

Investing in Our Future Education and the Economy in Prince George's County

A Report on the Prince George's Business-Education Summit

Sponsored by the
Prince George's Business-Education Alliance

December 4, 2004



 Prince George's
Business-Education
ALLIANCE
Our Children. Our Schools. Our Future.

The Prince George's Business-Education Alliance

P.O. Box 73

College Park, MD 20741-0073

phone: (301) 277-8042

fax: (301) 864-2977

e-mail: alliance@pgbea.org

www.pgbea.org

Executive Director: David R. Merkwowitz

Contributing Editor: Catherine A. Smith,
Community-Based Communications, LLC

Design and Production: Ellen Cornett
Graphic Design & Production

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Alliance

The Prince George's Business-Education Alliance
was created to ensure that the children of Prince
George's County receive an excellent education,
from kindergarten through college. We believe
that the future prosperity of Prince George's and
the well-being of its citizens depend on the quality
of its schools, and that how we care for our
children and the opportunities we offer them
reflect our values as a community.

The Alliance provides a forum in which business
and education leaders come together to identify
and address issues of common concern. Through
research, policy analysis, and advocacy, the
Alliance seeks to inform elected officials, the
media, and county residents about the role and
importance of public education; promote cooperation
between businesses and educators; improve the
management and efficiency of our educational
institutions; and enhance the local, regional,
and national reputation of the county's public
schools and colleges.

The Alliance's three major goals are to:

- Secure the financial resources needed to provide a world-class education for all Prince George's County students.
- Improve perceptions of the county's public schools and colleges.
- Build confidence in the county's educational institutions on the part of elected and appointed officials and the general public.

An independent, nonprofit organization, the
Alliance is not affiliated with any government

agency or educational institution. Membership
in the Alliance is open to all businesses that operate
in Prince George's County and, on an affiliate
basis, to business associations and foundations.
The membership currently includes more than
three dozen major companies that employ thousands
of county residents, as well as virtually every
major business association in the county and
the CEOs of the public school system and
Prince George's Community College.

Information on how to join the Alliance is available
on its website, www.pgbea.org

Membership

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Corporation
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Education

Prince George's Community College
Prince George's County Public Schools

Affiliate Organizations

Community Teachers Institute
FACTS: Foundation for Automotive &
Construction Technology for Students
Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable
Maryland-National Capital Building Industry
Association
Peter N.G. Schwartz Foundation
Prince George's Black Chamber of Commerce
Prince George's Chamber of Commerce
Prince George's County Association of Realtors
Prince George's County Board of Trade
Prince George's Tech Council
Prince George's Workforce Services Corporation
South County Economic Development Association

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Program

Prince George's Business-Education Summit Saturday, December 4, 2004 Prince George's Community College

Greetings and Introductions

Introductions: David R. Merkowitz, Executive Director,
Prince George's Business-Education Alliance

Greetings:

The Honorable Jack B. Johnson, County Executive,
Prince George's County

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen, U.S. House of Representatives

Keynote Address: "Linking Public Education and Economic Development"

Introduction: Elizabeth S. Casto, Director of Research,
Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable

Speaker: Dr. Stephen S. Fuller, Director, Center for Regional Analysis,
George Mason University

Session One: "The Legislative Agenda"

Moderator: Dr. Ronald A. Williams, President,
Prince George's Community College

Panelists:

Dr. André J. Hornsby, Chief Executive Officer,
Prince George's County Public Schools

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair, Education Subcommittee, Education,
Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, Maryland State Senate

The Honorable James E. Proctor, Jr., Chair, Education and Economic
Development Subcommittee, Appropriations Committee,
Maryland House of Delegates

Session Two: "The Prince George's Dilemma: Can the County Rise to the Challenge?"

Moderator: David H. Michael, Senior Vice President,
The Michael Companies

Panelists:

Mary M. Levy, Director, Public Education Reform Project,
Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
Thomas M. Himler, Director, Office of Management and Budget,
Prince George's County

Fredrick E. Nunley, Vice President for Administration and Finance,
Prince George's Community College

Luncheon

Sponsored by Pepco

Introduction: Catherine A. Smith, President,
Community-Based Communications, LLC

Speaker: Dr. Alvin Thornton, Associate Provost, Howard University

Session Three: "The Business-Education Connection"

Moderator: Sidney Gibson, Vice President,
South County Economic Development Association

Panelists:

Dr. Thomas C. Tuttle, President, The Tuttle Group International
Dr. Daniel P. Mosser, Vice President for Workforce Development and
Continuing Education, Prince George's Community College
John D. Porcari, Vice President for Administrative Affairs,
University of Maryland College Park

Summation and Closing Remarks

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Acknowledgements

Credit for the success of the Prince George's Business-Education Summit belongs to many parties, particularly the speakers and participants, who, in willingly sharing their time, knowledge, ideas and insights, demonstrated their deep concern for the children of Prince George's County.

Prince George's Community College served as host for the Summit. President Ronald A. Williams and Dean of College Life Services Jay H. Boyar and their staffs provided invaluable assistance, cheerfully and enthusiastically making all arrangements for a complex event even as the college was nearing the end of the fall semester. Their cooperative spirit is greatly appreciated.

Pepco sponsored the Summit luncheon, and our thanks go to Maryland Regional Vice President Thomas H. Graham for his support and generosity. We also are grateful to County Councilman Thomas R. Hendershot and the Better Communities Committee for their sponsorship of the continental breakfast and refreshments.

Others also contributed greatly to the Summit and the preparation of this report. Anne Harter provided logistical support and coordination prior to the Summit, handled media relations, and supervised operations on the day of the event with professionalism and aplomb. Micah Moss Greenberg helped with Summit preparations and provided crucial staff assistance during the Summit itself.

Catherine A. Smith of Community-Based Communications, LLC, participated in the Summit and prepared this report. Drawing on her experience as a member of the Prince George's County Board of Education, she successfully captured the themes of the presentations and discussions and identified the critical information and data that should make the report useful and informative to a broad audience.



Audience members at the Prince George's Business-Education Summit on December 4, 2004.

