

Contracts for Excellence

Bronx Public Meeting, 9/17/09

PS 23

PUBLIC HEARING

MR. SPEAKER:

(Audio begins mid-sentence) first and then C4E, whichever way you want to do it.

MS. MENENDEZ:

Let's do C4E first. Good evening. I would like to start by congratulating Shirley Torres on being the interim acting principal here at PS 23. And before I do the presentation, I just want to address some of the concerns in terms of the overcrowding. Yes, we are suffering from overcrowding in some of our schools but the Office of School Enrollment is working very quickly with principals and network leaders to ensure that we're finding available space for our students. This happens to be -- PS 23 happens to be a school that accepts many of the children throughout our district in terms of kindergarten, first and second grade in terms of overcrowding. So right now, we do have quite a number of children coming from PS 94 to here, to PS 23. And I'm sure that we will continue to identify schools that are low in register where we can continue to identify those school that are over-age to send the children there. I know that we already working with PS 20. They filled out a Capping Plan so that will be set in motion soon.

I also want to let the counsel know that I am letting the principals know that you are interested in visiting schools. If you would like me to visit with you, however, I would appreciate it if you would contact my administrative assistant, Sharon Berger (ph.) and I'll make sure that she knows that you are calling her so that we can set up a convenient time for both of us to be able to visit the schools together. And I'm sure that the principals will be very happy to welcome you so that you get to see our schools, not only the ones that your children go to but the other schools in our district.

So at this time I'd like to begin with the presentation on the Contract for Excellence and everyone should have a copy of the PowerPoint. I'm just going to go over it -- obviously, as Marvin says, just to brief the public that is here but again, we will have another meeting on September 30th so it's important that you get the word out to your constituencies to let them know that that meeting will also have another opportunity for feedback. Okay? So if we could just start?

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If you look at -- we're starting on page 2. And this is an overview of the Contract for Excellence. These funds, obviously, are to support specific program initiatives which are categorical in nature. So, city wide and in our district, therefore, class size reduction, time on task, teacher and principal quality initiatives, middle and high school restructuring, full-day pre-k programs and model programs for English language learners. As you can see, the funds are to go for the children with most educational need. So when we prioritize those children, we're talking about our second language learners, students in poverty, students with disabilities and students with low academic achievement or at risk of not graduating.

If we move on to page 3, this year, the Contract for Excellence money was not increased. As you know, we're suffering from a severe economic downturn that is faced not only by our state but nation wide. So, New York State held all of the funds flat which means that we were not given increases in Contract for Excellence money. So for this year there are no new funds and so schools are asked to maintain our effort which was approved from last year. So no new programs can be expanded. So, as you can see at the bottom, it's -- all proposed allocations described in this plan are preliminary and contingent upon further analysis of school-based conditions. So for example, that means that if your school used the money to lower class size however, if does not have the space to do so this year or it lost registers and can no longer do that, then the school's allocation might be slightly less, okay?

If you look at page 4, on page 4 is a chart showing the city-wide Contract for Excellence plan by allocation. So if you look at it, you see the blue discretionary allocation to schools that was 242 million dollars for sixty-three percent of the total allocation. Then you see in green, the district-wide initiatives, that was thirty-nine million for ten percent of the allocation. Maintenance of effort, thirty million, eight percent. And targeted allocations to schools seventy-six million for twenty percent of the allocation. Okay? As you can see, the total allocation was 387 million dollars.

If you look at page 5, here we see the funds by program area. So, for example, class size reduction thirty-nine percent of the funds were used to reduced class size city wide; 153 million dollars. Time on task, you see there was twenty-seven percent of the allocation or 103 million dollars. Teacher and principal quality, fifty-six million for fourteen percent of the allocation. Middle and high school restructuring, thirty-nine million, ten percent of the allocation. Full-day pre-k, six million dollars for two percent of the allocation. Model programs for English language learners, twenty-seven million dollars, seven percent of the allocation. And a small piece to be determined, four million dollars for one percent. Here again is all proposed discretionary spending by program area. And again, similar to the one before, it just delineates how much is being spent on each of the different programs. Okay?

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So if we look at page -- I'm on page 7. And this describes what each one needs. So discretionary allocation to schools it was 242 million in restricted Contract for Excellence funds were released to 1400 plus schools in May of 2009 for sixty-three percent of the total contract amount. And describing that is that is what's given to schools that Contract for Excellence funds should be used to establish continuity of service for existing programs. So like I said before, it was not to initiate new programs but maintenance of effort of what was allocated for last year. However, it's important to note, as I said before, that if a school could not maintain that effort due to significant changes, whatever the changes were -- so it could be in student population, it could be in overall instructional strategy -- it could choose to reallocate those funds to a different program area.

