

travis.day@carteretk12.org

From: travis.day@carteretk12.org
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 12:29 PM
To: 'Jake Godwin'; 'Melissa Ehlers'
Cc: 'Clark Jenkins'; 'Brittany Wheatly'; 'John 'Bubba' McLean Jr.'; 'Clark Jenkins'; 'Kathryn Chadwick'; 'bottoms, mat'; godwinjakejr@gmail.com
Subject: RE: MaST Funding

Thanks Jake. We've heard from everyone and we now need to decide our next steps. I have texted Mat to discuss where we should go from here. My thought is that Tuesday's board meeting is way too early for us to make any decisions that may be necessary. Besides, with our agenda already set, trying to do anything on Tuesday wouldn't be fair to any parents who wanted a chance to voice their opinions. I imagine we'll get some public comments at that meeting. Our next meeting is June 27th, which is pushing later into the summer.

I'd like to hear from Mat regarding his suggested timeline of our next steps.

Travis

From: Jake Godwin <jake.godwin@carteretk12.org>
Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2019 12:08 PM
To: Melissa Ehlers <melissa.ehlers@carteretk12.org>
Cc: Clark Jenkins <clark_jenkins@yahoo.com>; Brittany Wheatly <brittany.wheatly@carteretk12.org>; John 'Bubba' McLean Jr. <john.mclean@carteretk12.org>; Clark Jenkins <clark.jenkins@carteretk12.org>; Kathryn Chadwick <kathryn.chadwick@carteretk12.org>; bottoms, mat <mat.bottoms@carteretk12.org>; godwinjakejr@gmail.com; travis.day@carteretk12.org
Subject: Re: MaST Funding

I clearly understand that we supported Mast when we started the program. But that was the understanding the state was going to help fund for the next five years!!!! Now that the budget has said there could be no funding or for three years possible? We have to look at the future of all the other students out there too. Finding the money locally will not be easy task as we have requested from our leaders who give the funds. If we cannot get these funds promised from the state We cannot keep funding Mast!!

On Wed, Jun 5, 2019 at 7:17 AM Melissa Ehlers <melissa.ehlers@carteretk12.org> wrote:

This is a difficult situation given our responsibility to balance the needs of our students with our fiduciary duty to be good stewards of taxpayers money. I am a huge believer and supporter of the MaST program. We have many testimonies as to the enormous benefits of early college for its students.

When I voted yes last year it was with great trepidation based on the fact that funding was predicated on unenforceable promises from politicians. As with any funding, we are never guaranteed it's continuation. However well intended those promises were at the time, it seems my fears have come to pass.

Unfortunately in my opinion, the business metrics of this program have become untenable. Without a clear plan for funding, I don't see how we can move forward. I am not ready to give up but based on the facts that funding is now in question, it is difficult to see a solution that will not compromise our financial health of our community.

I am certainly willing and able to lobby in something I believe in so fervently, but it is difficult to see a clear path forward given the current situation of funding. Without a more permanent multiyear funding plan, continuing the program for another year could be throwing good money after bad.

Melissa

On Wed, Jun 5, 2019, 6:11 AM Clark Jenkins <clark_jenkins@yahoo.com> wrote:

I 100% understand where you are coming from Bubba...but from my point of view this is a futile exercise. If we help lobby for funding this year and are successful do we have to do this again next year or every three years...and every year after that. From the reading I have done there is almost no appetite at state level to fund MaST. The question I have is would it not make more sense to put our time and resources into the three already funded excellent high schools we have?

Clark Jenkins
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On Tuesday, June 4, 2019, 9:06:53 PM EDT, John McLean <john.mclean@carteretk12.org> wrote:

The [REDACTED] email is a perfect example of which I was referring. All [REDACTED] is asking is for us to help lobby for funding!

On Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 8:55 PM John McLean <john.mclean@carteretk12.org> wrote:

Here is the problem as I see it.

The public perceives our board as supporting MaST. The last vote the board publicly took (6-1) supported MaST, regardless of who voted for or against.

The last 2 budgets sent to the county commissioners included MaST funding. Obviously, we support it as a board or we would not have approved the request.