Executive Summary

At a day-long Summit in December 2004, business and education leaders, elected officials, and other invited guests met to explore the relationship between public education and the economy in Prince George's County. Several key findings came out of the panel presentations and ensuing discussion:

- Prince George's County is positioned to be an economic dynamo in the next 25 years—if it has the infrastructure, including a strong public school system, to support its potential growth. Businesses now go where the workforce is, not vice versa. The county's biggest competition for new business development is its neighboring counties.
- The county's economy is expected to grow by 173 percent between 2004 and 2030, compared with region-wide growth of 101 percent.
- In the last 24 years—since 1981—only one Board of Education budget request has been fully funded. Class size, repairs to buildings, curriculum development, teacher recruitment and retention, books, supplies, the pre-K program—all of these and much more have been affected negatively by the underfunding of education for almost two generations of schoolchildren.
- Federal, state, and local governments share the responsibility for funding public education adequately. Currently, none is meeting that responsibility.
- Prince George's Community College is the first choice for postsecondary education for many county high school graduates, but it, too, is grossly underfunded. Recent tuition increases have made PGCC unaffordable for many students.

The business community has an important role to play in advocating for more public funding for education.

- Workforce training at the postsecondary level is critical to growing the high-end service sector (accountants, teachers, etc.) that will provide most of the projected 140,000 new jobs the county will add by 2030.
- The University of Maryland College Park is the county's third-largest employer and an economic force, but Prince George's residents have not directly benefited from this “jewel in plain sight” to the extent possible. The lack of quality housing and good public schools impedes the university's efforts to hire employees who also would live in the county.
- The business community has an important role to play in advocating for more public funding for education—especially full funding of the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002, which adopted the

Thornton Commission recommendations. This includes the Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI), which targets additional resources to Prince George's County. The Bridge to Excellence Act was designed to eliminate educational inequities by significantly increasing state aid to every county in Maryland. It calls for a total of \$1.3 billion in additional annual spending on public education by 2008.

The Prince George's Business-Education Alliance will continue to work with educators, administrators, political leaders, government agencies, and business leaders to mobilize support for public education. *Our children. Our schools. Our future.* All depend on our willingness to fight for a public education system that meets the needs of every student—and, in the process, helps the county to fulfill its economic promise.



Patricia Hayes-Parker of the Prince George's Economic Development Corp., Richard R. Reed of Rifkin, Livingston, Levitan & Silver, and June White Dillard of the Prince George's County Chapter of the NAACP at the December 2004 Summit.

Introduction

On Saturday, December 4, 2004, the Prince George's Business-Education Alliance gathered more than 40 business and education leaders, elected officials, and other invited guests to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing Prince George's County and its educational institutions. The goal of the Alliance in sponsoring the first Prince George's Business-Education Summit was to learn in greater detail how the public schools and Prince George's Community College contribute to the local economy and to foster consensus among participants on an agenda to strengthen the county's public education system.



Emergency Medical Technician Class, Prince George's Community College.

Through their presentations, and in the ensuing discussions, the speakers and panelists at the Summit:

- Demonstrated how essential public education is to the growth of the county's economy and the improvement of its quality of life;
- Clarified how the schools and the community college are financed and the current state of education funding;
- Articulated the county's efforts at education reform and the obstacles these efforts must overcome; and
- Identified ways in which the business community can both support and benefit from a strong system of public education in the county.

The Summit also helped the Alliance develop its legislative agenda for the 2005 session of the Maryland General Assembly (see page 22).

This report tracks the themes that ran through the presentations and discussions at the Summit and recounts some of the data shared by the speakers. Its purpose is to educate the broader public on the needs of the county school system and Prince George's Community College and

create political momentum for policy makers to address those needs.

Summit participants pointed out that the public by and large does not know how the schools and the community college are financed, and that support for full funding for all levels of education can be generated only if citizens understand the value of public education in its broadest sense. As Dr. Alvin Thornton, the Summit's luncheon speaker, said, "The issue is much larger than money. It's not even first about money... It's about our kids having a oneness of opportunity that is uniform and universal. It is about them having a bridge to cross over where all the planks are sound."

Informing the public about the nature of these "planks" will "create a publicly known operating consensus about education in Prince George's County," Thornton said. "If the Alliance doesn't do anything other than that, that's an amazing accomplishment."

This report presents some of the ideas the Alliance will use in its efforts to frame the discussion, create that operating consensus, and stimulate the level of investment in public education that is needed to guarantee the health and well-being of Prince George's County in the 21st century.

Public schools are the key to attracting more households who can fulfill the skills requirements of the future workforce.

The Potential for Economic Growth

The Summit began with an assessment of how the county is positioned for economic growth over the next several decades—with public education as a critical component of this growth.

County Executive Jack B. Johnson characterized the beginning of construction on National Harbor as “a paradigm shift for the county in terms of economic development.”

“On the educational front,” he added, “lots of wonderful things are happening.” For example, the public school budget now stands at \$1.28 billion—\$112 million more than in fiscal 2004. The County Council and the Board of Education recently agreed to build two new high schools. In addition, the completely renovated Bladensburg High School and two new elementary schools will open in August 2005, as will one renovated elementary school. The county plans to build additions to three existing high schools, which will add 1,600 seats at the high-school level, in the next two fiscal years, and renovate one middle school within the next six years.

Also, Johnson said, public funds are in place to air condition every school, and an amendment to the telephone tax legislation will “allow us to use 10 percent of the . . . revenues to repair schools . . . which will start in July and be a huge repair program.”

“So we are moving in the right direction,” Johnson proclaimed.

Thomas M. Himler, director of the county's Office of Management and Budget, cited several positive economic indicators, including the following:

- Strong General Fund reserves;
- Tax revenue in 2004 that exceeded expectations;
- Employment growth;
- Continually rising household income levels; and
- A strong housing market, with the median home sales price rising by 25.8 percent and new home sales prices increasing by 19 percent between 2003 and 2004.

A Booming Regional Economy

In a detailed analysis of the county's economic outlook, the Summit's keynote speaker, Dr. Stephen S. Fuller, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University, noted that the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area—including Prince George's County—outperformed every metropolitan area in the country over the last five years in terms of economic growth and job creation.

