

SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

I.F. ii.
Local Goals and Indicators

This section is intended to provide school systems with an opportunity to discuss the progress that they are making toward local goals that have not been addressed in the preceding sections.

A. PROGRESS MADE IN 2007-2008 TOWARD ACHIEVING LOCAL GOALS

LOCAL GOAL 1: Reorganize the Somerset County Public School grade and facilities alignment to optimize students' academic, social, and emotional growth while reducing operational expenses. Progress on this goal includes:

1. A newly constructed facility for all 6th and 7th graders in the county is nearing completion and will open for students prior to January 1, 2008.

Somerset Intermediate School at Tawes is the first new construction in Somerset County Public schools in 30 years. The facility is already a point of pride and excitement in the county and was a cornerstone piece in the reorganization plan. The school is a \$19 million dollar facility with \$14 million invested by the state and \$5 million invested by the locals. The facility is enhanced by the infusion of high level technology and is located in a premier open setting that will lend itself to outdoor and environmental study. While not a truly green school, it has as many energy savings and environmental friendly measures as were economically feasible, such as a geothermal heating and cooling system.

Students are currently housed in an elementary school which will be closed and returned to the county commissioners for other public use. This facility can accommodate the students, but not well. The halls and classrooms are crowded; there are multiple modular units on site; music, art, technology education, and science instruction is delivered in standard classrooms without the necessary lab supports. Students, staff, and families are eager to make the move and actively involved in the planning. Research documents that an upgraded facility has a strong positive impact on student achievement.

2. A closed elementary site has been reopened to serve Alternative Education delivery for current and former students as well as adults.

The Marion Sarah Peyton Elementary School was closed in June 2006 with the consolidation of H. DeWayne Whittington Primary School and Marion Sarah Peyton School into the newly renovated Carter G. Woodson Elementary School in Crisfield, Maryland. In August of 2007, the building was reopened to house two programs: The Alternative Education School and the Adult Education Program.

The Alternative School had been housed in the J.M. Tawes Career and Technology Center. It was originally placed within the school to create a partnership between the alternative program and the Career Center opening opportunities to students who were having difficulty finding success in a traditional school setting. Space was limited to three standard classrooms. That partnership is now strong. The Alternative Center provides a behavior modification program as well as a monitored basic course instructional program linked with

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the home school courses and requirements. Most students attending the alternative center enter for a nine week period and then are transitioned to the regular school setting. Some students attend the alternative school for a portion of their day and the Career and Technology Center for the remaining portion. Younger (Intermediate School) students may be assigned only for the behavioral component—*Why Try?* The move to Marion Sarah Peyton has increased space for the program maintaining a close relationship with all sites and the JM Tawes Career and Technology Center.

The Adult Education and Workforce Community Programs were previously housed in Princess Anne, Maryland at the northern end of the county and in Department of Social Services space that had some size limitations. This program offers guided GED study and completion; youth work study; and career counseling.

LOCAL GOAL 2: Redesign the management of the Master Plan to maximize impact and focus on results of accelerating student achievement. Progress on this goal includes:

1. The redesigned management process of the Master Plan has been fully implemented.

Four critical targets for Master Plan impact were identified: Reading Achievement, Math Achievement, Positive Environment for Learning, and Safe Schools. Master Plan strategies and action plan steps were prioritized in alignment with these targets in a third document in 2005 that became the Somerset County BTE (Bridge to Excellence) Document. This narrowed each leader's Master Plan area of responsibility and made the targets clear.

However, steps for reaching those targets remained too broad. To address this issue a process of Quarterly Tasks and Progress Reports were designed and implemented beginning in 2005-2006. That process has now been established at both the site and system levels. Each master plan target area action step is annually broken into four quarterly periods for the year with specific actions identified for the quarters.

The work includes evaluation indicators and end of year expectations for data. Data analysis questions were developed for each action step. This work is done collaboratively by the building principals and supervisors each August to strategically direct their work and data collection. Collaboration on the steps systemizes the data and enables a fuller understanding of the results. Each principal's and supervisor's reported progress on these steps at the close of each quarter is reviewed and tracked by the Director of Planning and Technology. The Quarterly Task work concludes in an end of year summary Progress Report which provides the results of the Master Plan's implementation during the school year in data tables, narrative analysis of findings, and proposed next steps. The Summary Report is published and presented to the Board of Education and distributed to all administrators. The Summary Report provided significant support for the Master Plan Update preparation.

