



2009 BTE Master Plan Update Harford County Public Schools

Part III: ARRA Supplement



Introduction

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

Authorization

Title XIV of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)¹

Purpose

The purpose of ARRA is to stimulate the United States (US) economy in the short term and invest in education and other essential public services to ensure the long-term economic health of the nation. The use of ARRA funds is intended to strengthen education, drive reforms, and improve results for students from early learning through college. These funds are to be used to improve student achievement and help close the achievement gap.

¹ Public Law 111-5 (Recovery Act) was signed into law on February 13, 2009. The provisions of the ARRA are available on the USDE website at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/index.html>.

ARRA Supplement

Purpose

The Maryland State Department of Education has developed the ARRA Supplement Guidance for local school systems to use in illustrating the integration of ARRA funding into school operations.

Under the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002* (or BTE), local planning teams were required to develop comprehensive master plans and are required to update those plans annually. The local BTE plans and plan updates link the strategies that school systems put in place to improve student achievement with the budgets they have to accomplish the improvements. These BTE plans are living documents that need to be updated based on changing conditions, such as when new funds become available.

Recovery Act

On February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, or the Recovery Act)² was signed into law. This legislation is intended to stimulate the U.S. economy in the short term and invest in education and other essential public services to ensure the long-term economic health of the nation. Under the law, unprecedented funding is going into local school systems over a brief period of time.

Four principles guide the distribution and use of these funds:

- **Spend funds quickly to save and create jobs.** ARRA funds are intended to avert layoffs and create jobs. For this reason, local school systems are urged to move rapidly to develop plans for using the funds, consistent with the law's reporting and accountability requirements.
- **Improve student achievement through school improvement and reform.** ARRA funds should be used to improve student achievement and help close the achievement gap.
- **Ensure transparency, reporting and accountability.** To support the most effective uses of ARRA funds and accurately measure and track results, school systems must publicly report on how funds are being used.
- **Invest one-time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the "funding cliff."** ARRA represents a historic infusion of funds that is expected to be temporary. Depending on the program, these funds are available for only two to three years. These funds should be invested in ways that do not result in unsustainable continuing commitments after the funding expires.

² American Recovery and Reinvestment act of 2009 (ARRA) (Pub. L. 111-5), February 17, 2009.

State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) Fund Program

As part of the Recovery Act, governors directly received State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) funds to help save jobs and drive education reform. The SFS program funds are being awarded in two phases.

Phase I

To access the State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) funds in Phase I, state governors were required to assure that their states would take action and make progress in four areas of education reform:

- Increasing teacher effectiveness and addressing inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers (Recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers and principals);
- Establishing and using a pre-K-through-college-and-career data system to track progress and foster continuous improvement (Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices);
- Making progress towards rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including limited English proficient students and students with disabilities (Adopting internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace); and
- Providing targeted, intensive support and effective interventions to turn around schools identified for corrective action and restructuring (Turning around the lowest performing schools).

Phase II

In the Phase II applications, governors would be required to provide data in each of these four areas of reform. The data would be made available to educators and the public, for the purpose of enabling them to identify needs and influence reform. The proposed requirements for States receiving funds under Phase II of the SFS program were published in the Federal Register on July 29, 2009; see <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/proprule/2009-3/072909e.html>.

Overall

The ARRA Supplement submissions are intended to serve as local reports on the planned use of ARRA funds in support of BTE master plan priorities, and the four assurances that were required of Maryland local school systems to receive the State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) program funds.

Section 1: Executive Summary

Planned Use of ARRA Funds

Instructions: Local school systems are asked to summarize the planned use of ARRA funds by responding to the prompts in this section.

1. How has having State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) funds available influenced the school system's decisions regarding the master plan priorities for the year? How are specific ARRA grants (Title I ARRA Funds, IDEA ARRA Funds, National School Lunch Equipment Assistance, Homeless, other) being used to support the master plan priorities?

HCPS Response:

Harford County Public School's (HCPS) master plan priorities focus on student achievement (including closing the achievement gaps and turning around the lowest performing schools), teacher effectiveness (recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers), safe schools, and effective use of resources. The SFS funds were used to support health care costs system wide which, in turn, allowed HCPS to continue to address master plan priorities without loss of teaching staff and curriculum delivery.

The use of HCPS ARRA grants are tied directly to the first two priorities in this listing as these directly align with the reform focus areas addressed in this report. Table 1.1.A delineates the alignment of ARRA funds to the two reform focus areas (Assurances 1 and 4) in relation to the specific ARRA grants.

The specific ARRA grants are supporting the priorities in the following ways:

A. Title I

- i. Assurance 1: Title 1 ARRA funds are being used to provide staffing, wages, and training for the National Board certification program and the Student Achievement in the Arts summer program to enhance teacher effectiveness in these programs.
- ii. Assurance 4: Title 1 ARRA funds are being used to buy 10.4 FTE to support learning intervention programs [family liaisons (7), math specialists (.4), and para educators (3); as well as to provide staffing for intervention programs that are outside the regular school program [GED; Summer School; Before/After School programs]. The funds also enable HCPS to supply and equip these programs, which includes enhancing the instructional technology as necessary.

B. IDEA (Pass-through; Discretionary; Pre-school)

- i. Assurance 1: As outlined in the HCPS FY 2010 ARRA IDEA Recovery Use of funds application, alignment has been made with the HCPS Master Plan. Specifically, funds have been used to support highly effective teachers through imbedding school based professional development designed to increase understanding of policies, procedures, and responsibilities of teachers in the provision of specialized services for students with special needs. ARRA

funds will provide special education assistant principals in our secondary schools identified as needing additional support to ensure effective implementation of policies and procedures for students with special needs. In addition, special education teacher mentors and facilitators will be hired to support special education teachers. Professional development in transitioning to MD Online IEPs and increased administrative support of special education oversight is being funded through ARRA funds.

