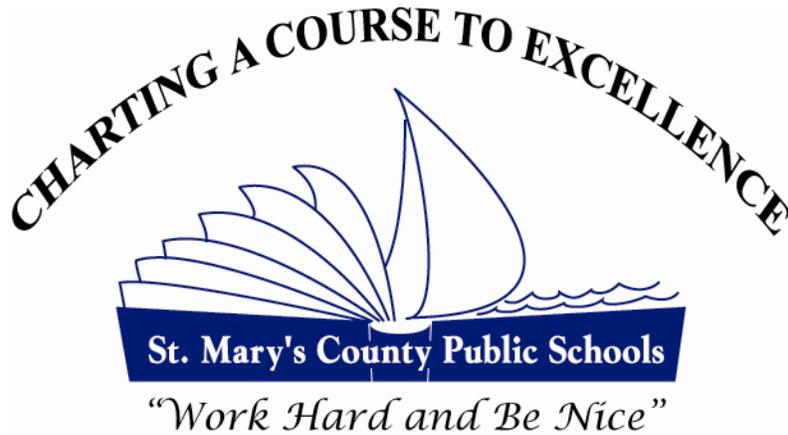


# St. Mary's County Public Schools

## Bridge to Excellence Master Plan 2009 Annual Update

### Part III: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Supplement



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**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009  
(ARRA) Supplement**

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## **Section 1: Executive Summary**

### **Planned Use of ARRA Funds**

1. State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) funds have influenced many decisions that St. Mary's County Public Schools have made regarding the Master Plan priorities for this year. Considering the "funding cliff" that exists regarding these dollars, we have focused on non-recurring priorities for the funding provided via the ARRA Grants. The State Fiscal Stabilization funds were used to fill gaps that were created by the loss of revenue to the school system from both county appropriations and grants. We were in jeopardy of losing positions but did not want to use potentially one time dollars to fund positions. We used the SFS funds to cover the cost of various components of our budget, thus freeing up general fund dollars to cover the deficit in our funding from the county. This allowed us to protect positions that would have been cut.

### **The following specific ARRA Grants are being used to support the master plan priorities:**

- a. **Title I ARRA Funds** were used primarily for enhancing the instructional technology in our Title I Schools. These four elementary schools are our lowest performing elementary schools and are the feeder schools to our middle school that is in restructuring status. The Smart technology package installed in every classroom includes an interactive white board with projector, student response pads, an interactive tablet, and a document camera. In the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms, Front Row classroom amplification systems were installed. There is a language gap for many of our most impoverished children as they enter school and this will give them an enhancement that will, hopefully, allow them to begin to make meaning of sounds and the spoken word. Research findings validated by the U.S. Department of Education support the use of classroom sound-field reinforcement which is said to improve student attention, motivation, and result in a reduction in student special education referrals. The amplification system enhances young students' ability to differentiate among sounds for the development of phonemic awareness. This Smart technology will create interactive engaging state of the art 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms. The upgraded classroom technology will also include for each school a FASST Math intervention program and installation of *Kidspiration* software which uses research-based principles and strategies to develop and support visual thinking and learning in core curricular areas for students in need of intervention. Professional development and technology support will be provided to train and assist the teachers with integrating the technology into their content and curriculum. Research suggests that technology-based instruction can and does result in learning. Lower socio-economic students thrive in engaging, tactile, interactive learning environments. When effectively integrated, technology brings new opportunities to access information and to create rich technology-based environments where students experience new challenges that would not be available to them in most of their low income environments. These

strategies will support school improvement by offering our Title I students the opportunity to better engage in learning by use of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology. We are also better preparing them to compete in the new global society.

**b. IDEA ARRA Funds** were used to address all four assurances.

Funding provided for **high quality professional development** in Autism, Reading Interventions, Preschool Special Education (PSSE) Assessment, Early Childhood Behavior/Social Development, PSSE Curriculum, Early Language Development, Physical Development, and Communication. Incentives were provided to related service providers to attract and retain staff. They included onsite training modules from ASHA (American Speech and Hearing Association) for speech/language pathologists, certification fees for occupational and physical therapists, laptops for itinerant staff and travel accommodations for therapists to attend professional conferences. These incentives are designed to attract contracted staff to become board of education employees and to retain current board of education staff.

