

Finance

1. Current Year Variance Table FY 2012
2. Prior Year Variance Table
3. Prior Year Variance Questions
4. ARRA Prior Year Variance Table
5. Prior Year ARRA Variance Questions
6. Race To The Top Monitoring Questions
7. Race To The Top Project Budgets

Prior Year Variance Table – Analyzing Questions

Revenue Analysis:

- 1. Did actual FY 2011 revenue meet expectations as anticipated in the Master Plan update for 2011? If not, identify the changes and the impact any changes had on the FY 2011 budget and on the system's progress towards achieving master plan goals. Please include any subsequent appropriations in your comparison table and narrative analysis.***

Revenues exceeded expectations for FY 2011. The Education Jobs Funding was received as a restricted federal ARRA grant in December, 2010. Additionally, the Maryland State Department of Education reduced the unrestricted State revenue, offsetting the reduction with 85% of the Education Jobs Funding received. While the net result was zero, the change is reflected in State Revenue and Federal ARRA Funds.

Local Revenue was higher than anticipated due to a dividend received from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) as a reimbursement for the self insured workers compensation fund.

Other Federal Revenue was more than budgeted. The Reading First and Safe and Drug Free School grants were scheduled to sunset with no revenues expected in FY 2011; however, SCPS received \$52,259 and \$7,474 respectively in funding during the first quarter of the fiscal year. Two additional grants were also received: an after school program grant from the Local Management Board (LMB); and a STEM grant from the Anne Arundel County Board of Education.

Analysis of Actual Expenditures

- 2. Please provide a comparison of the planned versus actual expenditures for each local goal provided in the Prior Year Variance Table. Identify changes in expenditures and provide a narrative discussion of the impact of the changes.***

GOAL 1: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: The student engagement goal was \$418,354 less than the planned amount; however since the planned expenditure was almost \$469,000 less than FY 2010, this was good news! There was an increase in Infant and Toddler funding over the budgeted amount (\$34,190). The funds received for Reading First, LMB and STEM (as discussed in the revenue analyzing questions) also accounted for the lesser decrease.

GOAL 2: HIGHLY QUALIFIED EDUCATORS: This goal was expended as planned with a slight increase due to the cost of the Human Resources application tracking system.

GOAL 3: SAFE, QUALITY ENVIRONMENT: Safe, Quality Environment was planned for a \$17,000 decrease; however, the Safe and Drug Free School funds (as discussed in the Revenue Analyzing Questions) accounted for the increase in expenditures.

MANDATORY/COST OF DOING BUSINESS: The planned reduction for this goal did not materialize. Increased fuel prices triggered the sliding scale used in calculating bus payments causing transportation costs to be \$80,000 more than planned. While not impacting the total, the retargeting of Education Job Funds (from unrestricted State revenue to restricted ARRA revenue) is disclosed in this section. Somerset County Public Schools moved the cost of school based custodial staff to the restricted grant. Additionally, an equipment grant from MABE which was not anticipated was received.

ARRA Prior Year Variance Table – Analyzing Questions

1. *(SFSF only) Please describe what the influx of flexible ARRA SFS funds has allowed the school system to accomplish this year, regardless of whether or not the SFS funds were directly used to fund an initiative. .*

ARRA (SFSF) provided Somerset County Public Schools with over \$524,942 in funds that were used to implement the four assurances stated. SFS funds used allow the operating budget, which is 80% staff and fringe, to focus those dollars on maintaining positions.

Assurance 1 – Increasing Teacher Effectiveness: Actual funds were used for technology purposes to include: replacing the computer labs at Woodson Elementary; the tech ed labs at both high schools; the five year replacement cycle for all computers; and, document cameras to work toward the goal of 100% of classrooms having these.

Funds were also used for a variety of professional development activities which would not have been accomplished otherwise. In particular, diversity training for one year was a highlight of the use of the funds. This training, which was comprehensive and included Board members, community members and administrators (both school and Central Office levels), would not have been possible as the operating budget funds are stretched to maintain staff. It is hoped that this training will open lines of communication at all levels to improve the school climate thus improving student achievement.

Assurance 2 – Building Data Systems: Training in the updated and revised version of Power School (student information system) was possible with the use of SFSF. Additionally, funds were used to allow a team to make a site visit to a school using a 1:1 laptop program. As this initiative is costly, and is funded through a combination of operating funds and non recurring funds from the County, it is critical that staff are properly trained to ensure its success.

Assurance 3 – High Quality Assessments: The amount spent in this area for assessments, textbooks and consumables wouldn't have been able to be purchased without the SFS funds. Ensuring that each student, in each class has a textbook has been a directive from the Board even during years of level or diminishing funds. Having a variety of assessments and protocols available ensures that students are properly identified for any needed services to ensure success in the classroom.

