

Response to Questions on the FY 2011 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Cook

Question: What is the per child cost for the School-Age Child Care program? If we retain the current sliding fee scale for households with incomes of less than \$50,000 what fee adjustments would be necessary to make the program cost neutral?

Response: The School-Age Child Care (SACC) program provides child care services to children in elementary schools throughout the County. The SACC program provides the following services:

School Year SACC

The SACC school year program is offered on a schedule that corresponds to the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) schedule so that parents are able to work full-time. There are three components to the school year SACC program:

- Before School – 7:15 a.m. until school begins;
- After Kindergarten – End of morning kindergarten until the end of school day; and
- After School – End of school day until 6:15 p.m.

Currently, all but six elementary schools have a school year SACC program. It should be noted that funding has been requested for a SACC program at Mount Eagle Elementary School. If this request is funded, only five elementary schools in the County would be without a SACC program.

Spring and Winter SACC

The spring and winter SACC programs are offered at consolidated sites throughout the County and correspond to the vacation schedule of FCPS. All centers operate from 7:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. daily.

Summer SACC

Weekly sessions are offered at consolidated sites throughout the County. All centers operate from 7:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. daily.

Fees are collected from parents as payment for SACC services. These fees are determined based on general program costs and are assessed on a sliding scale adjusting for household income. As a result, 75 percent of the program's cost is recovered. Costs not recovered through fees cover only the difference between the full fee and the reduced fees charged to families with low incomes and the above average cost of providing services for children with special needs. In other words, parents currently paying the full fee are covering the cost of providing SACC services to their child or children.

In FY 2009, actual expenditures were \$39.3 million offset by revenues of \$28.7 million for a net cost to the County of \$10.6 million. In order to make the program cost neutral a number of options could be considered. One option would be to apply the rate increase to only those families with an Adjusted Household Income of \$50,000 and over. In this option a 44 percent increase is required. This fee increase would apply to all SACC services. Using the school year SACC program as an example, full paying families with one child in the After School program would pay \$128 more per month for services.

A second option would be to apply the rate increase to all income levels on the sliding fee scale. In this option, a fee increase of 37 percent would be applied to all income levels. This fee increase would apply to all SACC services. Using the school year SACC program as an example, full paying families with one child in the After School program would pay \$107 more per month for services. The table below illustrates potential rate impacts to all three components of the school year SACC program. Please note that the current rate for the Adjusted Household Income of \$50,000 and over represents the actual cost per child; however, if rates were increased to recover the full cost of the program, families with Adjusted Household Income of \$32,000 and over would be paying a higher rate than the actual cost per child.

Standard School Year 2009-2010 Monthly Fee Schedule¹

Adjusted Household Income	Before School (1 Child)		After Kindergarten (1 Child)		After School (1 Child)	
	Current Rate	Including 37% Rate Increase	Current Rate	Including 37% Rate Increase	Current Rate	Including 37% Rate Increase
\$50,000 and over	\$131	\$179	\$290	\$397	\$290	\$397
\$45,000 - \$49,999	\$128	\$175	\$284	\$389	\$284	\$389
\$40,000 - 44,999	\$125	\$171	\$276	\$378	\$276	\$378
\$36,000 - 39,999	\$116	\$159	\$250	\$343	\$250	\$343
\$32,000 - 35,999	\$106	\$145	\$230	\$315	\$230	\$315
\$28,999 - 31,999	\$93	\$127	\$208	\$285	\$208	\$285
\$25,000 - 27,999	\$85	\$116	\$187	\$256	\$187	\$256
\$22,000 - 24,999	\$66	\$90	\$146	\$200	\$146	\$200
\$18,000 - 21,999	\$47	\$64	\$105	\$144	\$105	\$144
\$14,000 - 17,999	\$26	\$36	\$72	\$99	\$72	\$99
\$13,999 and below	\$7	\$10	\$11	\$15	\$11	\$15

¹ Since fees are already set to recover the program costs, making such an adjustment would represent a departure from the current policy of only charging parents the actual cost of the SACC services.

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