The results of this work have been clear. Focused, monitored management of the critical targets of Reading, Mathematics, and Safe Schools in the Somerset County Public Schools' Master Plan has increased student performance across the county and is leading to a clearer understanding of what problems and conditions need correction in order to achieve the desired results.

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LOCAL GOAL 3: Increase student, family, and community awareness, pride, and commitment to Somerset County Public Schools. Progress on this goal includes:

1. A State of Our Schools Community Information Luncheon was successfully held in May, 2007.

The Master Plan process for Somerset County Public Schools was initiated in 2003 with an annual gathering of a Master Plan Steering Team in the winter of every year to review progress of Somerset County Public Schools in achieving its strategic goals and to provide guidance and input on fiscal priorities. These have been excellent vehicles for providing stakeholders with accurate information about their public schools, but they have been work sessions and limited to a group of about 50 individuals. There remained a need to professionally report on progress and reach a broader group of stakeholders and decision makers—our legislators, commissioners, business people, agency leaders, parents, and community members joined our board and administrators for a State of the Schools Luncheon and Annual Report. The meal was prepared by the Culinary Arts Career and Technology classes of students. The event received high praises from the attendees and an excellent supportive editorial in the local paper. It will be continued.

B. PROGRAMS, PRACTICES, OR STRATEGIES AND THE RELATED RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS THAT APPEAR RELATED TO THE PROGRESS

1. Securing Local and State Support for the Somerset Intermediate School at Tawes New Construction

Significant planning and work was invested by the school system in working with the local stakeholders, local government, MSDE, legislators, and other State government officials toward developing a Facilities Master Plan that had everyone's support. As a county with severe funding restrictions, the endorsement and financial support of all groups was critical. Close communication with MSDE officials in the Public School Construction Program and the Interagency Committee on School Construction was essential to the acquisition of funding to support the new construction of an Intermediate School. Full involvement of local officials led to maximum fiscal support of the project. The Somerset Intermediate School Construction Project has served to increase community collaboration, communication, and common purpose. At the start of the project, all groups agreed that the project should:

- focus on students,
- honor developmental needs through facilities,
- maintain financial feasibility,
- respect the value of community schools,
- meet the necessities and expand opportunities,
- access state support not sanctions, and
- achieve consensus among all and continue to garner support.

Some early setbacks have occurred with architectural staffing problems leading to a delay of 5 months and escalating costs. It was necessary to approach the county commissioners for additional funding of over 2 million dollars—a large amount for a small struggling county. The request was approved and the project has gone forward with the exceptional and well

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appreciated support of the Somerset County Board of Education, Somerset County Commissioners, Interagency Committee on School Construction, and Board of Public Works.

RELATED RESOURCES FOR FACILITIES	
Capital Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began Construction of Somerset Intermediate School on Tawes Campus • Provided for Opening Building Costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SIS Site Costs ○ Moving Expenses 	<p>Cost: \$19.838 Million (Estimated)</p> <p>Source: State \$14.480 (Net State Funding-\$14.480 Million with remaining costs locally funded)</p> <p>Cost: \$592,415 Source: Local Funds</p>
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added a Technology Integration Trainer to Facilitate Academic Program 	<p>Cost: \$54,209 Source: Thornton Funds <i>*Duplicated Reference</i></p>
Equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported Instructional Technology Equipment Increase of State of Art Promethean Boards and Document Cameras • Covered SIS Kitchen Equipment, Bleachers, Cafeteria Tables • Covered SIS Equipment & Furniture 	<p>Cost: \$99,000 Source: Thornton Funds <i>*Duplicated Reference</i></p> <p>Cost: \$135,000 Source: Non-Recurring Cost</p> <p>Cost: \$188,000 Source: Local</p>

3. Quarterly Task Monitoring and State Of Schools Annual Reporting

With the reduction of the number of initiatives, programs, and processes to be addressed for 2006-2007 came a higher set of expectations and accountability: Quarterly Task Monitoring and Reporting and a Summary Report with system and site analysis.

