

FY 2010 QUESTION NUMBER: 9

QUESTION:

Respond to the Richard Montgomery Cluster testimony regarding the change in average kindergarten class size at focus schools from 15 to 17. If a class size exceeds 17 students will the school receive an additional teacher?

BUDGET PAGE REFERENCE: N/A

ANSWER:

In the past, teachers were allocated to schools using formulas based on projected enrollment. MCPS maintained an average class size of 15 in the kindergarten class in focus schools and a maximum class size guideline of 25 for non-focus schools. In order to maintain the average class size of 15 for focus schools, classes were allowed to increase to 17. Once all kindergarten classes in a school were at 17, an additional position was allocated. Similarly, in first and second grades the target average class size is 17 for focus schools. Once all classes at the grade level are at 19 students, an additional position is allocated.

For FY 2010, kindergarten will be treated the same as we have treated grades 1 and 2; once all classes are at 19, another position will be allocated. We hold off on the process until all classes reach the identified point, because enrollment fluctuates throughout the year. If we were to allocate as soon as a class goes over the targeted average, and enrollment drops, we would then have to pull back the position from the school soon after. Waiting until all classes are over the target allows for decreases in enrollment without having to pull positions from schools.