



# Prince George's County Public Schools

14201 School Lane • Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772 • [www.pgcps.org](http://www.pgcps.org)

**William R. Hite, Ed.D.**

*Superintendent of Schools*

March 3, 2011

Dear Parents:

This letter is being sent to you because your child is currently attending a specialty program in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS). As you know, the Board of Education approved the FY2012 budget in which we were forced to eliminate \$155 million. This equates to the loss of more than 1300 positions; more than 600 of those positions will be teachers.

Among the services that I recommended for elimination was transportation for specialty programs, such as Montessori, French Immersion, and Talented and Gifted. I want you to know that this cut was very difficult to make as we support choice and options for all of our families. Please be assured that the elimination of transportation should not be interpreted as an intent to eliminate these longstanding, successful programs.

Unfortunately, our deficit is deep. The cost of doing business has increased substantially because of an increase in utilities and health care costs. Moreover, PGCPS received stimulus funding from the federal government for two years, but that funding ends as of June 30, 2011. When the Governor introduced his proposed budget, we lost additional funding. Our enrollment is declining and school funding is based on the number of students in our schools. Consequently, we were forced to eliminate some very popular programs and services.

Many of you have contacted me to ask if we are examining other options, and we are. We are exploring a possible fee structure that would include a sliding scale for transportation to specialty programs. We are discussing expansion of before- and after-care and other enrichment programs which would allow working parents to drop off and pick up their children at the specialty school location. We are also identifying relocation of some programs to ensure that there are offerings closer to your homes.

We are hopeful that we will receive additional resources from state and county governments. I am meeting weekly with elected officials who are working to address our budget concerns. However, we have many competing priorities and I cannot guarantee that specialty transportation will be fully restored. I have stated that my top priority would be to maintain our class sizes.

I am asking for your continued patience and support as we work through this process. Please continue to weigh in and offer your suggestions. We are committed to providing choice and support for successful programs.

Sincerely,

William R. Hite  
Superintendent of Schools

c: Members, Board of Education  
Members, Executive Cabinet