The Quarterly Progress Documents and annual Summary Progress Report require significant administrative planning and follow through. Therefore, position responsibilities were altered and the Supervisor of Technology was advanced to a position of Director of Planning and Technology with a new major responsibility of designing, monitoring, and preparing an analysis of Master Plan progress. This was put into place for 2005-2006. This position was continued through 2006-2007 and for 2007-2008.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

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- 7.6.1 Appoint a staff position to assume responsibility for the planning process and planning documents
- 7.6.2 Establish planning process and product standards
- 7.6.3 Train staff in the planning process and product expectations including development of Quarterly Tasks for Action Steps
- 7.6.4 Provide collaborative work sessions for development of Progress Document Quarterly Tasks and Evaluation Indicators
- 7.6.5 Monitor and document implementation of Quarterly Tasks
- 7.6.6 Collate site progress data into Annual System Progress Report.
- 7.6.7 Organize Central Office administrators and supervisors for Update data collection, analysis, findings, and next step recommendations.
- 7.6.8 Facilitate preparation and presentation of Update Document
- 7.6.9 Debrief staff on Update Document process and final product
- 7.6.10 Apply System Progress Report and Update to Action Team and Steering Team Work Sessions

RELATED RESOURCES FOR QUARTERLY TASK MONITORING	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained position of Director of Planning and Technology with significant Master Plan Responsibilities 	Cost: \$55,979 (6/10ths position) Source: Local
Program	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published a “State of Schools” Report 	Cost: \$741 Source: Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranged and Facilitated the First Countywide “State of Schools” Luncheon 	Cost: \$700 Source: Local

4. Principal Collaboration

Although each principal and supervisor has the independence to implement the action steps, collect data, and report that data and findings, an early learning was that collaboration improved the product and eased the burden. The new monitoring and reporting process was introduced at a county wide Administrator and Supervisor meeting in a workshop during which individuals were put in small groups to work together to “write” their quarterly steps and set their key indicators for data collection. This initial collaboration led to on going meetings set by the participants to work together. Each effort enhances the system’s understanding of program impact and necessary change.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 1.7.7 Support team/collegial discussion and reflection of strategies to enhance student achievement goals
- 7.6.4 Provide collaborative work sessions for development of Progress Document Quarterly Tasks and Evaluation Indicators

Performance Assessment steps related to this strategy are:

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- 4.3 Make decisions by consensus facilitated by leader with advice from colleagues
- 4.4 Optimize decisions through collaboration with one or more other divisions
- 10.3 Share of personal knowledge and skills with colleagues

RELATED RESOURCES FOR PRINCIPAL COLLABORATION	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided A&S and other scheduled Work Sessions for group Quarterly Task writing by all principals 	Cost: Pro-rated estimate \$20,000 Source: Local

5. Expanding Volunteer Coordination Program and Attention to Data Collecting Practices for Parent and Community Coordination

The importance of parent and community involvement in the schools was recognized as a critical strategy for accelerating student achievement. One valuable form of involvement is volunteerism. The Somerset County Public Schools have always welcomed volunteers but left contacts, instruction, and use completely at the initiative of the individual employee. Hence, the program was weak and imbalanced. Some schools benefited from a great number of volunteers; others had very few. An important observation was that the system and individual schools had some assumptions about parent and community involvement but little or no facts. Two years ago, in accord with the Master Plan, a volunteer coordination responsibility was added to the Character Education position in a pilot school. This was found to be extremely effective and the position was expanded the next year to two more sites. These positions have not only added significantly to our students' learning and our teachers' effectiveness, but they have provided an insiders' view of our schools to each volunteer—who in essence becomes a public relations person for the system.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 2.1.4 Implement a volunteer program at all schools including orientation, training, modeling, coaching, and feedback
Designate and train a coordinator of volunteers at each site
- 2.1.14 Collect and analyze participation data (of family nights)
- 2.1.16 Develop a plan to increase involvement in planning and implementation for each subgroup whose participation is inequitable
- 2.2.20 Optimize *Project Achieve* presence in SCPS by recognition of community mentors
- 5.3. 2 Immerse students in teacher supported practices to build a success-oriented learning environment in each classroom.

RELATED RESOURCES FOR VOLUNTEER COORDINATION	
Current Staff Additional Responsibility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended contract of the Family and Community Coordinator to 11 months to enable countywide work with all levels 	Cost: +\$6240 Source: Thornton <i>Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain paid position of Volunteer 	Cost: \$ 166,458

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RELATED RESOURCES FOR VOLUNTEER COORDINATION	
Coordinators at elementary sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign volunteer coordination responsibilities to Character Education teacher at SIS 	Source: Local: (\$110,258) Thornton (\$ 56,200) <i>Duplicated Reference</i> Cost: \$0 Source: Staff Time

6. Collaboration with External Agencies

In addition to parents' and guardians' opinions and experiences with the Somerset County Public Schools educational program and learning environment, perceptions about the system are also formed by the various agencies throughout the county who interact with the system in behalf of the students and their families. Collaboration with external agencies has included but not been limited to Local Management Board, The Economic Development Council; The Professional Development School Status with local universities; the Drug and Alcohol Council; Core Services; and Local Coordinating Council. In each of these cases, the Board of Education is represented and an active participant. Collaboration was raised to a new level in 2006 with the successful acquisition of a Healthy Students/Safe Schools Grant in which the school system became the host to deliberate, planned and assessed interagency work for the benefit of students. This has provided a new window to many external agencies on the workings of the school system and served to promote a positive image.

The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant has supported:

- Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies
- Learning Support Team Staffing and Work
- Professional Development in Supporting Students
- Prevention Programs (Bullying Prevention; Anger Management)
- Increased Security through Camera Surveillance; Staff and Student ID's
- Parent Agency Outreach

In addition, Somerset County moved to establish a Truancy Court through legislation enacted the previous year for four Eastern Shore Counties. The Board of Education serves as the coordinator of court ordered interagency work to improve the attendance of chronic absentees. This program has created a stronger bond between the courts and the school system and served students well. A similarly structured court, Drug Court, has been initiated.

The impact of the Truancy Court is as follows:

- 38 cases have been referred since November, 2005
- The gender breakdown of referrals is 18 male and 20 female.
- The racial breakdown is 15 African American, 20 Caucasian; and 3 Hispanic
- The grade breakdown is:

6 th Grade	= 6 referrals
7 th Grade	= 9 referrals
8 th Grade	= 11 referrals
9 th Grade	= 8 referrals
10 th Grade	= 2 referrals

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Elementary = 2 referrals

- Intervention occurred with 31 referrals or 82% (7 referred students moved out of Somerset or new cases were set adjudication)
- 10 cases have been successfully closed with students having no unexcused absences for 90 days
- 5 additional cases are showing positive change

This is a very time intensive and costly program but it is yielding results that are making a dramatic difference in students' lives and their future.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

2.6.2 Maximize neighborhood involvement in the local schools during and beyond school hours through a variety of projects.

2.6.2.4 Coordinate county partnerships to fulfill goals of Somerset County Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative among:

- Community Services and Research Center
- Somerset County Early Childhood Committee
- Enrichment Center
- St. James U.M. Church
- Local Management Board
- Healthy Families Lower Shore
- Eastern Shore Psychological
- Maple Shade
- Three Lower Counties
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Somerset County Core Services Agency
- Somerset County's Sheriff's Office

5.2.11 Seek grant funding to increase number of Learning Support Specialists

5.1.12 Expand the role of Learning Support Teams to encompass and address all barriers that may prevent learning including truancy

6.1.6.3 Participate with family services and other agencies to implement a Truancy Reduction Pilot Program

RELATED RESOURCES FOR COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained (7) Learning Support Specialists to work with agencies to coordinated emotional and physical health of students as well as academic success in the classroom 	<p>Cost: \$274,864 Source: SS/HS Grant (\$152,426) Local: (\$122,438) <i>*Duplicated Reference</i></p>
RELATED RESOURCES FOR COLLABORATION WITH	

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EXTERNAL AGENCIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained Behavior Intervention Specialists to work directly with students experiencing behavior issues in the classroom or school preventing their successful learning (6) 	Cost: \$113,500 Source: SS/HS Grant <i>*Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained commitment of 2 mornings per/wk of court time by Student Services Supervisor and coordination of agencies' implementation of court ordered services to students & families 	Amount Budgeted: Court Time represents at least \$16,000 of Student Services Supervisor Source: Local Timeline: 2005 -2006

7. Equitable Salary Increase Making SCPS Competitive with Surrounding Systems

In addition to students, parents, guardians, and county agencies, the staff are major players in setting the perception of an educational system. Through careful negotiations including the introduction of performance assessment, sound fiscal management, and local support, Somerset County was able to increase salaries in all units and raise the level of esteem of employees and their pride in their schools.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 7.1.3 Meet all contractual obligations of bargaining units.
- 7.1.6 Implement evaluation process for administrators using the performance appraisal tool.

