As the school year reaches the halfway point, we are committed to building on the progress made last quarter and finishing the year strong so our students can be promoted to the next grade and our high school graduates can move on to a career or college. In this second quarter briefing, I will update you on our progress, goals and ongoing challenges that we face as a school system. Since the beginning, our administration has made transparency and accountability central to our agenda, informing you as a community on where we are and where we want to go.

We have made concerted efforts to learn from the past. Following our meeting with the Maryland State Board of Education in January, it is clear that these changes are having an impact. Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) was praised by Justin M. Hartings, President of the State Board of Education, saying that the grading accountability standards implemented at PGCPS are a model for the rest of the state. A result of our successful work in 2018 where we successfully implemented more than two dozen recommended improvements.

We are making real progress for our community, but there is still work to be done to hold ourselves to a high standard and do what’s right for our students.

Among the highlights outside the classroom, I was humbled and encouraged by the support offered during the federal government shutdown. I received countless messages from the greater Prince George’s County community offering support for students and families impacted. We established the 20,000 Meals Challenge fund to provide hot meals to students that needed one. The outpouring of support was incredible and we exceeded our goal, providing thousands of meals to students. Throughout this ordeal, I was impressed by the support from within the PGCPS community. Despite the challenging situation, our community came together to do what we do best — lend a hand, help our neighbors and most importantly, make a difference in the lives of our children.

In the pages to follow, we will update you on our efforts to better serve our students, parents and staff. These goals and initiatives include: investing more in our teachers and students, ensuring safety in our schools, constructing and renovating facilities, and reducing class size. These initiatives are the foundation for creating a school system that works for the community. Your support is critical to advancing the school system’s vision of ensuring all students, regardless of background or experience, have access to safe, high-quality learning environments, a broad array of educational opportunities, and effective support systems that equip them to graduate college and career ready.

I look forward to continuing this discussion and partnering together to make us all PGCPS proud.

Monica E. Goldson, Ed.D.
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Prince George’s County Public Schools
The State of Maryland’s annual investment in public education is significant and we are committed to protecting and providing the resources PGCPS children, educators and community need to teach, learn and excel. Our focus in Annapolis is to highlight this school system’s vision of ensuring all students, regardless of background or experience, have access to safe, high-quality learning environments, a broad array of educational opportunities, and effective support systems that equip them to graduate college and career ready.

The school system’s 2019 priorities for working with lawmakers in Annapolis includes:

- **Support for full State funding for Maryland’s public schools**, including passage and funding, through lock-box funding, of the Kirwan Commission policy recommendations to expand full-day pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds; increase teacher salaries; boost special education funding; provide concentrated poverty grants; establish tutoring programs for students in need to a more rigorous college preparatory curriculum; and expand career and technical education options for students.

- **Support for robust State funding for school construction and renovation projects**, including funding of at least $400 million for the FY2020 school construction budget to support local boards in providing safe and sustainable optimal learning environments.

- **Support for additional State funding to help school districts reduce class sizes** and alleviate overcrowding in schools.

- **Support for additional State funding to ensure school safety remains a top priority**, including funding for interventions such as restorative practices, training, professional development and infrastructure improvements such as locks, windows and doors.

We will focus on these priorities in an effort to effectively advocate for our students, staff and stakeholders. PGCPS is committed to having a consistent presence in Annapolis during this legislative session and representing the county’s best interest in the State Capitol.
BUILDING A NEW PGCPS

Looking ahead, one of Prince George’s County Public Schools most immediate needs is making upgrades to our facilities that are decades overdue. To help support this effort, PGCPS is supporting a legislative proposal that provides $1.8 billion in capital investments for new and renovated schools throughout the county through public-private partnerships. PGCPS is working with County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, the County Board of Education, and our elected officials to present a bill to the Maryland General Assembly. The proposal, if passed in Annapolis, will build and renovate 18 schools by 2026, providing improved and new facilities for 24,000 students. This impressive undertaking will provide state-of-the-art facilities with updated technology to ensure our students are receiving a high-quality education in a high-quality setting.

Building a New PGCPS with Public-Private Partnership

Public School Construction – Alternative Financing – Prince George’s County

Public-Private Partnership (P3) to acquire, design, construct, and maintain school facilities – new schools and renovated schools.

Allows PGCPS to focus on their core mission – educating children.