Now, due to some good ole politicking, the state isn't funding it. Clearly we cannot support MaST with local dollars. However the public still perceives us as supporting MaST. Why wouldn't we arm them with information to help lobby for funding, unless those of you that don't support it just want to blame the state and move on. If that's the case, I think we'll open ourselves up to major scrutiny.

Bubba

On Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 7:11 PM Brittany Wheatly <brittany.wheatly@carteretk12.org> wrote:

I feel that it is our duty to have the best interest of the entire school system when making decisions. I do not think that it is responsible to move forward when we are unsure of when or where we will receive funding. In the event that we do not receive funding for this school, it is not just to compromise the education of all of our students for one school.

Brittany

On Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 6:04 PM Clark Jenkins <clark_jenkins@yahoo.com> wrote:

Hello all....hope yall have had a great day! Regardless of any other factors, does any body think it is in any way financially responsible to move forward on a program that was not funded last year from the state and the possibility of funding from the state for this year is tenuous at best.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

On Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 5:05 PM, travis.day@carteretk12.org
<travis.day@carteretk12.org> wrote:

Board,

We have a decision to make and time is of the essence. Mat Bottoms & DeAnne Rosen have a letter (attached) ready to be sent to the parents of MaST students, asking parents to “let the Carteret County Board of Education members know you stand behind them in their support of MaST” and it lists all board member names and email addresses.

I told Mat that I felt it would be hypocritical of me to sign such a letter, suggesting that I am advocating for MaST funding from the state, when I have opposed the formation of the additional high school from the beginning. When we discovered we would be losing funding for multiple teaching positions, I inquired as to whether closing MaST would allow us to help fund the loss of numerous teaching positions at other schools. But I was told that this was not a possibility. Therefore no action was taken to deliberate on closing MaST, and it remained in our budget to continue operating another year (assuming state funding). However, given the current lack of state funding, our situation is different. The county commissioners will not fund MaST if the state does not. Although I can make no assurances, the county commissioners may allow us to use the local funding originally allocated for MaST in order to help fund other school system needs, such as funding teaching positions at other schools.

As Mat mentioned in his original email, it could be as late as October before a final vote on Early College funding could be resolved. This is obviously well into the school year, so we potentially could go yet another year without state funding and having to figure out how we are going to pay for MaST. I warned about this possibility over a year ago, indicating I thought it was irresponsible to open Early College before we were guaranteed it would be funded. Now we are yet again in the same position.

Given the current lack of state funding, we need direction from the board as to whether we have the desire to push for state funding for MaST. I personally am not comfortable putting my name on a letter which suggests that parents “join us in advocating for full funding of MaST...” If necessary, we can call a special meeting of the board to try to discuss this in person. But I thought we should start by exchanging dialogue via email about the thoughts of the rest of the board on this topic.

Please respond as soon as possible so Mat will know how we wish to proceed.

Thank you,

Travis

From: bottoms, mat <mat.bottoms@carteretk12.org>

Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2019 2:27 PM

To: John McLean <john.mclean@carteretk12.org>

Cc: Brittany Wheatly <brittany.wheatly@carteretk12.org>; Clark Jenkins <clark.jenkins@carteretk12.org>; Jake Godwin <jake.godwin@carteretk12.org>; Kathryn Chadwick <kathryn.chadwick@carteretk12.org>; Melissa Ehlers <melissa.ehlers@carteretk12.org>; Travis S. Day <travis.day@carteretk12.org>; godwinjakejr@gmail.com

Subject: Re: MaST Funding

Final funding is a wild guess, but I do not foresee it coming in the next few weeks. This makes decision making even harder.

On Thu, May 30, 2019 at 2:21 PM John McLean <john.mclean@carteretk12.org> wrote:

Mat,

Awful news! Feels slimy, underhanded, politically motivated and like ANOTHER knife in Carteret County's back!!!!!!

Obviously, time is of the essence.

Tough question, but when do you anticipate knowing the final funding situation?

Would a resolution on our part be a first step?