RELATED RESOURCES FOR BECOMING COMPETITIVE FOR HQ STAFF	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided Substantial Increase in Teachers' Salaries and Benefits to attract and retain HQ Teachers 	Cost: \$ 1,284,948 Source: Thornton <i>*Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided Substantial Increase in Classified Salaries and Benefits to attract and retain HQ Teachers 	Cost: \$271,635 Source: Thornton
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided Substantial Increase in Administrative Salaries to Attract and Maintain High Qualify Leaders 	Cost: \$123,000 Source: Local

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C. EVIDENT CHALLENGES IN MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD LOCAL GOALS

1. Maintaining the Construction Schedule for the Opening of Somerset Intermediate School during the Fall of 2007.

Although the schedule is showing a substantial completion date of December 2007, this will require everything to go right from weather to relationships between architects, construction management, and subcontractors. The Somerset Intermediate School at Tawes Campus has already been delayed one year and students remain temporarily housed in an Elementary School which will be closed at their vacating.

1. We are challenged to transition from the Westover Elementary site to the Somerset Intermediate School at Tawes site with minimal instructional interruption.

2. Coordinate Findings of Update Process with Action Planning and Steering Team Work of 07-08 for Fiscal Year 09 Budget

Somerset County's Master Plan is the product of the community and involves annual work by internal and external action teams for each strategy. These action teams review county progress, consider the coming years planned action steps in the master plan, and establish priorities for the Master Plan Steering Team's consideration. The Master Plan Steering Team then sets recommended Budget Priorities for the coming fiscal year. The preparation of the Update has seemed out of step with making adjustments to the master plan and for allocating resources. However, the Progress Report (the system's close of year measure of progress on master plan goals, strategies and action plans) and the Update 2007 will be used by the action teams this year as key resources in their planning and resource work.

1. We are challenged to create a seamless system of analyzing master plan progress and budgeting adequate resources for needed change and adaptations.

3. Manage Master Planning and Update Process to the Benefit of the System

Somerset County Public Schools is one of Maryland's smaller systems and as such has limited staffing. Somerset County Public Schools also has significant work to do to "measure up" to providing a quality education successfully to all students at all levels. The Update process is a healthy one but it requires significant additional time and energy which is not available. Consequently critical responsibilities are neglected, attended to minimally, or reduced in priority in order to meet the required reporting deadlines. The work responsibilities were added to the principals', the supervisors', the directors', and the superintendent's plates and nothing was taken away; each still had his or her building or division to manage and lead.

1. We are challenged to develop a Master Plan for 2009-2013 that strategically advances our progress and builds but does not exhaust our capacity.

4. Sustain Services Provided by Grants

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Somerset County Public Schools has been the successful recipient of several very large grants which span 3 years of support. These are addressed in other sections of the Update. One is the 21st Century Grant which provides highly valued and necessary After School and Summer Programs at the Elementary and Intermediate School levels. The other is the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant which promotes interagency collaboration and coordination and staffs each site with Learning Support Specialists and Behavioral Intervention Specialists as well as supplying a Program Coordinator. At this point, the system could not provide local support to sustain either program.

Thornton funds have provided Somerset County Public schools with 6.6 million additional dollars. This amount added to Federal competitive grants has amounted to a 49% increase in the last 5 years. In comparing the percentage and dollar increase over the four year period of Thornton increases, the following is revealed:

Areas for Greatest Dollar/Expenditure Increases

1. Instructional Salaries for Existing and New Positions	\$ 4.4 million
2. Fixed Charges	1.5 million
3. Capital Outlay	1.2 million
4. Special Education	.7 million

Categories of Greatest Expenditure

1. Instructional Salaries	\$ 14.0 million
2. Fixed Charges	4.9 million
3. Transportation	2.4 million

Categories of the Greatest Percentage Increase

1. Other Instructional Costs	140.8%
2. Student Personnel Services	116.8%
3. Health Services	57.6%

Categories of Least Expenditure

1. Health Services	\$ 107,615
2. Administration	\$ 110,524

1. We are challenged to plan for sustaining the critical elements of direct service grants to meet the needs of seriously troubled students.