Examining forecasts for the next 25 years is important, Fuller said, “because as you think about educational change, you can't change the



Jack B. Johnson

system today. It needs to be changed every day, and it needs to look forward to what kind of workforce we need here to support the kind of economy which wants to happen.” (See Table 1.)

“When we do economic forecasts, we let these models run, and they assume we have the infrastructure, they assume we have the qualified workers, and so they show what our potential is.”

The Census Bureau projects that the region will add 1.8 million people by 2030, and Fuller's econometric models predict that it will add 1.7 million jobs.

“In 25 years, our economy will be almost 100 percent bigger than it is today,” Fuller said.

“With a one-third increase in population and a less than 50 percent increase in workers, how do

The Washington, D.C. metropolitan area—including Prince George's County—outperformed every metropolitan area in the country over the last five years in terms of economic growth and job creation.

Table 1. Economic Forecast 2004-2030

	Regional Outlook Washington, DC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)				Outlook for Prince George's County			
	2004	2030	Numerical Increase	Percent Increase	2004	2030	Numerical Increase	Percent Increase
Population	5.2 million	7.0 million	1.8 million	34.4%	822,100	975,660	153,560	18.7%
Jobs	3.6 million	5.3 million	1.7 million	46.9%	403,230	544,620	141,430	35.1%
Average Wage (All Workers)	\$58,500	\$78,900	\$20,400*	34.9%	\$46,460	\$70,000	\$23,540*	50.6%
Average Wage (Service Sector)	\$49,700	\$65,500	\$15,800*	31.8%	\$35,000	\$55,900	\$20,900*	59.7%
Gross Regional/County Product	\$293.4 billion	\$592.5 billion	\$299.1 billion*	101.9%	\$26.4 billion	\$72 billion	\$45.6 billion*	172.8%

*Statistics provided by George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis, March 2005.
Indicates dollars adjusted for inflation.

you get 100 percent more output? Obviously, they are going to be different kinds of jobs, better jobs. The higher productivity will require more skills and more knowledge on the part of our workers.”

The service sector will be predominant in this coming economy. “When people think of the service sector, they think of restaurants and cleaners and seasonal, lower-wage jobs,” Fuller observed, “but the service sector in the Washington area is knowledge-intensive and requires a technological base like almost no other in the country any more. By 2030, more than 50 percent of all the jobs will be classified as services—and that doesn’t include government, just the private sector.”

The average wage in the service sector will rise from \$49,700 in 2000 to \$65,500 in 2030—an increase of more than \$15,800 when adjusted for inflation. “This increase happens because we’re working smarter and producing more value,” Fuller noted. “You can’t do that without better education.”

Growth in the County

In the overall regional context, “Prince George’s County has a lot to look forward to,” Fuller said. Its population isn’t going to grow as fast as the region’s total population, but it still will add 153,560 more people and 141,430 more jobs. The county’s economy will see a 173 percent increase from 2004 to 2030, compared with 102 percent for the region. “Prince George’s County has lagged the region, but it’s projected to be catching up, with the service sector again leading the way,” he said.

The average salary in the county for all jobs was \$46,460 in 2004; this will grow to \$70,000 by 2030. In the service sector, wages today average about \$35,000, compared with \$49,700 for the region. The county’s service sector is “skewed towards lower-wage jobs as opposed to higher-wage jobs,” Fuller noted. While the county is looking at an increase of 140,000 jobs, “this includes a lot of replacement jobs—so we’re rolling over less good jobs for more good jobs,

with Prince George’s [service sector] wages averaging about \$56,000, compared with the \$65,500 average salary in the region” in 2030.

In Prince George’s County, “jobs are going to grow twice as fast as the population, and income will grow five times as fast as jobs—meaning output of this economy. That is really remarkable. It means that’s your potential, that’s your aiming point.”

To ensure the growth of a stronger economy, Fuller recommended that the business community and county government be aware of the following:

- The county currently has two economies. “One is supported by local spending—at CVS, Giant Food, restaurants, etc.—which is driven by disposable income,” he said. “The other is an externally supported economy, which is driven by the National Capital functions—federal procurement, federal payroll, and the hospitality industry. The externally supported

The economy of Prince George's County will see a 173 percent increase from 2004 to 2030, compared with 102 percent for the region.

economy is the one that is key to building a stronger economic base.”

- At present, the county's biggest export is commuters; only 39 percent of Prince George's residents work in the county, compared with 60 percent in Montgomery County. “Having out-commuters isn't bad,” Fuller observed. “It just shows that the county is in an early stage of its development. As the county becomes more mature and the economy becomes stronger, more residents will live and work in the county.”
- Building better housing, which the county already has begun doing, attracts households with higher incomes and more education while also drawing more businesses. “Businesses go where the workforce is,” Fuller stressed. “So we have to be able to offer high-quality workers right here who can get to work without being late and who don't have high absentee rates because of traffic congestion. Increasingly, labor force quality is the key to business location decisions once they have decided to relocate to the Washington area, which is an easy decision for businesses these days.”

“Your competition,” he commented, “is with your neighboring counties.”

Fuller outlined a strategy for Prince George's to follow: grow the locally based economy first, which the county currently is doing in places like Largo Town Center, the Boulevard at Capital Center, and the new National Harbor. Then expand the externally based economy (which also is beginning to happen). The county is fortunate to have an advantage in its location (next to the nation's capital) and a good transportation system. However, timing is critical. “Prince

George's must leapfrog over the competition—the neighboring counties, certainly—but, more importantly, it must intercept future growth before companies opt to locate or expand into third-tier counties like out in Frederick, Maryland.”

“Public schools are the key to attracting more households who can fulfill the skills requirements of the future workforce,” Fuller remarked.

“Households that are making higher salaries can live anywhere, and they get more house for their dollar here, which is attractive to them. But they also have to get equivalent services.” This extends not just to households with children, but to anyone who wants to protect his or her investment in a home. Housing remains the largest investment most homeowners will ever make.

Workforce training will be critical to addressing “how you get 100 percent more output with a one-third increase in population and less than a 50 percent increase in workers,” Fuller said. “Obviously, there will be different kinds of jobs—different jobs, better jobs, higher producing jobs—which will require better skills and more knowledge. . . . The service sector in the D.C. area is knowledge-intensive and requires a technological base like almost no other in the country.”

