

Success for Every Child: A Nationwide Endeavor

New Law

When President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) into law in January 2002, he set in motion sweeping changes in the realm of public education. No state, no school system, no classroom is exempt from the profound implications of this far-reaching legislation, which redoubles the federal government's role in education.

The No Child Left Behind Act's goal: To close the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged, disabled and minority students and their peers

"It is impossible to argue with the act's fundamental purpose: To close the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged, disabled and minority students and their peers," according to Dr. Jack Dale, superintendent of Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS). "That's more than noble — it's essential."

The law's hallmarks are increased flexibility in how schools can use federal funds and greater accountability for student performance. The act stipulates that all 50 states set new standards for achievement in reading and math. It directs schools to show that all subgroups of students are making adequate yearly progress and requires annual tests to determine achievement gains in grades 3 through 8. It offers greater choice for parents when their

children aren't making progress and calls for highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals in the nation's classrooms.

NCLB also specifies that every state, district and school will issue a "report card" starting in 2002-03 that conveys performance data by race, income, gender, English proficiency and disability.

For details about NCLB, visit www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02, or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

New Tests

Walkersville Middle School teacher Janine Kosmack (left) is one of thousands of teachers nationwide whose students will be tested in a new way starting as early as this spring.

For several years, the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (known as MSPAP) has been the yardstick by which school systems throughout the state measured school performance. Now Maryland joins other states across the country in introducing new testing programs that meet the conditions of NCLB.

"Tests are good indicators of whether or not students have mastered the curriculum, but effective instruction doesn't change because a test has changed. And the concepts and skills students must learn remain the same," Ms. Kosmack says. "When a teacher uses the best instructional practices, discusses strategies with colleagues and meets the needs of each student, everything falls into place — no matter what test is administered."

States must also establish adequate yearly progress targets for schools. All students must show improvement toward these targets and, in 12 years, achieve proficiency in reading and math.

Learn more about the new tests on page 4.



New Opportunities

Like other school districts across the United States, FCPS is working closely with our state education agency to implement NCLB. "We are already well ahead of the curve in terms of standards and accountability," said FCPS Superintendent Jack Dale. "Now it's a matter of gearing up to meet the letter of the law. Expectations are high. But the possibilities and promise are vast."

Two 2002 documents give Maryland and FCPS a decided strategic and fiscal edge: *Achievement Matters Most* and *The Bridge to Excellence in Public Education Act*. The former is a pre-k-12 public education plan that fulfills recommendations made by the Maryland State Department of Education's Visionary Panel for Better Schools. The latter is a Maryland General Assembly act designed to increase state aid to public schools by \$1.3 billion over the next six years. Of the \$2.2 billion total, 74% will be distributed according to a formula that gives comparatively more funding to the poorer of Maryland's 24 school

The Bridge to Excellence in Education Act means \$41 million in state aid for Frederick County over the next six years.

districts than the wealthier districts. The formula assumes county governments will continue to fund local operating budgets, which cover salary increases and cost of living adjustments, at levels at least consistent with 1997-99.

Under the multi-year Bridge to Excellence plan, Frederick County stands to receive \$41 million in state money. The act gives FCPS more spending flexibility. But we must develop a five-year master plan describing how the resources will be

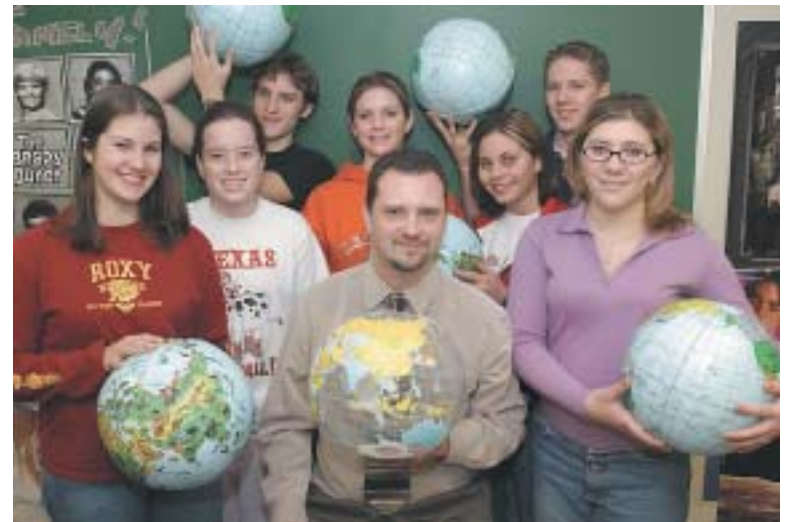
allocated to meet the state's performance standards. And we must offer full-day kindergarten by 2007-08 — at a cost of about \$8.5 million — and pre-kindergarten for all at-risk children.

Maryland's 2002 Teacher of the Year Darren Hornbeck (right) — who teaches sociology at Frederick County's Linganore High School —

Strategies to Improve Education

FCPS has begun drafting a five-year master plan that outlines local goals, strategies, measures of achievement and an implementation time line tied to NCLB and Maryland's plan. Due October 2003, it will incorporate input from the community gathered over the next several months. Among the emerging strategies:

- Reduced class size
- Full-day kindergarten at all elementary schools
- Pre-kindergarten for all at-risk children
- Expectations, guidance and courses that direct all students toward college
- Free PSAT testing for all high school sophomores
- Ongoing textbook replacement cycle
- Equitable funding for media center books and equipment
- Expanded programs for students with limited English proficiency
- More time for teachers to train and work with colleagues and students
- An 11-month contract for new teachers to provide more training
- More reading specialists, guidance counselors, psychologists, pupil personnel workers and other student support staffing

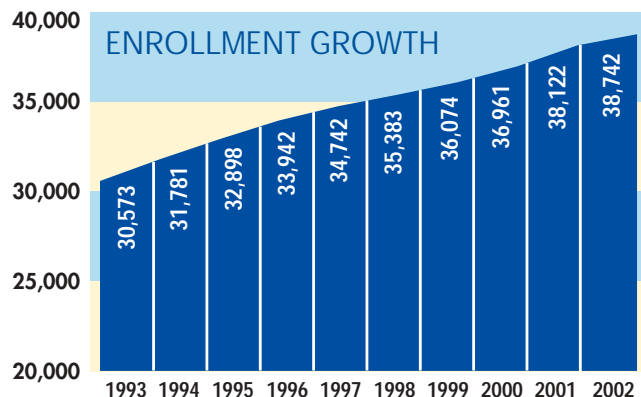


ranks among the staunchest supporters of the Bridge to Excellence Act. "Ours is one of the few states in the nation that has done the research to find out what it really takes to provide a quality, fully funded education for all our children," he said. "There is no better investment."

Meeting the Challenge: FCPS

Enrollment: 38,742

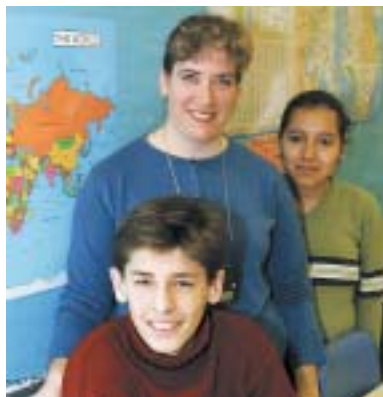
- Pre-K & Kindergarten – 3,364
- Elementary School – (grades 1-5) 14,599
- Middle School – (grades 6-8) 9,198
- High School – (grades 9-12) 11,225
- Special Schools & Programs – 356



Demographics – 84.2% White, 9.5% African American, 3.5% Hispanic, 2.6% Asian, 0.2% American Indian, Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander

Gifted & Talented – 40% in grades 1-5 enrichment/acceleration, 1.8% in elementary magnet schools; 53% in middle school honors/enrichment; 42% in grades 9-12 honors classes; 34.5% in grades 11-12 Advanced Placement; 1.8% in grades 9-12 concurrently enrolled in college/university

Low Income – 12% of students come from homes whose family size or income guidelines qualify them for free or reduced-price meals



NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

Of the county's 672 non-native students who receive instruction in the English language, 33 from 14 different countries attend Julie Matthews' (left) classes at West Frederick Middle School. "A large part of my role is to help my students become comfortable in their new surroundings — to understand our school, the 'ins and outs' of American culture and how to fit in," she says. "But I also encourage them to have pride in themselves, their uniqueness and their ability to teach their classmates about the world." The FCPS "ESL" population is growing faster than any other Maryland district's. 44 native languages are represented systemwide, with Spanish, Korean, Chinese and Russian predominating.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

4,536 students — or nearly 12% of FCPS enrollment — receive special education services, 317 in special programs or schools. Special education teacher Jen Aylor (right) makes every effort to "create a nurturing learning environment that conveys trust" for her students at Monocacy Middle School. She says, "All my students are unique individuals with different experiences."

In 2001-02, FCPS spent an average of \$7,370 – or \$40.94 per day – to educate each student.

SCHOOL MEALS

Food Service Fund – \$8.6 million (federal and state funds and income from selling meals reimburse FCPS for the cost of school meals)

Served Daily – 13,632 lunches; 2,020 breakfasts

Full Price Student Lunch – \$1.50 elementary, \$1.75 secondary

Reduced-Price Student Lunch – 40¢

Cost of Lunch to FCPS – \$3.10

Federal and State Subsidies – average 88¢ per meal

New Menu Items – Personal pizzas, ham & cheese "shaker" salads, made-to-order wraps and calzones

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Buses – 407

Riders – 31,967

Drivers – 360 regular, 75 extra

Bus Assistants – 50

Field Trips – 6,000 per year

Miles Traveled – 34,888 per school day, 6.3 million miles per school year

Bus Cost - \$49,394

STUDENT SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

Guidance Counselor to Student Ratios – 1:543 elementary; 1:393 middle; 1:334 high

Psychologist to Student Ratio – 1:1,884

Health Room Visits – 1,659 per day average, 48% for medication administration

Health Screenings – 11,451 vision, 10,804 hearing, 2,903 scoliosis

Financial Report: 2001-2002

OPERATING FUND: \$281 million*

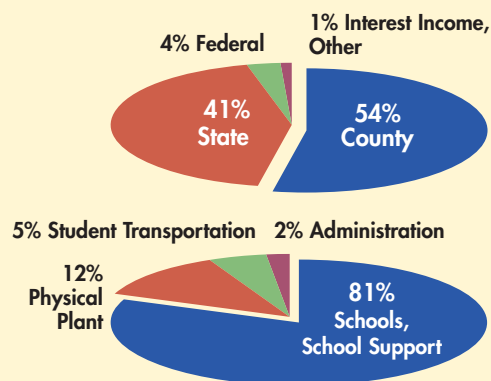
County, state and federal funds along with grants cover day-to-day school system operations and activities, including salaries, instructional materials and equipment, bus transportation, technology and training.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

County	\$149.6 million
State	\$114.2 million
Federal	\$ 11.6 million
Interest Income, Other	\$ 2.6 million

HOW THE MONEY IS USED

Schools, School Support	\$226.8 million
Physical Plant	\$ 32.8 million
Student Transportation	\$ 14.6 million
Administration	\$ 6.9 million



* The audited annual financial report for 2001-2002 is available from the FCPS Office of the Comptroller, 7630 Hayward Road, Frederick, Maryland 21702, 301-644-5043

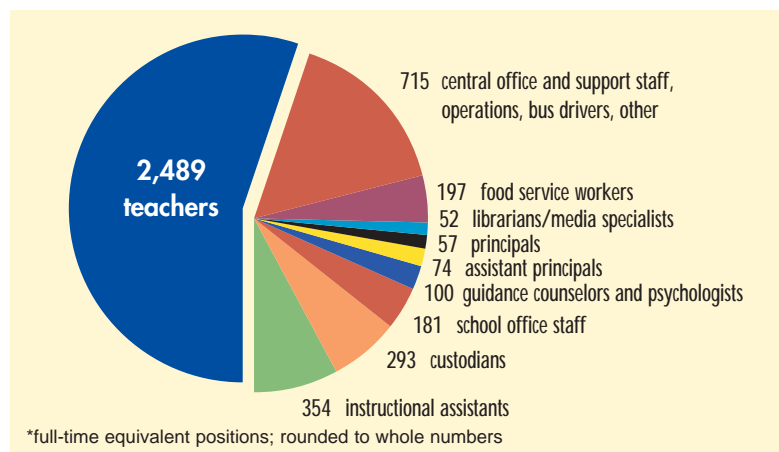
Technology: Connected

FCPS has exceeded state and national averages by having one networkable computer for every five students. 100% of our schools are Internet-connected, and 5 high schools offer distance learning. Norm McGaughey (right) and his technology education students at Oakdale Middle School enjoy doing "real life stuff" with technology. They use a mixing board, CDs and tapes to create radio broadcasts complete with weather and sports reports, songs and ads. They produce 60-second commercials on video and even DJ school dances, create teacher web sites and print school logo T-shirts.



PS Facts, Figures and Faces

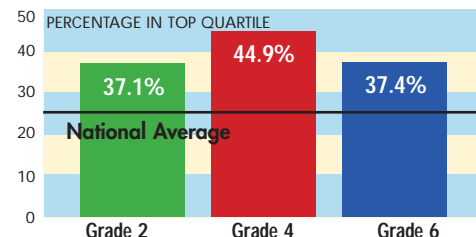
Employees: 4,512*



Achievement: Improving

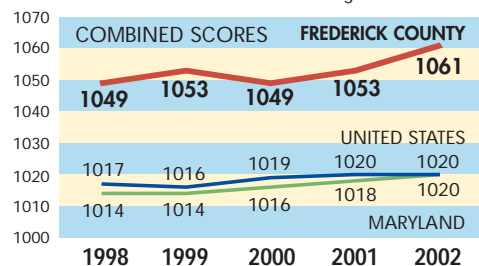
CTBS/5

Higher percentages of FCPS students scored in the top quartile than the national norm of 25%.



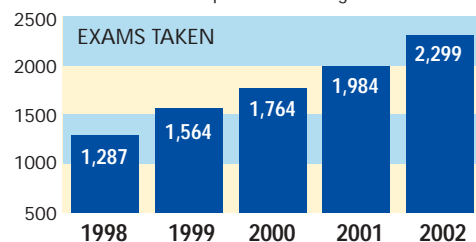
SAT-1

57% of all FCPS seniors took the SAT-1 college entrance exam.



ADVANCED PLACEMENT

More students took AP exams last year than in 2001, and 72.3% earned scores that qualified for college credit.



OTHER MEASURES

Attendance Rate – 94.3%

Dropout Rate – 1.73%

Graduation Rate – 90.79%

Certificate of Merit – earned by 55% of high school graduates

Blue Ribbon Schools – 8 national and 3 state winners, 2 honorable mentions

Wanted: More Teachers

Last year, more than 138 substitutes, support employees and student teachers rose through the ranks to full-time teaching positions with FCPS. Jennifer Seibert (left) is one of them. Having substituted at several schools, Ms. Seibert signed on as an instructional assistant at Emmitsburg Elementary while balancing a full course load at Mount Saint Mary's College.



"It was a 24-hour commitment, but the Mount's education program is so aligned with the FCPS curricula that I was able to put into practice what I was learning in my college classroom every day." A 2002 graduate with honors, she now has her own 2nd grade class.

FCPS works diligently to "home grow" teachers like Ms. Seibert and attract other skilled educators from throughout the region. But applications decline yearly. In fact, the teacher shortage is a national problem. A major contributor to Maryland's low supply is the dearth of candidates coming out of teacher training programs in the state — fewer than 3,000 graduate each spring, and only about half take jobs in Maryland public schools.

Incentives like excellent training, mentoring and tuition reimbursement programs and strong community support for education help FCPS compete for and keep dynamic teachers like Frederick High's Tamela Frazier (right, front). The energetic physical education and dance teacher believes teaching is a true calling. "When you take something you do well, that you're passionate about, and when you have the ability and patience to transfer what you know to someone else, then you ask yourself, 'What difference can I possibly make in the world?' The answer, the only answer, is to be a teacher."



TEACHER SALARIES

Entry-level with Bachelor's - \$32,017

Entry-level with Master's - \$34,443

10 Years Experience - \$44,100

Needed: More Schools

FCPS depends on state and county funding to pay for new school construction, major renovations and additions, land purchases, technology equipment and related capital expenses. Lisa Bruck (below, left) is one teacher who, along with her students, enjoys the advantages of a modern learning environment.

Expanded and updated in 2000 along with most of the school, her Catoctin High physics lab has technology ports, electricity and water access at every lab station. The new space "gives students so many more exciting opportunities to learn," she says, and has enabled the school to pilot a unique earth system science research course.



IN THE PROPOSED MASTER PLAN

SCHOOL	SCHEDULED OPENING
Tuscarora High	2003
Crestwood Middle	2004
Tuscarora Elementary	2004
Middletown Primary	2005
New Urbana area elementary	2005
Urbana High addition	2005
Brunswick Middle addition	2006
Carroll Manor addition	2006
New Market Elementary addition	2006
New Urbana area middle	2006
Thurmont Primary addition	2006
Valley Elementary modernization	2006
Emmitsburg Elementary addition	2007
New east county area high	2007
Oakdale Elementary addition	2007
Yellow Springs Elementary addition	2007
Brunswick High addition	2008
Frederick City area elementary (north)	2008
Oakdale Middle addition	2008
South Frederick "B" Elementary modernization	2008
Linganore High modernization	2009
Middletown High addition	2009
Middletown Middle addition	2009
Tuscarora High addition	2009