I think the majority of the BoC support MaST (based on their willingness to fund it). Would a resolution on their behalf help?

Also, would it make sense for Katherine or Travis, as our political liaisons, to contact Pat and Norm's office on behalf of the board?

Finally, maybe we could ask [REDACTED] for some help?

Bubba

On Thu, May 30, 2019 at 1:46 PM bottoms, mat <mat.bottoms@carteretk12.org> wrote:

Board,

There has been some movement in Raleigh regarding funding for MaST. However, the versions of these budget predictions vary greatly. I have contacted Norm Sanderson and Pat McElraft to solicit their guidance and to help secure the funding for MaST. Below is my accounting; if it gets confusing, welcome to the crowd.

The Senate Appropriations Committee Report states that funding for the five early colleges approved last year (that would include MaST) and the two new ones approved for the 2019-2020 school year has been recommended for approval. That budget line is \$1,510,000.

I read in another bill that funding for MaST and others would be reduced from five years to three years.

With contradicting bills, I contacted our representatives. Pat responded quickly stating:

Mat it is my understanding than none of the newly formed schools got funding in the House or Senate budget. They said there were too many of the early college high schools to keep funding them, so they have capped the number, and many were cut out and ours in particular since they were approved but not funded last year. I'm confirming this.

Just to clarify the "ours in particularly," I responded:

Thank you so much for the quick response. While you are verifying your information, I want to make certain that I understand your initial statement. Are you saying that state funding for our early college is in doubt for 2019-2020 and subsequent years?

Pat responded:

Yes, I just found out, but I will confirm.

So, at this point in the saga, I did not know whether to rely on the Appropriations Bill which funded the early colleges, the other message which reduced the funding to three years, or Pat's source(s) that removed the funding.

A few minutes ago, Norm's office representative responded:

We spoke with our education policy advisor and he states that the Senate budget as of now would fund MaST Early College for three years, instead of the five years. Please let me know if you have any further questions.

I trust you are still with me and see that we have three versions of reality.

It is my recommendation that the Board begin to solicit help to secure full funding for MaST. We have 50 students who are finishing year 1 with rave reviews and another 50 students out of 129 applicants poised for their opportunity to attend next year. We have hired the new staff, scheduled the students, and are eagerly awaiting the August start date. We are their advocates and they are relying upon us to secure the funding.

Once the final version of this story is known, the Board must decide if we move forward if the funding is reduced to three years. I think this version is where we may eventually land, and it is the most controversial of the three options. In other words, if funding is completely lost as per Pat's contacts, I do not see how we can move forward. If funding remains in place per the Senate Bill, then we are still on the same course. If funding is reduced to three years, then the controversy begins – do we move forward?

If I had a crystal ball, I could envision a large crowd of upset parents at an upcoming Board meeting. If we have not advocated strongly, pulling all strings possible, the parents will most likely turn their anger on the Board. They must be assured that the Board has gone the extra mile, called all the contacts, and sought favors from every political ally possible. Even this strong advocacy will still net harsh words from some parents.

Finally, as I envision this meeting, there are many parents who have political influence who have children and grandchildren attending or about to attend MaST. One such person is [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] attend the school and [REDACTED]. I have always said one angers people most when you interfere with their children or their money. My guess is that I am wrong, it is probably the [REDACTED] that override the other two scenarios. I think we could use [REDACTED] to help us at this point as he is politically aligned and has media at his fingertips. However, if we opt to go other directions, he may very well be one of the vocal people at that Board meeting. I have not spoken to [REDACTED] lately, but I know [REDACTED] enjoy MaST. I think you can hear that in [REDACTED] presentations, too.

The funding story could have a final vote in July, August, September, and even as late as October. It is my opinion that July is later than we can handle, as moving 100 students to other high schools would cause rippling problems with class sizes and course availability. As you know, we have reduced the high schools by several teachers due to the ADM reduction and a MaST closure would overcrowd the very schools that lost the teachers.

None of this is positive news. I think this warrants discussion and strategy so the Board is not seen as the source of the problem. I will continue to update you should I get more information. For now, I await your guidance.

Mat

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