The importance of public schools and quality housing was echoed by John D. Porcari, vice president for administrative affairs at the University of Maryland College Park, who noted that UMCP currently is the county's third-largest employer (behind the school system and Andrews Air Force base). Although it has an economic impact of \$1.8 billion, the university has “not been very connected to our community” and “not been as good a partner in Prince George's County as we should be,” Porcari said. However, UMCP is

focused on changing that. “We understand that we sink or swim together,” he stated. It is especially critical for the county to build housing attractive to the university's faculty and staff, he emphasized, and to have quality public schools to which they can send their children.

Bottom line? According to Fuller, “A lot of local governments think that having a strategy that might attract more school kids is bad and having a strategy that attracts more jobs is good—but you actually have to do both.”

“If you look at all of the 140,000 jobs that are going to be coming here, and the job turnover that will happen over the next 30 years, you're talking about over 400,000 jobs,” he continued. Ideally, these employees will come from within the county, and the improved services that follow will encourage them to keep their accumulated wealth here—which means that our workers have to be well educated, from K-12 on to the community college, university, and continuing education levels, Fuller concluded.

Businesses go where the workforce is.



Stephen S. Fuller

The Public Schools: Pluses and Minuses

Prince George's County has the 18th largest school system in the nation. Its enrollment of 135,755 students in 2003 is projected to rise to a peak of approximately 143,800 in 2013.

The stated mission of the Prince George's County Public Schools is to provide **all** children with access to a quality education so that they can be lifelong learners and productive citizens. Some positive signs indicate that, for many students, the system is succeeding. For example, the county's high school graduation rate is 89.5 percent, and more than 70 percent of students graduating in 2004 planned to enroll in postsecondary education, an increase of 2.1 percent over the previous year.

While test scores are low compared with those in other school systems in the state, recent educational reforms seem to be having an impact. Based upon data from the Maryland School Assessment, High School Assessments, and other measures of student achievement, such as



Thomas R. Hendershot

Scholastic Assessment Test and Advanced Placement Test results, the school district reported that it had “met academic AYP [adequate yearly progress] standards in both reading and mathematics for all students.”¹ However, the system's Quality Schools Program Strategic Plan goes on to say that only “44 percent of the students [demonstrated] proficiency in reading and 35 percent [demonstrated] proficiency in mathematics,” with lower proficiency levels for African American and Hispanic students.

“Our schools are not doing as well as we need them to do. We need to do better,” said County Councilman Thomas R. Hendershot. “The simple fact of the matter is that the public schools of Prince George's County have been chronically underfunded for a generation. Since 1981, only one Board of Education budget has been fully funded. While money alone won't solve all problems, it takes money to attract and retain good teachers and administrators. It takes money to provide more classrooms and more teachers to reduce class size.”

“Now, we're training teachers and administrators for other jurisdictions,” Hendershot asserted.

“Our professionals depart for better pay, benefits, and working conditions elsewhere. Meanwhile, too many of our youngsters come to school hungry, tired, and unprepared, with language problems and learning disabilities, and too many parents are unable to hold their youngsters accountable.

“Our community needs to understand: these problems won't be solved on the cheap. We must invest more in our children,” he argued.

Dr. André J. Hornsby, CEO of the public schools, said that the system is putting in place programs



André J. Hornsby

to achieve the goal of having “all students . . . reach high standards in core curricular areas, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better for each subgroup [as defined by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act] in reading/language arts and mathematics.” But even in his Strategic Plan, Hornsby acknowledges the extent of the problem. For example, between the 2000 and 2002 school years, the system lost approximately 20 percent of its teacher workforce; of the roughly 4,200 teachers hired during that period, about 45 percent were provisionally certified. Hornsby's list of things the system must improve includes:

- Teacher and administrator qualifications, retention, and professional development support;
- Reading and literacy skills in all elementary and middle schools;

¹“Quality Schools Program Strategic Plan, 2003-2008” (available at www.pgeps.org).

- Adequate facilities and staffing to meet the current and future requirements of a growing student population;
- Smaller class sizes; and
- Adequate funding to overcome challenges to student achievement.

Paul G. Pinsky, who chairs the Education Subcommittee of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Maryland State Senate and taught in Prince George's for almost 20 years, called the issue of teacher quality "fundamental in terms of how it affects the schools, successful instruction, and how our children learn. We need the people who have the content skills. We have some standards for teachers in place, but there are efforts each year to get rid of those and have none. To have a teacher come in for a year or two and do damage to kids and then leave doesn't help the school system. So teacher quality is a problem."

More teachers should be encouraged to seek certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Pinsky urged. "About 10 years ago we started a program two-thirds paid for by the state and one-third by the county to allow teachers to go through the certification process for 10 months. Even those who don't get certified say it helps them in ways that reflect positively on their teaching... Statewide, there are 400 of these... We would like to have 4,000, so we could hold these folks up in a school and say 'these are quality people.'"

"It's not the solution," Pinsky cautioned, "but it would be a step forward."

The system's Strategic Plan, which Hornsby distributed, cites many challenges facing the schools. These include:

- The need to improve academic performance while eliminating the achievement gap for English Language Learner, Special Education, Talented and Gifted (TAG), and minority students;

- An increased need for certified teachers at a time when the candidate pool is shrinking. (As Hornsby told Summit participants, the state of Maryland hires 9,000 teachers each year but produces only 3,000);
- Implementation of systemic solutions for low-performing schools, overcrowding, and inadequate facilities;
- Increased numbers of children who are economically disadvantaged;
- Outdated technology that must be replaced, repaired, and/or updated; and
- Limitations related to school funding.

Some of these challenges cannot be resolved by the school system. It has no control over the income level of students' households or the number of non-English speaking students it must serve. It can hire and place the best possible teachers in classrooms where they are most needed, and encourage National Board Certification, but it can do little to enlarge the overall pool of teachers.

What it **can** do is reflected in the Strategic Plan: improve the quality of the curriculum, increase retention and the professional development of administrators and teachers, provide teachers



Paul G. Pinsky

with the instructional resources they need, improve facilities, and upgrade technology. However, all of these tasks require adequate funding.