Assurance 4 – Targeted Support: Through the use of ARRA funds, eleven positions were created or saved. Two of these positions (intervention teachers at Somerset Intermediate School - SIS) were created with SFSF. These positions, among other strategies, are credited with SIS being able to exit the School Improvement process in FY 2012.

SFSF were also used for a summer school makeup program that allows students to retake coursework that was not successfully completed during the school year. Successful completion of the coursework includes taking the High School Assessment, if appropriate. Additionally,

funds were used to provide stipends for teachers grading “Bridge” projects (the alternative to the High School Assessment) during after school hours.

Updated technology included replacing two computer labs at Woodson Elementary and the tech ed labs at Crisfield High and Washington High.

Other: Special Education contractual services, such as physical therapy and occupational therapy were provided using the SFS funds. These services ensured compliance with the requirements of the student’s IEP.

2. *(SFSF only) If 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.*

N/A

- 3 *(SFSF ONLY) Please describe, if applicable, one-time uses of SFSF funds. Include individual activities and corresponding resource allocations in your description. After the ARRA funds run out, is there a plan of sustainability? If so, please briefly describe the plan.*

Assurance 1: Each item listed (total of \$159,342) was a one time use of SFS funds. Some funds have been included in the operating budget for continued professional development, but the Diversity Training (year 2) was put on hold until additional funding could be obtained. Professional development outside of what is required by RTTT has been put on hold so that staff energies are focused.

Technology needs are prioritized and funded based on those priorities. County non recurring cost funds are requested as appropriate.

Assurance 2: The entire amount expended was one time use of SFS funds. Professional development activities are not a priority over maintaining positions; thus, these activities were not funded in 2012. They will be reviewed for inclusion in the 2013 budget.

Assurance 3: Textbook allotments (\$86,000) were included in the operating budget for FY 2012.

Assurance 4: The intervention teachers at SIS were maintained through attrition of other staff. There were sufficient funds available in SFSF to be able to maintain the Summer School program for the summer of 2012. Funds will be allocated in 2013 budget process. Technology needs are prioritized and funded based on those priorities. County non recurring cost funds are requested as appropriate.

Other: Special Education services have been funded in the FY 2012 budget. Any shortfall will be covered using Medical Assistance funds.

- 4 *(SFSF ONLY) Please describe the steps that the school system proposes to take to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers that impede access to, or participation in, a program or activity.*

Student activities, such as summer school, provide transportation to permit students and parents without transportation to participate.

5. *(ALL ARRA FUNDS) How has the potential "funding cliff" impacted current discussions and subsequent decisions regarding the most effective use of ARRA funds?*

During the FY 2012 budget preparation process, all ARRA funds were reviewed. Those that were ongoing, particularly positions were prioritized by the school principals and Central Office Administrators. The highest priority positions were funded through attrition of current staff and through the use of Education Jobs Funds. The FY 2013 budget process will review those positions through the Jobs Funds, prioritize, and determine what, if any can be funded in the operating budget. Other high priorities, such as textbooks and technology, were prioritized and included as funding permitted. Through non recurring cost funds, the County Commissioners provided funding to continue various technology projects, including the 1:1 laptop program.

Race to the Top Monitoring Questions:

1. *Please provide the reason for the balance of unused funds at the conclusion of Project Year 1. Where the reason is project specific, please include this information at the project level.*

There were no unused funds at the conclusion of Project Year 1.

2. *How did the availability of unused funds at the conclusion of Project Year 1 impact the LEA's planning for Project Year 2 and beyond?*

N/A

3. *What programmatic changes or accelerations have been made to ensure that activities and goals are met within the grant period?*

The Assistant Superintendent has been instrumental in ensuring that activities and goals were met within the grant period. RTTT has been made a primary focus in his responsibilities.

4. *What will the LEA do differently in Project Year 2 as a result of lessons learned in implementing Project Year 1?*

The number of staff budgeted for stipends in the various projects will be more carefully reviewed to ensure that all funds are expended. This will (hopefully) reduce the need for amendments, particularly during the hectic summer months.

5. *Does the LEA anticipate any challenges in implementing Project Year 2? If so, please identify the challenges at the grant and project level, if applicable.*

Somerset County Public Schools will be challenged to maintain the Teacher Induction project funding a .5 staff member. During the fiscal year, this project will be reviewed and a recommendation made for Years 3 and 4.

SCPS is also concerned that there is sufficient funding in Project 9 to upgrade the technology infrastructure as more information is obtained on what will be required.

Project 3, Transition to Common Core, is being reviewed for adequacy to carry out the objectives as planned. There is concern that there are not sufficient funds for training all of the teachers that will need this professional development to comply with the requirements of RTTT.

As there have been some staffing changes, there is concern about the Writing Professional Development (Project 4).