanced Items to use with students. Instructional Services was able to respond, develop these resources, and deliver them to schools through eCART. Without eCART in place, this type of responsive support would not be possible.
- d) **Curriculum updates would become very burdensome to teachers and instructional personnel:** The Virginia Department of Education has a seven-year revision cycle for state standards of learning. This requires FCPS to update programs of studies and related assessments and resources. eCART tools allow FCPS to update programs of students, realign centrally provided resources and assessments to the new standards, and update teacher created questions to the new programs of studies through automated processes. Without eCART in place, implementing curriculum updates would require significantly more effort by people throughout the school division.

- e) **Management of FCPS intellectual property would be difficult:** eCART serves as a central repository for FCPS intellectual property. Without eCART, FCPS would not have a central system to manage FCPS intellectual property, which would result in inefficient content management.

The eCART budget covers the costs for the Curriculum Repository, Horizon, and EDSL eCART. The budget is differentiated between recurring maintenance funds necessary to use eCART and development funds to cover enhancements requested by the schools. The maintenance and development budgets are detailed below.

The annual maintenance and support budget for FCPS eCART effective in FY 2013, including budgeted positions, is \$2,769,332. The annual maintenance budget breaks down as follows:

- Hosting and maintenance costs for FCPS eCART applications: \$1,350,118
  - Horizon assessment application hosting and maintenance
  - eCART Resource Search and Retrieval tool software maintenance
  - EDSL eCART data warehouse and reporting application software maintenance
  - Curriculum Repository software maintenance
- Application support staff funding: Hourly - \$110,086
- Processing assessment results for the more than 670,904 paper and pencil assessments administered: Contracted - \$103,700
- Printing and distribution of over 130,000 booklets supporting the two district assessment administrations each year: Contracted - \$65,000
- Budgeted positions with benefits:
  - 4.0 Instructional Services FCPS 24/7 Learning curriculum area specialists: \$577,329
  - 1.0 Instructional Services eCART Program Manager: \$171,444
  - 1.0 PLA psychometrician supporting assessment and assessment item analysis: \$131,680
  - 2.0 IT technical specialists providing support for EDSL eCART: \$259,975

In addition to the annual maintenance budget, there is \$989,857 for development. The development budget addresses mandatory overhaul of the curriculum to align with the Standards of Learning, as well as enhancements requested by the schools. The FY 2013 development budget breaks down as follows:

- Instructional Services curriculum development to align with state standards and to refresh assessments and instructional resources for the new school year: \$350,000
- Curriculum Repository enhancements to support new question types that students will experience on SOL tests and to provide a more “Google-like” instructional resource search: \$136,229

- EDSL eCART enhancements to support reporting longitudinal assessment results by elementary class enrollments and current class roster, to provide enhanced dashboards to support cumulative standards, benchmarks, and indicators performance, and provide reports on teacher-scoreable assessments: \$351,180
- Northrop Grumman and Blackboard support for the items above: \$152,448

The total FY 2013 budget, including maintenance and development, is \$3,759,189.

In addition, Project Management Oversight Committee (PMOC) funding of \$372,022 was used in FY 2013 to support eCART; however, this funding is not part of the annual eCART budget. PMOC funding is not dedicated to a specific project and may be allocated to other initiatives in future years.

#### **4. Extended Time for Teachers**

The FY 2014 budget includes \$3.5 million to extend teachers' time to support their collective work building professional learning communities that employ best practices to close the achievement gap. On FCPS' 2012 Working Conditions Survey, "time" was the most frequent response to the question "Which aspect of working conditions is most important to you in promoting student learning?" This additional time will benefit students and teachers by increasing the time available to FCPS teachers. This initiative was reduced from \$6.5 million in the proposed budget to \$3.5 million in the advertised budget to fund a FECEP expansion. Further reducing or eliminating this initiative will limit efforts to build professional learning communities and provide no improvement in teacher working conditions.

#### **5. Consulting and other expenses for professional training, facilitators, and speakers**

Other professional services represents when FCPS hires an external organization to provide a professional service to FCPS. Of the \$16.4 million budget in FY 2014, \$15.5 million in this category is for information technology support for systems such as eCart, data services, enterprise application integration, network support, software support, and the student information system; payments to the County for school nurses; costs associated with the Early Identification Program and Pathway to Baccalaureate partnerships with George Mason University; maintenance contracts for the financial and human resource systems; and costs associated with the applied Behavioral Analysis program and the individualized education program (IEP) online program.

The remaining \$0.9 million is for professional training and development. Professional development is important because it fosters the emergence of forward-thinking, excellent leaders through cultivating and empowering FCPS employees. Programs are standards based and focused on best practices in leadership, remaining current with changing technologies and emerging trends in education.