Hornsby noted that the system recently created a grants department to help with resource development. "In less than six months, we have written more than 65 competitive grants and over 37 of them have been awarded," he said. "We need to be aggressive because foundation and other dollars do exist. We have also established an Educational Excellence Foundation to raise funds to support programs on behalf of the school

The issue of teacher quality is fundamental in terms of how it affects the schools, successful instruction, and how our children learn. We need the people who have the content skills.



Thomas C. Tuttle

Advice for Education Leaders

Dr. Thomas C. Tuttle, president of The Tuttle Group International, offered several recommendations for how education can improve its relationships both outside and within the school system. Among them:

- Don't assume that the loudest, most strident, self-serving, selfish business people who always throw stones at the school system represent the voice of business. Find those business people who understand the appropriate roles and responsibilities of business and education and make them your partners—and allow them to be true policy partners.
- Set more-aggressive targets for performance but increase your emphasis on supporting your staff (education, coaching, recognition) in their efforts to meet the education system's goals.
- Clearly define the requirements of the community (business, parents, citizens). Translate these requirements into performance expectations for the education organization—this is why you exist—and make this, rather than state or federal mandates, the focus for the school or district.
- Find ways to say no. "I believe it is unacceptable to project a 25 percent increase in cost per student every five years," Tuttle said. "We have to find ways to create schools where kids learn more, but they cost less per unit of knowledge gained. Productivity matters. For example, public schools should say no to a business request or a staff request to build an information technology lab that will provide a specific vendor's certification to students upon course completion. Should the kids understand the principles underlying various types of computer networks? Absolutely."
- Break down the walls in education that separate academic from vocational or career/technical education. Teaching academic subjects in a real context probably is better for all students. And certainly, career/technical education is as much a path to college as the traditional college prep path.
- Make kids responsible for their own learning. Just as business is promoting self-managing teams as the most cost-effective way to create quality products on time, self-managed learning is the most effective way to operate an education organization. However, just as businesses need to retrain their supervisors, school administrators will have to retrain teachers to shift from the teaching to the learning model.
- Union and management leaders in public schools must create and pursue a common vision and collaborate to achieve it. Management must take the first steps to attain true collaboration with union leaders. Both must realize that a joint agenda has more power and is likely to be more balanced with respect to all stakeholders than either a management or a union agenda alone. Union-management fights serve only to reduce the public's already declining support for public schools.

Funding Public Education: The Real Deal

Funding for public education in Prince George's County comes from several sources:

- The federal government, which channels funds (often designated for specified purposes) through the county government;
- The state government, which the Maryland Constitution requires to fund all public schools in the state adequately (although it has not yet done so);
- The county government, through its general revenue sources; and
- Various others, such as foundations and individuals, who also target their resources to specific areas rather than the system's general operating budget.

Funding for Prince George's Community College also comes from the state (which currently provides 25.1 percent of its operating budget) and the county (24.1 percent). But the single largest source is tuition (47.4 percent). The remaining

3.4 percent includes contracts.² (See page 15 for details on PGCC and its current funding crisis.)

The Federal Contribution to Elementary and Secondary Education

On a national level, the federal contribution to public education has been growing steadily over the last six years, both in real dollars and as a share of school revenue. However, **the federal government still contributes less than 8 percent of the funding for public schools.** (See Table 2, which shows the percentage of school system revenue from various sources for the U.S. and the state of Maryland in 2001-02.) Intended exclusively as a supplement to local and state funds, most federal dollars go to the neediest schools and communities.³

State and Local Funding

The latest national figures from the Census Bureau (2001-02) show that an average of 49

percent of funding for public schools was contributed by states, while 43 percent came from local sources, mostly generated by property taxes. (Local revenues pay for the basics of operating a school: classroom teacher salaries, books, furniture, office supplies, utilities, and maintenance.)

The ratio of state to local contributions varied widely among the states. The majority of funds contributed by the states to their public schools took the form of general, or basic, aid calculated on a per-pupil basis. Funding formulas for distributing basic aid often are complex and combine a per-pupil dollar award with a calculation of a district's educational needs and ability to pay for services. Many state aid formulas try to equalize fiscal resources among districts.

In 2000, Maryland was the sixth-richest state in the nation (in 2003, it was the fourth-richest state) in terms of per capita income. However, for the 2001-2002 school year, Maryland ranked 47th in the share of revenue it spent on elementary and secondary public education.⁴

Nationally, the average per pupil expenditure by states in 2001-02 was \$8,900. State expenditures ranged from a low of \$5,960 by Utah to a high of \$13,136 by New Jersey. Counting Washington, D.C., which spent \$16,627 per pupil, Maryland ranked 14th at \$9,789.⁵

Table 2. Sources of School Funding

The following chart shows the percentage of school system revenue from various sources for the U.S. and the state of Maryland in 2001-02:

Geographic Area	Federal Sources		State Sources		Local Sources	
	Total	Compensatory (Title 1)	Total	Formula Assistance	Total	Taxes and Local Government Contribution
U.S.	7.8	1.5	49.4	33.6	42.8	36.0
Maryland	6.3	1.5	37.2	20.0	56.5	51.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

²Figures are for FY 2005 Funding. Provided by the Prince George's Community College Department of Administration and Finance.

³According to the organization New American Schools (www.nasdc.org).

⁴2000-2002 figures are from *The Fact Book 2002-2003*, Maryland State Department of Education. 2003 figure is from The Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce. Per capita income is total personal income divided by total resident population.

⁵U.S. Census Bureau.

The county government claims that 65 percent (\$1.3 billion) of its General Fund goes to the Board of Education. However, this number includes the \$726.3 million provided to the school system from outside sources and tax revenues mandated by the state.

The Prince George's Picture

More recent statistics show that federal aid for the Prince George's County Public Schools in 2004 accounted for 6.7 percent of the system's operating funds—less than the national average (still approximately 7.8 percent). The state of Maryland contributed 47.8 percent (slightly above the national average) and Prince George's County 44.5 percent (below average). Contracts and other sources accounted for 1 percent.⁶

The county government claims that 65 percent (\$1.3 billion) of its General Fund expenditures go to the Board of Education, and puts this figure on homeowners' property-tax notices (see Figure A, General Fund Expenditures). However, as shown in Figure B, General Fund Revenues, this number

includes the \$726.3 million provided to the school system from outside sources (primarily the federal and state governments) and tax revenues designated by the state for the school system that also pass through the county's budget (\$160 million). (For fiscal 2005, this tax revenue includes \$72.1 million from the real estate transfer tax, \$44.2 million from the energy tax, and \$43.8 million from the telecommunications tax.) When these amounts are factored in, the County's share drops to a much lower 29.7 percent.