5. Sustain Adequate Salary Increases to Retain and Attract Staff

Somerset County Public Schools was able to provide a competitive increase for all three bargaining units for the 2007-2008 school year. With Fiscal Year 2008 being the final year for Thornton Bridge to Excellence equity funding, the current program and staffing, let alone an expanded program, will be difficult to sustain.

Neighboring counties pride themselves in acquiring 2 to 3 year well trained Somerset teachers for their counties through higher salaries and stronger benefits. Somerset has long

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held the lowest rung on the ladder, which works to the benefit of neighboring counties who will continue to work to keep Somerset in that position.

1. We are challenged to build commitment and community in each site which will provides staff with professional satisfaction, engagement, and dedication to Somerset County Public Schools

D. ADJUSTMENTS OR NECESSARY CHANGES

1. Implement Tight Monitoring of Construction Schedule and Prepare Internal Contingency Plans

An excellent contract management firm has been retained to oversee the Somerset Intermediate School Project and maintain the projected schedule. The Board will receive bimonthly project progress reports. Plans will be made for a midyear transition should the project be delayed.

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE A	
Capital Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend Contract Management Firm contract to Maintain Schedule and provide monthly schedule update to Board 	Amount Budgeted: \$256,090 Source: Capital Projects Timeline: July, 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign additional responsibilities for planning a midyear transition to existing staff at building and central office level 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: SIS Administration, Secondary Supervisor; Director of Facilities, Staff Time Timeline: November , 2007

2. Initiate Master Planning Process for Master Plan 2009-2014

Training for Action Team leaders will be provided on the Progress Document and Update Document for use in Action Team work for 2007-2008. Several Update adjustments or changes have been held for the 2007-2008 year.

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE B	
Professional Development and Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the advantages and disadvantages of the current system of Master Planning and Updates for Somerset • Research strategic planning models • Develop and plan to plan 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Central Office Leadership Team Timeline: December, 2007

3. Seek Recognition and Relief for Small System Burden

The superintendent will continue to work with the Master Plan Update Committee and MSDE in finding the ways and means for small systems to manage the Master Planning and Update process and product. One possible approach would be a move to a 2 year or every other year full narrative Update but maintain annual Fiscal Updates to meet the legislative

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requirement. This would not only provide much needed relief to small system, but it would also allow for a more solid evaluation of program and strategy impacts and support reviews of trends.

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE C	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign additional responsibilities to Central Office staff for reducing the Master Plan Update preparation burden 	<p>Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Central Office Leadership Team Timeline: January, 2008</p>

4. Prepare Locals for Absorption of Critical Grant Positions

Current work has begun in providing for the continued leadership and management of the After School and Summer Programs. More work will be required for the 2009 allocation of resources. Efforts have already begun in gathering community support for School Based Heath Centers (SBHC) at the secondary level. This federal and state supported program could continue many of the bridges and efforts built through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiatives.

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE D	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare to absorb cost of critical positions from 21st Century and SS/HS grants 	<p>Amount Needed: \$300,000 Source: Local Timeline: January, 2009</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Attendance Clerk positions to other schools 	<p>Amount Needed: \$20,000 Source: Local Timeline: July, 2008</p>
Core Program	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct needs assessment and investigate feasibility of SBHC for Somerset County 	<p>Amount Budgeted: \$2500 Source: LMB and Community Foundation Timeline: October, 2007</p>

5. Promote and Support Thornton Extension of Equitable Funding for Future

Somerset County Public Schools has been the grateful recipient of Bridge to Excellence Thornton funding that has provided the resources to accelerate student achievement. Unfortunately, other unforeseen resource demands of rising operational costs, Federal reductions in Title funding, and NCLB demands have prevented true equity of educational opportunity for all of Maryland's students. As Somerset County seeks continued increasing local support, local philanthropic support, federal grant support to meet exceptional needs, and state grant support for new opportunities, Somerset will also seek an extension of Thornton support to meet the continuing needs.

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ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE E	
Program Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign additional responsibilities to Central Office staff for acquiring additional philanthropic and grant support • Work closely with County Commissioners on local funding support • Support and contribute to legislative efforts to continue Thornton support with a basic cost of living increase 	<p>Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Central Office Leadership Team Timeline: 2007-2008</p>
School Climate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize Mentor Program Leadership and implementation to retain staff and gain commitment to Somerset County's children 	<p>Amount Budgeted: \$83,000 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008</p>