

May 2013

High Support Schools Buoyed by Budget Changes

The changes to WSF and strategic decisions result in more funds at 21 High Support Schools

In an effort to improve the academic performance of students in the 21 [High Support](#) schools with the lowest test scores and lowest student growth, (other than the Turnaround schools) the BPS is providing additional financial and [programmatic](#) resources in FY13 and FY14. The BPS has restructured its weighted student funding ([WSF](#)) formula so these schools in need will receive additional funds. BPS has also arranged for individual schools to secure grants and receive support from partnerships.

Changes to WSF

The WSF formula allocates school resources among 116 of the 127 schools. Under WSF, dollars follow the students and individual schools receive funds according to the specific needs (e.g. learning disabilities, age, and English language fluency) of the students enrolled in the schools. However, BPS recognized that high concentrations of poverty affect a school's performance. In FY14, the threshold for counting students in poverty decreased, which qualified 4,200 more students for added weight. This was a strategic decision to aid schools with high concentrations of low-income students and High Support schools fall disproportionately into this category. The Poverty element is the only weighted item that affects funding on a school level as opposed to a student level.

Of the qualifying 9,909 students in poverty, 1,574 attend High Support schools. For FY14, the BPS added \$2.5M to schools with high concentrations of poverty with \$494,887 allotted to the 21 schools. The City also added \$30.8M to the WSF appropriation, directing an additional \$3.0M to High Support schools.

While additional funds support WSF, changes in enrollment also affect each school. For example, Rogers Middle School gained \$178,758 because there was more money applied to the formula, but lost \$105,365 because of enrollment changes. The Condon school fared better and received \$430,725 more through the increase in formula funds and \$159,998 more due to enrollment changes.

Other Grants and Partnerships

In FY14, the District is planning to allocate flexible grant funds to High Support and Turnaround schools. Specifically, \$1.9M in Title I funds and \$800,000 in Race to the Top funds will support strategic partnerships and extended time in these schools. In terms of partnerships, some examples include the Condon and Mendell Elementary schools collaborating with EdVestors; English High partnering with Blueprint Networks; and others working with nonprofit organizations such as City Year, Tenacity, and Citizen Schools.

Quality Improvement Funds

The Mayor committed \$30M to BPS, paid in \$10M installments over three years, with half intended for capital improvements and half for operations. FY14's operational funds will primarily focus on High Support and Turnaround schools, leadership development, and expansion of school partnerships.

Capital Improvements

In FY 14 the BPS is investing an additional \$8M in capital projects at High Support schools, \$5.4M of which will come from the Mayor's Quality Improvement Funds.