Prince George's County State's Attorney Glenn F. Ivey told Summit participants that "It would be helpful for people to have a more accurate sense of what the county's contribution is, because there's a real disconnect between what parents see happening at the schools and this giant financial contribution they think their taxes are making."

"At my kids' schools," Ivey continued, "teachers are asking for basic materials, enough textbooks, everybody doesn't have a chair, there are major facility issues, and I won't even get into the trailer issues... When you look at the facilities, basic things are missing. When I was a kid in segregated North Carolina, we didn't have some of the problems with facilities that you see in Prince George's County today."

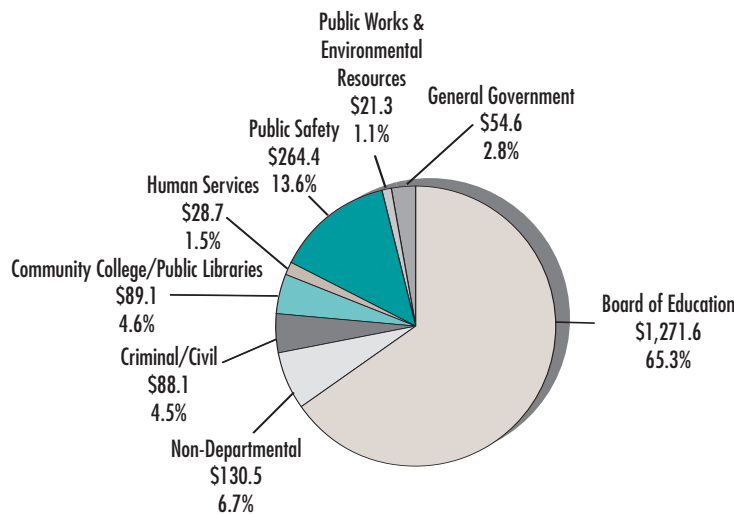
As Table 3 (Comparison to Local Jurisdictions) indicates, regardless of whether you use the 44.5 percent figure or the 29.7 percent figure, Prince George's still ranked sixth out of seven large Maryland school districts in 2004 in the share of the school system's budget that came from its county or city.⁷ Only Baltimore City's share was lower. Prince George's ranked second in terms of what it received from the state (again, just behind Baltimore City).

Tom Himler argued that comparisons with wealthier counties are problematic. "If someone

⁶FY 2004 Sources of Revenue for Operating Fund, Washington Area Boards of Education Guide for FY 2005, p. 22 (www.fcps.edu/fs/budget/wabe/2005.pdf).

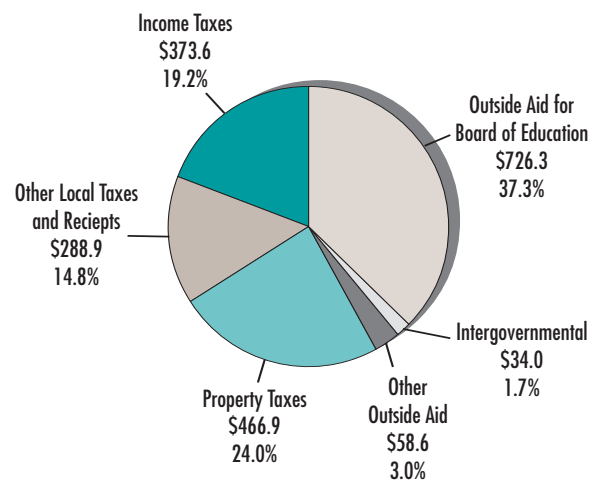
⁷The figures were compiled by County Councilman Thomas R. Hendershot.

Figure A. General Fund Expenditures (in millions)



Source: Prince George's County Government

Figure B. General Fund Revenues (in millions)



Source: Prince George's County Government

**Table 3. Comparison to Local Jurisdictions
County and State Revenue Share of FY 2004 School System Budgets & Expenditures Per Pupil**

Jurisdiction	County Revenues to the School System (Millions)	Percent of School System's Operating Budget	State Revenues to the School System (Millions)	Percent of School System's Operating Budget	Expenditures per Pupil	Notes to Expenditures per Pupil
Montgomery	\$ 1,135.9	75%	\$ 251.7	17.0%	\$ 9,938	K-12
Howard	310.6	73.7%	106.0	25.2%	8,731	
Anne Arundel	390.6	64.4%	187.8	30.9%	8,370	
Baltimore County	560.2	64.2%	305.0	34.9%	8,286	See Note
Frederick	168.7	51.8%	137.1	42.1%	8,575	
Prince George's	521.3	44.5%	562.0	48%	8,214	K-12
					8,020	PreK-12
Baltimore City	207.6	22.7%	555.1	60.7%	9,695	

Note: Expenditures per pupil not provided by BCPS. Estimate based on FY 04 projected students K-12. Total operating budget \$872,988,129/105,346 students. Source: Maryland Association of Counties.

Prince George's pays the lowest average salaries in the area—possibly because so many teachers leave for more lucrative employment elsewhere.



Thomas M. Himler

has three times the tax base, there's no way we're going to match it, dollar for dollar," he said. "In terms of effort, we fare well." TRIM, which caps property tax rates,⁸ limits the county govern-

ment's resources, he said, but the Homestead Tax Credit is far more restrictive.⁹ As a result of the Homestead Tax Credit, "when folks see their [property] assessments go up 20 percent, they think the county is getting that money, but we aren't," Himler explained. "We're only getting a fraction of it.... The only assessment [increase] that's taxable for the upcoming fiscal year will be 3 percent." In 2004, legislation was introduced to modify the Homestead Tax Credit, "but it is a touchy situation because the voters placed it in the charter, and some may not want to override it," he observed.

