

Profile of the Baltimore County Public Schools

The mission of the Baltimore County Public Schools is to provide a quality education that develops the content knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable all students to reach their maximum potential as responsible, life-long learners and productive citizens. This mission, along with specific indicators of progress and attainment strategies, is outlined in the *Blueprint for Progress*, the strategic document that will serve as the framework for the development of the Master Plan. The *Blueprint for Progress* was recently revised and expanded to include indicators which address the new federal and state standards included in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, *Visionary Panel for Better Schools: Achievement Matters Most*; and the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act*.

BCPS is the 3rd largest school system in Maryland and the 23rd largest in the United States. Based on the official census count for Baltimore County as of April 1, 2000, the population age 5-18 was 143,696. (Based on data provided by the MSDE in September 2002, approximately 30,000 Baltimore County children are enrolled in private and parochial schools.) While extrapolation of the data from the census would indicate that the school age population is expected to decrease slightly, public school enrollment has continued to increase. The Baltimore County Public Schools official enrollment count for 2002-2003 is more than 108,600 students. Current projections by the BCPS Office of Strategic Planning indicate that student enrollment will hold steady or increase slightly for the next five years. By the year 2011, the student enrollment will be nearly 110,000. (Student enrollment data disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity are included in the appendix of this document.)

The students of the Baltimore County Public Schools are served in 162 schools, including 103 elementary schools, 26 middle schools, 24 high schools, five special education schools, and four alternative schools. BCPS staff maintains nearly 15.5 million square feet of building space and over 3,700 acres of playing fields, sidewalks, and parking lots. BCPS has 17,000 employees including 8,200 teachers, making it one of the largest employers in the region. BCPS will serve nearly 10.5 million nutritious school lunches and breakfasts in school cafeterias this year and log nearly 14 million miles transporting students in a fleet of over 760 buses.

BCPS is dedicated to providing a quality, comprehensive educational program that meets the needs of a diverse student population. Based on a review of student achievement data overtime, it is clear that more BCPS students are achieving at higher levels than ever before on many different measures of success. (Graphs of student achievement disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity are included in the appendix of this document.)

- More than 75% of BCPS high school graduates continue their education at two or four-year colleges and universities or at trade or business schools.
- BCPS students excel on the Maryland Functional Tests of reading, mathematics, and writing, meeting or exceeding standards for the fifth straight year.

- BCPS remains at or above the national median on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills in nearly every tested area.
- Student participation rates on the SAT exceed the national average, and combined SAT math and verbal scores have soared in the last two years, exceeding the national mean average.
- In 2003, thirty-two BCPS students scored in the top ½ of 1% on the PSAT and earned National Merit Finalist status
- In *Newsweek's 100 Top High Schools*, eight of our 24 high schools were included.
- Student pass rates on Advanced Placement tests exceed the global passing rate.
- Attendance rates for grades 1-12 exceed the state standard of 94%, and the dropout rate of 2.6% is at its lowest level since 1998 and below the state standard of 3%.

Vision for the Future

Our vision for the future is based on the belief that all students can and will learn and achieve when they are provided with a rigorous curriculum, highly qualified teachers, and proven strategies for learning. The development and full implementation of the BCPS Master Plan will enable us to align all aspects of the educational process and to assure equity and adequacy of resources by linking resources to student needs. The results will be accelerated student achievement, the elimination of all student achievement gaps, and graduates who meet high standards and have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to reach their potential as responsible, productive citizens in a global economy and multicultural society.

BCPS graduates achieve success in post-secondary education and in a variety of career fields, becoming productive, responsible, and successful adults. However, we must do more to ensure this outcome for all children, particularly those who have fewer resources and greater challenges and who have historically been shut out of college and career because they lack the high level skills to be successful. Children who live in poverty, children for whom English is a second language, children of color, and others must have access to the same academic rigor and quality instructional program as children in more affluent communities or in families with greater resources.

In order to meet the learning needs of all students, BCPS provides a range of programs and services:

- Since 1995-96, BCPS has concentrated Title I resources in schools with poverty rates of 50% or higher. Since that time, the number of schools being served through Title I dollars has doubled. In 2003-04, forty-four (44) schools will be served because their rates of student eligibility for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) has reached or exceeded the 50% threshold.
- BCPS magnet schools serve over 12,000 students in 47 different programs for elementary, middle, and high school students.
- A full range of special education services is provided in the least restrictive environment to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities.

- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is provided for all English Language Learners not meeting English proficiency levels.
- Alternative schools offer intensive support and specialized programs for students who are unable to achieve success in the traditional school environment.
- Over 20,000 adult volunteers and partners in education support the instructional program and students and teachers in all schools.

BCPS spends an average of \$7,521 per pupil for instructional costs, student services, transportation, operation expenses, and administrative costs. Funding from national, state, and local government makes up our annual budget. The BCPS Combined Revenue and Expenditure Budget for FY2003 is \$989.6 million as divided among the following categories:

- \$807.9 M General Fund
- \$ 24.9 M Debt Service Fund
- \$ 28.8 M Enterprise Fund
- \$ 97.5 M Special Revenue Fund
- \$ 35.6 M Capital Projects Fund

The General Fund total is composed of 68% from county funds, 31% from the State of Maryland, and 1% from tuition and other fees. Of the General Fund expenditures, 68% are assigned to wages and salaries. The BCPS budget is aligned with the goals of the school system and identifies the human and fiscal resources needed to provide the children of the Baltimore County Public Schools with the education they will need to be successful in further education, career, and community.

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ORGANIZATION



