



Wednesday, May 19, 2010 5:30 pm

Budget Settlement Reached

MCPS Furloughs Averted

Dear Colleagues,

After weeks of discussions, the leadership of MCPS reached an agreement with the County Executive and County Council today on the MCPS budget for the 2010-11 school year. MCEA, MCAAP, SEIU Local 500, the Board of Education and the Superintendent all remained firm throughout the discussions that MCPS employees would not be furloughed. The agreement reduces the MCPS budget by an additional \$24.4 million beyond that proposed by the County Executive. The County Council took a straw vote today (an indication of its intentions) and the recommended MCPS budget passed unanimously. There were no additional public calls for furloughing of MCPS employees.

The additional cut will include \$19.7 million from the operating budget and \$4.7 million from the capital budget, which funds construction and technology. The MCPS Budget Committee, which includes representatives of the three MCPS unions, will meet to make recommendations to the Board of Education as to how the additional cuts will be absorbed. We are confident that the additional cut can be absorbed without resorting to furloughs.

Make no mistake - these cuts, on top of the \$137.7 million that the County Executive already cut from next year's school budget - will have an impact. Our top priority, as always, will be to protect the jobs of our members.

The Council also took votes today on a number of tax increases. On a narrow 5-4 vote, they approved the proposed Emergency Medical Service Transport fee to charge insurance companies for county ambulance service – like most of our neighboring jurisdictions. They also voted in favor of increasing the cell phone tax and the energy tax. Although no one likes tax increases, without these steps, the cuts to programs and services in MCPS and the other county agencies would have been even greater.

The County Government and the Board of Education will be going to a hearing in front of the State Board of Education on Tuesday (5/25) to request a waiver from the state maintenance of effort requirement, so MCPS doesn't lose the \$51 million in increased state aid that we are counting on. The State Board is expected to issue its decision in June.

Again, as difficult as this budget crisis is, it appears that we have been able to prevent the furloughing of MCPS employees. We will keep you informed of any further developments.

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