County Executive Jack Johnson noted that in fiscal 2005, despite financial constraints, the Board of Education received close to full funding for the first time in more than 20 years. The \$1.27 billion public school budget approved by the County Council (out of a Board request for \$1.37 billion) represented an increase of \$101.4 million from

the previous fiscal year. However, \$80 million of this increase comes from the state and most of the remainder from the county's transfer and energy taxes.

Other indicators demonstrate that Prince George's County's public school funding does not measure up to comparably sized neighboring counties.

⁸TRIM (Tax Reform Initiative by Marylanders) is an amendment to the County Charter that caps property taxes. It resulted from a voter referendum in 1978. An attempt to modify TRIM in 1996 was unsuccessful.

⁹To help homeowners deal with large assessment increases, state law established the Homestead Property Tax Credit. The Homestead Credit limits the increase in taxable assessments each year to a fixed percentage. Every county and municipality in Maryland is required to limit taxable assessment increases to 10 percent or less each year. Prince George's County's limit is 3 percent. Effective July 2005, 13 Maryland counties will tax the maximum 10 percent, including Montgomery County. Prince George's remains at 3 percent. Source: Maryland State Department of Taxation (<http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/homestead.html>).

Data presented by Mary Levy, of the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, show that in terms of per-pupil spending, Prince George's (at \$8,014) ranked at the bottom of the list in fiscal 2004, far behind Fairfax County (\$10,113), Montgomery County (\$10,644), and Arlington County (\$13,950). With respect to teacher salaries, although pay for starting teachers in Prince George's falls in the middle of the range, salaries for more experienced instructors are relatively low. The county also provides teachers the lowest level of benefits in the metropolitan area. In addition, Prince George's pays the **lowest average** salaries in the area—possibly because so many teachers leave for more lucrative employment elsewhere.

The Retire/Rehire Issue

To address chronic teacher shortages, and to help Prince George's overcome the loss of experienced teachers and administrators, in 1999 the General Assembly approved legislation allowing school systems to rehire still-certified education professionals who had retired.

"It took close to four years to convince the board of directors of the Pension Commission that we could rehire people," recalled Delegate James E. Proctor, Jr., who chaired the House pensions subcommittee at the time. "In the first year, Prince George's County picked up 400 retired teachers, not the 100 we expected. It's a program that works." However, the law expired last year, and efforts to pass a new bill defining the circumstances under which retired teachers, principals, supervisors of principals, and health care practitioners could be rehired by their school systems failed at the end of the 2004 legislative session.

Proctor, who chairs the Education and Economic Development Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, introduced retire/rehire legislation last year. A renewal of the program "had been worked out between the Senate and the House," he said, "but the principals involved in it—the chairmen of committees—would not sign off on it, so the bill died." He and numerous other delegates submitted



James E. Proctor, Jr.

revised legislation to renew the program, and to define more strictly the circumstances under which retired teachers can be rehired, during the 2005 General Assembly session.

Senator Pinsky called the hiring of retired teachers "positive, but you should take back only those who have shown proficiency. We need that bill, and it's shameful that it didn't pass last year. In fact, it's abominable."

The Thornton Plan and Budgetary Issues

The solution to the problem of chronic underfunding of the Prince George's and many other Maryland counties' school systems appeared to have been achieved in 2002, when the state legislature voted to fund public education at the level recommended by the Commission on Education Finance, Equity and Excellence (known as the Thornton Commission because it was chaired by Dr. Alvin Thornton, a former chair of the Prince

George's County Board of Education). The resultant legislation was called the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act.

The county did receive nearly \$600 million in state education aid for fiscal 2005, an increase of more than \$80 million, or 15.4 percent, from 2004. The extra money represented the third installment of the planned six-year major boost in funding under the Thornton plan. This made Prince George's the top recipient of state education funds, with Baltimore City close behind at \$590 million.

The Bridge to Excellence Act also called for creation of a Geographic Cost of Education Index (GCEI) to provide extra funds for jurisdictions in high-cost areas, particularly Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. However, an opinion issued by an assistant state attorney general in 2003 held that, because the law did not specify the amounts to be spent for the GCEI in future years, the governor was not required to include this money in his budget.



Alvin Thornton

Governor Ehrlich did not request GCEI funding for fiscal 2005—an omission that cost Prince George's \$16-19 million it otherwise would have received.

In its fiscal 2005 budget request, the Prince George's Board of Education included state aid totaling approximately \$635 million, which would have supported about 50 percent of the system's operating budget. This amount represented a \$76 million increase from 2004, due primarily to anticipated funding through the Bridge to Excellence Act, including the GCEI.¹⁰

However, Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. did not request GCEI funding for fiscal 2005—an omission that cost Prince George's \$16-19 million it otherwise would have received.

As Senator Pinsky told Summit participants, the GCEI did not have “mandating language” but “optional language, and I wouldn't hold my breath if you think it's going to be put into the [governor's 2006] budget when it comes out.” Indeed, Governor Ehrlich did not include GCEI funding in the budget he submitted in January 2005, though he later indicated that the funds might become available if the General Assembly approved his proposed slots legislation. (At the time of this report, the fate of this latest effort to enact a slots bill had not been decided.)

Suzuki violin student, Thomas G. Pullen K-8 School for the Arts.



Nevertheless, the school board again included anticipated GCEI funds in the fiscal 2006 budget it submitted earlier this year.

The loss of GCEI funding for fiscal 2005 was compounded by a shortfall in school construction money. Out of a total state pool of \$116.6 million for school construction and renovation, the Board of Public Works allocated only \$10.174 million to Prince George's—\$15 million short of what the county requested. As a result, virtually all school construction in Prince George's is being funded from the county's school construction surcharge on new development.

Adding to the challenge of adequately funding public education are the essentially unfunded mandates of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001, better known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB “is good news because it requires standards and makes sure that, when we look at schools and how they are performing, we don't just look at averages but look at every group within that school to gauge performance,” said U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen at the Summit. “Averages can be deceiving.” Even Alvin Thornton agreed. “No Child Left Behind begins to create national school norms and statistics that introduce a due process concept of equity that every community has to provide,” he stated during his luncheon address.