The amount per school was the same as 2008/2009 and that was determined using a formula based on student need and defined by the State Education Department and Contract for Excellence regulations. Now, of course, in looking at the funds, it would look like schools got less money only because teacher's salaries were increased, but it didn't. It received the same amount of funds. But as a school you might have less in terms of being able to do more.

Now, if you look at page 8, targeted allocation to schools, and that was seventy-six million and in this category's of the preliminary posting of our plan, schools receiving this allocation were chosen based on overall student need and capacity to carry out specific program. And that was twenty percent of the total contract amount. The funds allocated by the Department of Education directly to schools for specific uses that are eligible within the Contract for Excellence program areas. So that was sixty-one million for collaborative team teaching, that CTC classrooms, six million for full-day pre-k, 7 million for autism spectrum disorder classrooms, two million for ELL, English language learners summer school. And schools that received the targeted C4E allocations in 2008/2009 received those allocations again in 2009/2010 as long as they retain the population necessary to maintain this effort. So for example, if a school was funded to support ten new CTT students in 2008 and 2009 and had a loss, a net loss, of eight CTT students in 2009/2010, that school received for school year '10 C4E CTT allocation that is lower than the year before. So if they lost a student, they did not receive the same allocation. It was reduced. Okay?

If we look at page 9, this is district-wide initiatives and that thirty-nine million in our estimate in this category. Well, these funds will not appear on school's budget, the department is required to attribute dollars to impact the schools as part of this DOE city-wide C4E plan. That's ten percent of the total contract allocation. So the funds allocated to central programs that directly benefit high-need school; seven million went to multiple pathways to graduation initiatives for over-age and under-credited student; ten million went to principal training initiatives, five million went to school restructuring initiatives, seven million went to year two of English language learners success and middle school success grants and ten million went to college and AP prep for high-need 9 through 12 students. And please note, this is new in 9/10 and replaces the higher allocation in '08/'09

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for the middle school success program which tapers down in the second year. If you see at the bottom, the maintenance of effort, that was thirty million, eight percent of the total contract amount and the department proposes to spend these funds to maintain summer programs impacting the student with the lowest academic achievement in the city.

If you look now on page 10. Here you see the proposed discretionary spending in our district, District 10. Schools in this district were allocated discretionary Contract for Excellence funds and schools have proposed to spend these funds as follows. So you can see in our district, the schools that received the funds chose to spend it as follows: class size reduction -- and you can see that forty percent, 40.9 percent of the funds that schools received were spent on that; time on task, 19.5; teacher and principal quality initiatives, 18.1 percent; middle and high school restructuring, 13.5 and there you see the dollar amounts; full-day pre-k, no funds; model programs for English language learners, 14.3 percent. So comprehensive information about these proposed allocations, including the school level programs strategies and performance targets are available online. And there's the web address that you can go and see for individual schools.

On page 12, continuing for District 10 -- I should really say here you see the city-wide total and then you see the District 10 total. So for class size reduction which is creation of additional classrooms to lower class size, in our district, it was five million dollars plus for 17.4 percent. Reducing teacher/student ratio through Team Teaching Strategies. As you know, in some schools, it is not possible to reduce class size because of classroom space. But, principals can do that through a team teaching model. And so seven million dollars plus were spent on that, 22.9 percent. For the total being 40.3 percent, twelve million dollars was spent on reducing class size. Time on task, which is before and after school programs, summer school programs, dedicated instructional time, individualized tutoring. And there, on the side, you can see the amounts city wide and you can see the amounts for our district for each one of those areas.

And for the total, for our district, it was six million dollars plus for 20.4 percent of the allocation. Teacher and principal quality initiatives, and that includes programs to recruit/retain highly qualified teachers, you can see that it was 5.5 percent of the allocation; professional mentoring for beginning teachers and principals for four percent of the allocation; instructional coaches for teachers, 2.9 percent; leadership coaches for principals, 4.2 percent; and there you can see the total of two million dollars plus for 7.5 percent of the allocation for District 10.