The St. Mary's County Public Schools uses the Performance Matters data warehouse, a **data system that tracks progress**, to measure student success and inform teachers and administrators where achievement gaps exist. ARRA funding was used to purchase desktop computers for teachers in order to fully access Performance Matters and progress monitor student achievement. These computers allow special education staff to maintain dedicated computers for professional use, avoiding limited access to student data due to competing student use of computers.

To address making progress toward **rigorous college and career-ready standards and high quality assessments**, funding was provided for the full acquisition and implementation of the MECA System. MECA (*Microcomputer Evaluation of Careers and Academics*) is an age-appropriate transition, career exploration, career assessment and vocational assessment system related to training, education and employment. Funding was allotted to purchase online high school courses to allow students with school access issues to continue to make progress in the requirements that lead to high school graduation and college readiness. A transition high school curriculum was funded, as well as hourly staff members, at the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center to support career readiness, literacy, and community job placement. Travel vouchers were provided for travel to supported work sites and tuition for the Career Starters Network courses was paid at the College of Southern Maryland. Finally, updated and valid educational assessment tools were purchased to identify present levels of performance and to develop educational plans that are targeted to individual needs. The updated assessment tools align with the best practice of developing standards-based IEPs that support rigorous instruction and align with graduation standards.

**Targeted, intensive support and effective interventions** were provided to support our lowest performing schools. At Spring Ridge Middle School (in restructuring) and four of the feeder elementary schools (lower performing Title I schools), SMART Technology was purchased to support math and reading interventions and differentiated instruction,

supporting proficiency goals on MSA, HSA and Alt-MSA. Assistive technology (AT) and *Universally Designed* learning materials, K-12, were funded to ensure that interventions were targeted to student need and would result in proficiency on the assessments. These materials allow for integrated access and differentiated instruction in reading, math and science materials through SMART technology. Technology supports for instruction and assessment for students with hearing and vision impairments (AT Vision, AT Audiology, and AT Deaf Education Team) were also purchased to improve access to general education curriculum. Adaptive physical education equipment supports students with physical needs (AT Physical Therapy Equipment). The adaptive equipment was selected carefully by assessing and evaluating the needs of all individuals and ensuring that equipment is selected which best meets individual needs to allow students to remain in their least restrictive environment.

- c. **State Fiscal Stabilization**-The unrestricted ARRA funds (SFS) are being used in a variety of categories to maintain and enhance the instructional program. The enhancement of the tuition reimbursement program allowed for increased teacher training and educational opportunities at two area colleges. Supports for specific student populations included supporting Limited English Proficiency students by providing additional materials of instruction and funding for contracted therapists in Special Education to enhance support services to students. Additional supports to instructional programs included one-time allotments for library media, science, art, music, and drama. Funding was used to offset budget cuts and maintain programs including curriculum related travel, student assessments, and textbooks. Funding was also used for utilities in support of a new school opening and to offset additional costs for the expansion of our charter school.
  - d. **National School Lunch Equipment Assistance**-The funding from this grant provided a new dishwasher for Lexington Park Elementary School. The dishwasher is one of the basic pieces of infrastructure in supporting the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, After School Snack Program and starting this year, the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program at Lexington Park Elementary. The new dishwasher uses water and electricity much more efficiently and is more environmentally friendly and allows us to stop using Styrofoam compartmented trays.
2. The **ARRA funding streams** are being coordinated to support all four reform priorities. The funding streams were in large part targeted toward enhanced technology across numerous classrooms. We used our data to specifically target schools and classrooms where an achievement gap still continues to exist and in schools identified as in need of restructuring and the schools that feed into that school. The technology has impacted all of the assurances, in part. Teacher effectiveness has been enhanced in many classrooms by the inclusion of advanced technology and the training that supports it. The teacher computers, both desk top and laptop, allow increased use of our data warehouse and the many reports that it generates. This data is integral to the PLC meetings taking place at all schools and in all content areas and grade levels. The third assurance has particularly been impacted by IDEA funding that has supported enhancements to our transitioning programs for students as they move to careers and extended learning beyond the K-12 programs. Finally, the most impactful use of the funding streams has been focused on

providing targeted, intensive support and effective interventions to help students in our lowest performing schools. High Quality Professional Development, whole school technology initiatives for all students and assistive technology targeted to specific students has allowed all students to access the learning more completely.

