



LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MICHAEL F. BRANDMEYER
SUPERINTENDENT

May 24, 2010

To: School Committee
From: Mickey Brandmeyer
Re: METCO Budget Gap FY2011

Earlier this year, in collaboration with Superintendents Brackett and Carpenter from the Sudbury Public School and Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School, we proposed to consolidate the METCO Director's positions in the three districts to one regional position. Serious concerns about the proposal were raised by Lincoln METCO parents, Lincoln residents and METCO Inc. expressing a consistent message about keeping the Director's position. Because of this feedback I am recommending that we take additional time to discuss this proposal, to look at other options to staff and manage the METCO program in Lincoln, and not to implement the proposal in the 2010-2011 school year.

One of the benefits of the consolidated directorship was the resulting cost savings and the ability to close the projected budget gap of approximately \$52,000 in FY11. The gap is the result of a budget reduction in the METCO grant statewide and has been proposed by both the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees. The gap must be addressed before the start of the school year.

Since the consolidation proposal was made more information about the state budget for FY11 has been released and in addition to a METCO budget gap it has been recommended that the Full-day Kindergarten Grant also be reduced by 25% and that the Special Education Circuit Breaker Reimbursement Program be funded at only 30% of eligible costs, a significant reduction from the 75% reimbursement included in the legislation.

I met with Christina Horner, METCO Director, Stephanie Powers, Administrator for Student Services, and Stephen McKenna and Sharon Hobbs, Lincoln School Principals to review the METCO budget and to discuss strategies to close the budget gap.

Our approach focused on maintaining services closest to students, transportation and bus monitors. As a result, we are recommending the elimination of the METCO Secretary position, which will result in a savings of approximately \$30,000. The employee currently in this position will be transferred into the position of Special Education secretary at the Lincoln School, a position that is currently open due to the retirement of the incumbent.

I am proposing that we allocate the remainder of funds, approximately \$22,000 from the general operating budget through an opportunity to pre-purchase special education tuition.

The district will receive the second installment of federal stimulus funds, one time funding that will not be available after FY12 and I am recommending that we reserve stimulus funds for possible reductions in special education circuit breaker or full day kindergarten revenue projected for FY12.

The METCO staffing for 2010-2011 as proposed will include:

METCO Director	1.0 FTE
Academic Advisor	1.0 FTE
Social Worker	1.0 FTE
Special Education Teacher	1.0 FTE
Bus Monitors	2.0 FTE
Instructional Assistant (offset)	\$20,000
Transportation (2 morning and 2 afternoon buses)	

The chart below summarizes the major job responsibilities currently performed by the METCO Secretary and how they will be reassigned in the 2010-2011 school year.

Current major responsibilities of the METCO Secretary	Reassigned to METCO Director	Reassigned to METCO Social Worker or Academic Advisor	Reassigned to Lincoln School Secretaries	Reassigned to METCO Bus Monitor 15 hours/week clerical support
Coordination of parent requests, phone calls and response to transportation issues				√
Weekly communications, METCO newsletter, etc.		√		
Managing the placement process, scheduling interviews, placement meetings and follow-up	√			
Maintaining student information in Student Information Management System			√	
Special Projects (e.g., connections with external educational organizations, student performance analysis, etc.)	√	As needed		

Recommended motion: That the School Committee approve the elimination of the position of METCO Secretary and allocate \$22,000 through the pre-purchase of special education tuition to close the gap in the METCO budget for FY12.