Again, just showing it to you in a different way, all funds by program strategy, the middle and high school restructuring and that includes instructional changes that was 17.4 percent; structural changes, for our district, 1.8; for a total of nineteen percent of six million dollars. Full-day pre-k, .8 percent and you can see the amount. Model programs for English language learners, that includes innovative programs for English language learners -- as you know, our district has quite a large percentage of English language learners -- and so 9.4 percent for two

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million dollars was spent on innovative programs for our English language learners. For teacher recruitment, parent involvement and there is, you see the total for model programs for ELLs for 9.4 percent for two million dollars.

MS. SPEAKER:

4.9 percent?

MS. MENENDEZ:

I'm sorry.

MS. SPEAKER:

4.9 or 9.4 percent?

MS. MENENDEZ:

9.4. I'm sorry. Did I say 4.9?

MS. SPEAKER:

Okay.

MS. MENENDEZ:

9.4. I'm on page 12, okay?

MS. MENENDEZ:

And there you can see the total amount that was received by District 10 which is thirty-one million dollars.

Now looking at the next page, it's important to note, in terms of class size reduction, that as teachers' salaries rise more funds are required to maintain the same number of teachers as last year. So as I said before, teachers' salaries went up so obviously you could not increase that to another class. Impacted by register changes and average teacher salary changes, even schools that allocate the same amount of money year over year to class size reduction activities, may experience a slight increase in class size or pupil-teacher ratio. And, because of the severe economic downturn faced by the state and our nation, it required an average of 4.9 cut to the schools causing a large number of schools to eliminate a teaching position which could also have some impact on class size depending on the position. Many schools choose class size reduction or pupil-teacher ratio strategy to avoid increased class size.

And finally, again, we want to encourage public comment so we will take public feedback into account in the coming month as we continue to develop a city-wide Contract for Excellence plan. The deadline for public comment is October 8th and that's thirty days from the date that the comprehensive 2009/10 proposed plan

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was posted to the departments website. We encourage you to comment and we'd like you to know that the public may comment on any aspect of the plan including how schools are planning to spend their discretionary funds within the six allowable program areas, how the DOE is allocating targeted contract funds to schools, how the DOE is allocating funds for district-wide initiatives, the New York City's class size reduction plan and the public comment process itself. So, educators, parents and all members of the New York City community with feedback can e-mail -- and there's the e-mail address -- or can come and give their comments publicly at our follow-up meeting on September 30th for public comment.

MR. SPEAKER:

Also, for the members, in your packets, there's a school by school breakdown. It's the legal sized -- it looks like a couple of columns got chopped off, okay. One's pre-k, not a lot going in there but the ELL's a very important column. If you all haven't received an e-mail forwarded by Maria, there's a -- resubmit to everybody, Maria --

MARIA:

Yeah.

MR. SPEAKER:

-- that link that Martine

MARIA:

Though if I sent it to you, I sent it to everyone.

MR. SPEAKER:

Okay. An e-mail got posted about a week ago from Martine Guerrier, there's a link. If you can't find it, then I guess you can go to school.nyc.gov where you get -- there's like five different variations of the same data put in different ways by program area, by school. And, you know, this one has class size reduction but there's another report, you can tell which schools are building new classrooms versus collaborative team teaching. So we've been -- you know, a snatch out of District 10 right here. You know, once again, bottom line, he's going to class size reduction, but you can get into more detail by school, where they're spending that money or they're proposing to spend that money. Also, as a note, District 10, I think, gets the largest proportion of the city so we, you know -- and at 3.83 and 187 million we're getting thirty-one that's almost ten percent and there's thirty-one other districts. So we do get a lion's share of the dollars. So I think the -- September 30th hearing on the public comment is very important. People will look at these numbers and, you know, come back with it -- come back with some ideas. Any other questions or --

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MS. SPEAKER:

-- or public comments.

MR. SPEAKER:

-- or public comment at this time? I know it's a lot to digest. Once again, if you can go on the website and look at the individual reports and the individual schools here, you know, I would look at PS 24 or some other school or look at your home school and any other schools that you may think, you know, have issues with space or how are they spending these monies and you can make a comment on that. Why are they spending money on this as opposed to another bucket and that's fair comment. Okay? So once again, we look forward to hosting September 30th a larger public comment hearing. Once again, you can e-mail it to that address and thank you very much. And now we'll -- we're going to jump into the BCEP.

MS. SPEAKER:

Did you decide what time that meeting?

MR. SPEAKER:

6 o'clock.

MS. SPEAKER:

6?

MR. SPEAKER:

Tentatively 6 o'clock at Jonas Bronck Academy.

[END TAPE]