WORK-BASED LEARNING

- Local companies gave 621 high school juniors and seniors work-based learning opportunities
- 98.5% of employers were satisfied with students' work performance
- 304 juniors and seniors did internships
- 616 students participated in service learning with employers

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- 6,138 volunteers gave their time and talent to FCPS
- 50 schools met or exceeded the state standard of two hours of adult volunteer time per student
- 155 local businesses and agencies had active formal partnerships with FCPS

SCHOOLS

- Capital Fund - \$62.2 million
- Schools – 52 traditional, 5 special
- Building Enrollment – 98% of capacity systemwide
- Operating Over Capacity – 23
- Portable Classrooms – 137
- Average Class Size – 23 elementary, 25 middle, 25 high

Education: A Family Matter



More than 30 years of research shows that family involvement in a child's learning has greater impact on that child's success in school than family income or educational background. Attending parent-teacher conferences and encouraging good homework habits earn big points on the family-involvement scale. But even an everyday activity can become a learning opportunity that shows your child you care — and boosts both achievement and self-esteem.

Thurmont Primary School music teacher and arts enthusiast Margo Hall (above) believes those opportunities start right from the cradle. "Sing to your children from the time they're born — without apology! Rock your babies, and dance with them. And when they're a little older, expose them to a wide variety of musical and artistic styles. Turn off the television, and take them to live performances and art exhibits." (See the box below for more tips.)

FCPS has joined the Frederick County PTA Council in an initiative to increase family and community involvement in schools. A number of local school improvement teams have made commitments to promoting parenting skills and family literacy. "Take 15 for the Family" is Maryland's initiative to build parents' awareness of the value and pleasure of being involved in their children's education. "Spend 15 minutes a day together," goes the slogan. "Just a little bit of your time makes a BIG difference to your child."

For access to these and other family involvement resources, visit www.fcps.org and click on Parent Zone, or call 1-888-246-0016.



- Make a meal together, and eat it as a family
- Ask what happened in school today
- Share what happened at your job today
- Put on a tape or CD, and sing and dance along
- Play a game, and have your child keep score
- Read a book or listen to a book tape together
- Post your child's artwork (and report card) on the refrigerator
- Visit your local library together
- Talk (or just listen!) while you take a walk together
- Watch your favorite TV show together, and talk about it afterward
- While your child does homework, take a seat close by and read the newspaper or a magazine
- Find at least one reason to praise your child every day

The New Maryland School Assessment will ...

- Completely replace the MSPAP
- Generate individual student scores as well as school and school system scores
- Provide home reports for parents and score reports for student transcripts
- Measure foundational knowledge and higher-level skills in reading, math and eventually science
- Include both
 - Norm-referenced items, to compare students to a national sample
 - Criterion-referenced items, to measure whether students meet Maryland standards
- Include multiple-choice and short-answer items
- Be taken individually, not in groups, for about 90 minutes per day over four days
- Be given for the first time in March 2003 in grades 3, 5 and 8 in reading and math, and in grade 10 in reading; in March 2004 in grades 3 – 8; and in 2006 in science in grades 3, 5 and 8
- Report student scores in late summer 2003 for the first test and by the end of each school year for subsequent tests
- Report school and school district scores by race, poverty, disability and English proficiency

For more information, visit www.marylandpublicschools.org or, call 1-888-246-0016.

New Tests: High Standards

In Maryland, perhaps the most visible, early change resulting from the No Child Left Behind Act (*NCLB*, see page 1) will be a different set of tests, administered more often and in more grades. Unlike the MSPAP, the new Maryland School Assessment (MSA) will focus on *student* performance, as required by the federal law, rather than school and school system performance.

The MSA stresses reading and math proficiency. For Charlene Denton (below), a pre-kindergarten teacher at Waverley Elementary School, the reading focus in particular makes perfect sense. "Reading has been deemed a 'gatekeeping skill' for children, and our early childhood programs play a vital role in developing this ability," she says. "Every day, we use multi-sensory activities to introduce letters and their sounds in a playful yet systematic way. We talk, read, sing, rhyme, play and dance. We're very busy getting children ready to approach that 'gate.'"

Ultimately, the MSA is but one measure of student performance. How well a student understands and applies knowledge is the sum total of many factors, including regular course grades, class participation and scores on tests like the SAT and Maryland's High School Assessments.

According to FCPS Superintendent Jack Dale, "In evaluating progress, we're looking for trends rather than just a snapshot in time. And we're looking for enthusiastic, excited learners who work hard. We encourage parents to do the same."



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- Call 301-696-6900
- Visit www.fcps.org
- Watch cable channel 18
- Visit a school near you!

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