

Calvert County Public Schools

Jack R. Smith, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools

1305 Dares Beach Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Telephone: (410) 535-1700
(301) 855-1834
FAX: (410) 535-7298
TDD: (410) 535-6852
<http://www.calvertnet.k12.md.us>

April 8, 2009

Mr. James H. DeGraffenreidt, Jr., President
Maryland State Board of Education
Office of the Maryland State Board of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Mr. DeGraffenreidt:

I am writing this letter to oppose the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners' Maintenance of Effort (MOE) waiver request.

Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) has been fortunate in that the Board of County Commissioners, by its commitment to a funding formula, has provided resources beyond the MOE. Over the last several years, the County Commissioners have provided reasonable levels of funding which supported us as our school system moved to the top of the State in student achievement.

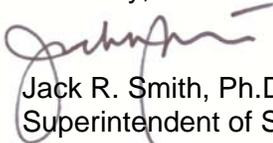
Utilizing the funding formula, CCPS was slated to receive in excess of \$4.7 million above the MOE requirement for FY 2010. In spite of this anticipated local funding, I found it necessary to write the Board of County Commissioners in February 2009 to request additional financial assistance. Based on projections of reduced funding from the State, CCPS was facing a \$7 million budget gap.

The County Commissioners were unable to provide additional funding, so in addition to critically analyzing every line item in my proposed FY 2010 budget, I took the following steps to reduce the funding gap: requested the employee associations renegotiate salaries; successfully renegotiated administrator salaries; and proposed the elimination of 125 positions.

Any reduction in the County's funding that is beyond that provided in the funding formula agreement would have a significant negative impact on the operation of CCPS at many levels. A reduction in County funding below the MOE requirement would necessitate the reduction of employee positions to a point where the programs and structures responsible for CCPS' high level of student achievement could no longer exist. Additionally, many federal grants that provide significant amounts of funding to CCPS for the provision of services to students with disabilities, students receiving free and reduced meals (FARMS), and students with English as a second language; and programs that support instructional initiatives in the areas of math, science and technology and provide career pathways contain MOE requirement provisions. A waiver of the MOE requirement could result in a significant reduction in the dollars received from these federal grants.

The granting of a waiver of the MOE requirement would be devastating to the education of our students.

Sincerely,


Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools