

## Direct From the Superintendent: FY 2011 Budget



Our schools continue to provide an excellent education to all students. Despite fiscal challenges and budget reductions, we hope that students will continue to achieve at the levels of recent years. Although FCPS received nearly \$50 million in federal stimulus funding, FCPS needed to implement \$171 million in budget reductions and cost avoidances, which included the elimination of 788 positions, to balance the budget for this school year. FCPS' employees continue to provide excellent services for all our students; however, with cuts in staff, program reductions are unavoidable.

Unfortunately, as we develop the budget for fiscal year 2011 (next school year), we are projecting that, without additional revenue, **FCPS will need to make significantly more reductions for next school year**. To begin the budget planning discussions for next year, FCPS and Fairfax County held community dialogue meetings. We have also gathered feedback on budget priorities from our employees. With a deficit this significant, we will be reviewing each of FCPS' programs with the possibility of increasing class sizes further, discontinuing full-day kindergarten except in very high-need schools, adding new student fees for activities and for Advance Placement and International Baccalaureate tests, eliminating foreign language instruction in elementary schools, eliminating elementary band and strings, reducing school-based technology specialists, and implementing an additional five percent reduction to central office support. These are just examples of the magnitude of the reductions and decisions that may be made. No decisions have been made at this time.

Let me note that our **cost per pupil is in the middle of metropolitan Washington school systems**, and \$2,000 less than Montgomery County Schools in Maryland. Our percentage of nonschool-based management positions to total positions is the lowest in the area at 0.89 percent (next lowest is Montgomery County at 1.1 percent). Our school system is recognized nationally (and even internationally) as one of the very best, and we are doing this—with the help of great parents, who support us—while doing a lot more with a lot less than other excellent school systems. But we cannot keep cutting forever without undermining our success.

In this issue is a [link to a planning calendar for the FY 2011 budget](#). As you will note on this calendar, after I release the proposed budget in early January, the School Board will hold public hearings in late January, and the Board of Supervisors will hold public hearings in April.

I urge you all to contact state and local officials with your views about revenues and their effects on the budget. I look forward to the support of the Fairfax community as we work together to develop the school system budget in a far from ideal economic climate.

**Jack Dale, Superintendent of Schools**

*Article taken from Family Gram Fall 2009*