3. The potential “**funding cliff**” has impacted our decisions regarding the most effective use of the ARRA funds. Recognizing that funding could be a one year opportunity, we selected initiatives where the various funding streams could complement each other and provide a non-recurring purchase that would be sustainable without the ARRA dollars. The large scale purchase of high tech equipment was in our long range vision and this afforded us the opportunity to act on that vision. We have never been able to target a significant amount of limited budget dollars to such an initiative at one time. Our stabilization dollars did just that, stabilized our budget that had been diminished by approximately 4% from county appropriations being cut and grants that were smaller than expected or had ended.
4. The ARRA Funds **Financial Reporting Table** follows.

1.1.A: ARRA Funds Financial Reporting Table			
Local School System: .St. Mary's County Public Schools			
CFDA	Grant Name	Current FY 09 Budget	Current FY 10 Budget
10.579	National School Lunch - Equipment Assistance	\$14,029	\$ 4,937.00
84.387	Homeless Children and Youth	0	\$ -
84.389	Title I - Grants to LEAs, Neglected and Delinquent	0	\$ 1,352,959.00
84.391	IDEA Part B - Grants to States-Pass-Through	0	\$ 1,856,744.00
	IDEA Part B - Grants to States-Pass-Through*	0	\$ 1,856,744.00
	IDEA Part B - Grants to States-Discretionary	0	\$ -
84.392	IDEA Part B - Preschool Grants	0	\$ 79,407.00
	IDEA Part B - Preschool Grants*	0	\$ 79,407.00
84.393	IDEA Part C - Infants and Families	0	\$ -
84.394	State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Education Program	0	\$ 3,171,948.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$14,029</b>	<b>\$ 8,402,146.00</b>
			<b>\$ 18,966.00</b>
			<b>\$ 1,352,959.00</b>
			<b>\$ 1,856,744.00</b>
			<b>\$ 1,856,744.00</b>
			<b>\$ -</b>
			<b>\$ 79,407.00</b>
			<b>\$ 79,407.00</b>
			<b>\$ -</b>
			<b>\$ 3,171,948.00</b>
			<b>\$ 8,416,175.00</b>
Instructions: For each of the four assurances, please identify how ARRA funds were used by itemizing expenditures for each assurance. Indicate the grant CFDA number as the source of the funds for the expenditure.			
<b>Assurance 1:</b> Increase teacher effectiveness and address inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers (recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers and principals).			
<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Tuition Reimbursement	84.394	\$ 538,880.00	0
Training on use of Smart technology	84.389	\$ 7,438.00	0
Technology Integration Teacher (2 years)	84.389	\$ 146,528.00	1
Professional Development:	84.391	\$ 175,395.00	0
Professional Development:	84.392	\$ 61,562.00	0
Related Services Providers	84.391	\$ 32,222.00	0
Intervention Materials	84.391	\$ 242,776.00	0
<b>Assurance 2:</b> Establish and use a pre-K through college and career data system to track progress and foster continuous improvement (building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices).			
<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Desktop computers for intervention and monitoring	84.389	\$ 30,100.00	0
Desktop computers for intervention and monitoring	84.391	\$ 15,000.00	0
<b>Assurance 3:</b> Make progress towards rigorous college and career-ready standards and high quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including limited English proficient students and students with disabilities (adopting internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace).			
<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
ESOL MOI	84.394	\$ 16,000.00	0
MECA Instructional and Assessment	84.391	\$ 44,020.00	0
Transitions HS Curriculum	84.391	\$ 6,000.00	0
Hourly staff	84.391	\$ 34,560.00	0
Transportation Vouchers	84.391	\$ 1,000.00	0
Tuition for Career Starters Network	84.391	\$ 10,000.00	0
Educational Assessment Tools	84.391	\$ 101,268.00	0
<b>Assurance 4:</b> Provide targeted, intensive support and effective interventions to turn around schools identified for corrective action and restructuring (turning around lowest performing schools).			
<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
SMART Technology to support interventions	84.391	\$ 800,000.00	0
Assistive Technology and Universally Designed Mat	84.391	\$ 196,442.00	0
Assistive Technology and Universally Designed Mat	84.392	\$ 17,845	0
Technology Supports Vision, Audiology, Deaf Education	84.391	\$ 90,805.00	0
Technology and adaptive equipment -Physical Therapy	84.391	\$ 39,928.00	0
Compliance for implementation of IDEA	84.391	\$ 67,328.00	0
SMART Technology and intervention software	84.389	\$ 995,709.00	0
Para educators and technology assistants	84.389	\$ 104,628.00	0
<b>Other:</b> Please itemize other uses of ARRA funds in this category.			
<b>Expenditures:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Spec Ed Contracted Therapists	84.394	\$ 152,207.00	0
Non-Public Placements	84.394	\$ 186,072.00	0
Curriculum Related Field Trips	84.394	\$ 417,977.00	0
Library Media MOI	84.394	\$ 50,000.00	0
Rag Prig Textbooks	84.394	\$ 209,828.00	0
CTE MOI	84.394	\$ 72,592.00	0
Rag Prig MOI	84.394	\$ 1,101,018.00	0
Utilities (Oil & Electricity)	84.394	\$ 427,374.00	0
Equipment - dishwasher	10.579	\$ 18,966.00	0
Parent Involvement: Required 1% reservation	84.389	\$ 14,000.00	0
Non-Public: Required reservation	84.389	\$ 28,061.00	0
Homeless: Required reservation	84.390	\$ 1,606.00	0
Indirect Costs	84.390	\$ 24,889.00	0
* We will be receiving an additional \$1,856,744 from Passthrough and \$79,407 from Preschool Passthrough to be used through FY 2011.			