- ii. Assurance 4: Additional special education teachers (6), para educators (5), a behavior specialist, an IEP data manager, math coaches (4) and a school psychologist have been hired to provide support for our special needs students in order to close achievement gaps, as outlined in our Master Plan. Instructional resources and supplies have been provided system-wide to target interventions for students with disabilities and at risk for IEPs.
- C. National School Lunch Equipment Assistance: School Lunch equipment provided much need cafeteria equipment allowing for effective use of resources.
 - D. Homeless: Funds were aligned with HCPS Master Plan in order to close the achievement gap as our students who are homeless are unable to achieve proficiency. ARRA funds were used to provide professional academic assistance for homeless students in area homeless shelters. Funds are being used to hire teachers to provide individualized academic assistance for students living in area homeless shelters. Homeless ARRA funds were directly aligned with the Master Plan priority of student achievement.
 - E. Infants and Toddlers: Funded through the Harford County Health Department, Infants and Toddlers funds are used to ensure school readiness for young children. ARRA funds were used to support an early childhood special education teacher as well as two speech therapists to assist young children. In addition, ARRA funds supported the purchasing of supplies and materials.
 - F. Other
 - i. State Fiscal Stabilization funds were used to support health care costs of HCPS employees. As a result, all Master Plan priorities can continue to be implemented without reduction of effort.
2. Please explain how the ARRA funding streams are being coordinated to support the law's reform priorities:
- Increasing teacher effectiveness and addressing inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers (Recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers)

HCPS Response:

As seen on Table 1.1.A, ARRA funding streams are being coordinated to support this reform priority. The table delineates the funding streams for Title I, IDEA special education and other ARRA dollars and breaks down the dollars into the following categories: salaries & wages, and contracted services. Data analyses influenced funding decisions in that HCPS is able to target underperforming students and underperforming schools in efforts to increase staffing as needed for intervention programs, and to provide appropriate training for those teachers and paraprofessionals working with both regular programs, as well as outside of the regular school day programs (B/A programs, summer programs). In addition, professional development is provided for the additional staff at our Title I schools and

within the special education department ensuring that we are able to address the specific identified student needs for Title I schools and for special education students in targeted schools

In order to increase the efficacy of teachers and address the achievement gap of our students with special needs, IDEA State-Pass-Through and Early Intervening funds were used to purchase additional special education administrative support, math coaches, behavioral specialists as well as specific equipment designed to support classroom instruction for our students with special needs.

- Establishing and using a pre-K-through-college-and-career data system to track progress and foster continuous improvement (Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices); (STATE ONLY)
- Making progress towards rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including limited English proficient students and students with disabilities (Adopting internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace); and (STATE ONLY)
- Providing targeted, intensive support and effective interventions to turn around schools identified for corrective action and restructuring (Turning around the lowest performing schools).

HCPS Response:

As seen on Table 1.1.A, ARRA funding streams are being coordinated to support this reform priority. The table delineates the funding streams for Title I, IDEA, National School Lunch, and Homeless, and breaks down the dollars into the following categories: salaries & wages, contracted services, supplies, equipment, and other. Data analyses influenced funding decisions in that HCPS is able to provide appropriate intervention programs/services, as well as the equipment and supplies for these programs, ensuring that we are addressing specific identified student needs.

3. How has the potential “funding cliff” impacted current discussions and subsequent decisions regarding the most effective use of ARRA funds?

HCPS Response:

HCPS understands the impact of the potential “funding cliff” and will adjust and reallocate funds accordingly for those initiatives that we will sustain after the SFS funds expire. All employees have been notified upon hiring that positions are dependent upon availability of funding. With attrition, we may be able to absorb some positions as a result.

4. Please complete the ARRA Funds Financial Reporting Table.

HCPS Response:

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED EXCEL DOCUMENT (ARRA Table)

Section 2: State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Program – Phase I

Planned Use of State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) Funds

Instructions: Local school systems are asked to detail the plans that they have for the use of SFS funds by responding to the prompts in this section.

1. Please describe what the influx of unrestricted ARRA funds (State Fiscal Stabilization program funds) has allowed the school system to accomplish this year, regardless whether or not the SFS funds were directly used to fund an initiative. (For example: A school system plans to use SFS funds to pay for utilities, but that decision, in turn, is allowing the district to allocate other funds to a different program or initiative.)

HCPS Response:

State Fiscal Stabilization funds were used to support health care costs of HCPS employees. As a result, all Master Plan priorities can continue to be implemented without reduction of effort.

2. If the State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) funds are being used for specific construction projects, please provide a list of the specific construction projects (ARRA Division, A, Section 14008) and the corresponding resource allocations.

HCPS Response:

SFS funds are not being used for construction projects.

3. If the SFS program funds are being used for one-time costs to avoid the "funding cliff" when the money runs out in two or three years, please describe these initiatives, and include the corresponding resource allocations.

HCPS Response:

Some of the SFS funds are used for one-time costs that will not require replicating at the point in time when the funds expire. All other uses for the remaining SFS funds will be absorbed by other funding sources once the SFS funds expire. It is yet to be determined if HCPS will lose some positions or will have to reallocate other funds to pick up the costs of these expenditures.

Section 3: State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Program – Phase II

Proposed Program Requirements

Instructions: Please complete the Excel Workbook for the State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) Fund Program requirements. The workbook is organized by education reform area and intended to be used by local school systems in addressing the SFS program's proposed data and information collection and reporting requirements. (*Note: LSS responses are required only in the section on Achieving Equity in Teacher Distribution.*)

HCPS Response:

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED EXCEL DOCUMENT.