Lower Per Square Foot Construction Costs: $300 (P3) VS $450 (traditional)

$180 million savings in deferred maintenance and construction costs

Provides for $1.8 billion in capital investment in our schools.

Prince George’s County Public Schools P3 for School Construction

Delivery Dates:
- August 2022, 2024, 2026
- Quicker delivery time – 50% faster

Lower cost for construction due to scale

Includes preventative maintenance for life
- Shifts construction risk to private partner

1 High School
8 Middle Schools
9 Elementary Schools

Affected Seats: 17,400
+ New Seats: 6,600
Total Seats: 24,000
2020 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Academic excellence, high-performance workforce, lower class size, and school safety.

We have proposed a $2.1 billion operating budget to the County Executive for Fiscal Year 2020, prioritizing employee compensation, lower class size and school safety by redirecting $19.3 million from the central office to these key school initiatives. A continuation of my efforts to reorganize central office executive-level and managerial positions, redirecting $2.4 million to schools. This budget proposal maximizes the amount of funds and resources provided to students. The majority of budget investments will go toward developing a high-performing workforce, bolstered by the work of a new compensation task force seeking to make Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) competitive with surrounding jurisdictions.

The budget plan will allocate investment in new school programs and initiatives including: school psychologists and social workers, Pre-K expansion, Spanish language learning programs, financial literacy initiatives, Saturday school programs, Community Schools Programs and more. The budget request also supports anticipated enrollment growth and critical programmatic investments while identifying efficiencies.

Our district is comprised of students and staff that deserve a budget that adequately reflects the community’s commitment to investing in and improving education outcomes for the youngest amongst us. This budget proposal reflects the feedback and conversations I’ve heard around the district over the last several months. Supporting our teachers through fair compensation that allows them to better serve our students, keeping our students safe during the school day and reducing class size for grades K-3 so our students get the attention and care they so richly deserve moves us forward in creating a school system that leads the region. These investments reflect our continued commitment to supporting our educators and staff to meet the needs of our students for years to come.

The budget framework is anchored by investments in these strategic plan focus areas:

- $25.3 million for academic excellence
- $64.4 million to support a high-performing workforce
- $6.8 million toward safe and supportive environments
- $637,000 directed to family and community engagement
- $2 million for organizational effectiveness

After considering public input during hearings on the proposed budget and working collaboratively with the Board of Education, the Board approved a $2.1 billion budget that the County Executive will now review.
Every student who graduates from a Prince George’s County public school must be adequately prepared for higher education, the workplace and beyond. This is the basic promise our school system makes to our community and our students. We approached the issues raised in the original graduation audit with a sense of urgency, a commitment to compliance, and a better understanding of policies and procedures. Through our work, we have achieved significant improvements. Our efforts have moved Prince George’s County Public Schools toward greater accuracy transparency, and accountability, in certifying graduates.

As the most recent audit shows:

- **We have nearly eliminated issues** with graduating students who have not met transcript or service learning requirements.
- **We significantly reduced** the degree to which grade changes were used and misused.
- **We increased compliance** with administrative procedures and state requirements.
- **We created a new Chief of Accountability position** to apply rigorous data analytics to administrative procedure related to grading, grade changes, attendance and academic achievement.

Along with updating our grading policies, at the auditor’s recommendation, we also updated our attendance policy and are now providing more oversight and support to enforce attendance policies and their impact on grades. As we all know, attendance matters. Students cannot succeed if they are not in school. We will tackle the attendance issues with the same sense of urgency and best practices used to address our grading and graduation certification issues. We are monitoring each school’s chronic absentee rate, student by student, class by class and school by school. We will implement intervention plans and strategies as needed.

Trust, accountability, transparency and academic excellence must be our hallmarks. We are confident that our graduation and grading process is among the best in Maryland. We will continue our progress in making every school community in PGCPS proud.
Prince George’s County native and NBA all-star, Kevin Durant is partnering with Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) to create College Track @ The Durant Center. College Track is a program where students receive academic, financial and social-emotional resources over a 10-year period that spans their education through college graduation. To support the effort, PGCPS is investing $125,000 annually to support daily operations and the creation of a referral program to assist in recruiting students. Durant’s selflessness in providing a program that supports over 3,500 students for 10 years will have an incredible impact on our community. The College Track program provides the license to dream and to realize those dreams. We are proud to invest in student success and create brighter futures.