**Section 2:**  
**State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Program – Phase I**

**Planned Use of State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) Funds**

1. The unrestricted ARRA funds (SFS) are being used in a variety of categories to maintain and enhance the instructional program. The primary areas of focus include improving teacher effectiveness and providing targeted, intensive support to students. These include the following:
  - Enhancement of the tuition reimbursement program to allow for increased teacher training and educational opportunities at two area colleges;
  - Supporting Limited English Proficiency by providing additional materials of instruction for students;
  - Funding for contracted therapists in Special Education to enhance support services to students;
  - Providing additional funding for non-public school placements to offset state cuts to this activity and maintain needed services;
  - Maintaining curriculum related travel which provides additional learning experiences for our students to include Fine Arts, Starbase Atlantis, Fairlead Academy (alternative school), athletics, student orientation, special events, and other related programs;
  - Additional one-time allotment for library media supplies and materials to enhance our collection in support of students;
  - Purchasing additional textbooks in support of new courses, our STEM program, and increased student enrollment;
  - Additional one-time allotment for our Career and Technology Center for supplies and materials;
  - Funding for additional testing assessments to maintain rigor for all students;
  - Additional one-time non-capitalized equipment in support of science, technology, art, music, drama, audiovisual, and special needs;
  - Funding for utilities in support of a new school opening and to offset additional costs for the expansion of our charter school.
  
2. The State Fiscal Stabilization (SFS) funds are not being used for specific construction projects.
  
3. Discussions regarding the “funding cliff” were central to the development of the FY 2010 operating budget and will continue into 2011 and 2012. Approximately \$4.8 million was cut from existing programs and initiatives in order to balance the budget. Without the influx of SFS funding, the school systems budget would have experienced a 4% decrease and additional program and personnel cuts would have been necessary. With the development of the FY 2011 operating budget, discussions are already underway to adjust program and personnel needs in order to develop a budget which will address the current and future fiscal realities facing the school system.