However, while NCLB requires a massive increase in testing and other services, the federal government thus far has failed to provide the funding needed to reach the goal of 100 percent passing rates on state tests for all students by 2014. This leaves states with the responsibility of paying for the mandated activities. As a result, lawmakers in more than 30 states have asked the federal government to change the law or demanded more money to comply with the act.

The most important step the governor and the General Assembly can take to help improve Prince George's County schools is to fully fund the Bridge to Excellence Act, including the GCEI, stated Tom Himler. Full funding would add \$80 to \$100 million to the system's budget each year.



Glenn F. Ivey

“That's why it is critical to hold the governor accountable,” he said.

Thornton noted that Article 8 of the Maryland Constitution requires the state to provide an adequate education for all children. “That says statutorily that test requirements and accountability will be high. Now we must attach that to equity” in funding, he asserted. “We must look to our state constitution and the equal protection provision and statutes that have been passed by our legislature to find protective cover for our children.”

“To go in a positive direction, we must understand the importance of education to democracy,” Thornton declared. “Without quality education, you cannot have democracy.”

¹⁰Budget in Brief. Board of Education Approved Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year 2005, October 2004 (www.pgcps.org).

Prince George's Community College: Critical to Economic Development, Critically Underfunded

Making the case for the importance of community colleges to economic development, Dr. Daniel P. Mosser, vice president for workforce development and continuing education at PGCC, cited the observation by prominent labor market analyst Anthony P. Carnevale that “more than two-thirds of the jobs being created in the fastest-growing sectors of the U.S. economy . . . now require at least some college.”¹¹

In an article on the changing nature of the workforce published by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Carnevale concluded: “States that do not push enough of their students through college are going to lose jobs, skilled workers, and tax revenue to locations that do.”

Mosser also referred Summit participants to an essay by Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, who noted, “Education beyond high school is increasingly essential to earn a living wage. . . . Community colleges produce formal performance-based certifications as indications of specialized skills. They



Ronald A. Williams

We have more students in our community colleges in our state than we have in our four-year institutions. Yet, despite the demand and the need, Prince George's Community College is in dire financial straits.

offer academic preparation for those needing an educational foundation; workplace skills development in response to rapidly changing needs; short-term training as a pathway to extended technical and academic education; customized training for employers; and general education as a springboard for four-year academic programs.”¹²

“We must invest in a superior workforce system for this nation,” Harkin wrote. “This system must be relevant, comprehensive, easily accessible, and include all appropriate partners, and community colleges must be at the heart of it.”

Mosser challenged the assumption, prevalent since World War II, that “we will always have more workers than jobs. In 2007, there will be more jobs in the economy than workers to fill them. There will be 158 million workers by 2011, and 168 million jobs.”

“Where will these workers come from?” he asked.

Mosser pointed out that “existing jobs we never thought would need postsecondary education do require it. Administrative assistants need more than typing skills—they need computer skills, communications skills, math, and more. Many construction jobs require apprenticeship training. Police officers need higher-level thinking skills, communications skills, computer skills.” He credited the state of Maryland for “doing a

remarkable job producing individuals with advanced degrees to service our external economy.” However, he said, “where we have dropped the ball is with that service economy—our internal, local economy—health care workers, educators, policemen, firemen, retail workers—those are the workers turning to community colleges for an education.”

Delegate Proctor also highlighted this gap. “We need about 15 more Prince George's Community Colleges to meet the growing demand we will have by 2020,” he said. Even now, he noted, “we have more students in our community colleges in our state than we have in our four-year institutions.”

Yet, despite the demand and the need, Prince George's Community College is in dire financial straits.

In his presentation, Fredrick E. Nunley, PGCC's vice president for administration and finance,

¹¹Carnevale, Anthony P., “A College Degree is the Key: Higher education and the changing workforce.” The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, *CrossTalk*, Summer 1999 (www.highereducation.org/crosstalk/ct0799/voices0799-carnivale.shtml).

¹²Harkin, Tom, “Community Colleges and Workforce Investment: A Necessary Partnership,” in *Building a Workforce System Through Partnering*, SCT Leadership Abstracts, League for Innovation in the Community College, November 2003 (www.league.org/publication/abstracts/leadership/labs1103.htm).

reported that since 1999, full-time equivalent enrollment at the school has risen by almost 10 percent, from about 9,000 to more than 9,800, with the total number of students now standing at 13,000. Despite the demand for services, however, PGCC is facing a funding crisis.

"Funding for our community college stands poorly against the other 15 community colleges in the state," Nunley said. "It is at the very bottom, where it has been since I've been here for 18 years." In 2004, county support for community college budgets ranged from a low of 23 percent in Prince George's, to 35 percent in both Garrett and Anne Arundel Counties, to a high of 44 percent in Montgomery County. Nunley recalled that up until 1990 or 1991, state law required counties to make a minimum contribution of 28 percent to the community colleges, "but for the bulk of time that standard was never met." By 2004, however, all counties except three (Allegany, Worcester-Wicomico, and Prince George's) met or exceeded the 28 percent contribution.

In the meantime, the college has lost state support. The high-water mark for state funding for PGCC was recorded in 2002, at \$18.5 million. By 2004, however, it had fallen to \$16.8 million.

State funding and per-student costs "are supposed to move in the same direction," Nunley said. "But in 2003 the relationship reversed itself, and



Daniel P. Mosser

the college has had substantial amounts of money taken away by the state. . . . We were behind [in funding] all along, and are behind even more because of the impact of state cuts."

On February 12, 2005, PGCC students and officials joined hundreds of students from all 16 Maryland community colleges for Maryland Community College Student Advocacy Day at the State House in Annapolis. There they addressed the unfairness of the funding formula the state uses to provide direct aid to community colleges. That formula is based on a percentage of the per-student aid received by the University System of Maryland in the previous year. Thus, the community colleges were hit hard by successive cuts in the university budget in recent years, and in 2004, to balance the state budget, the General Assembly further reduced funding to community colleges by altering the formula.

The students also claimed that financial aid is distributed inequitably; data from the Maryland Association of Community Colleges show that while community college students make up 45 percent of those eligible for Maryland's Educational Assistance Grant, they receive less than 7 percent of the funds.

In the wake of the state cuts, the county increased its contribution to PGCC by \$1.2 million in fiscal 2004 and \$2 million in 2005. However, the combined state and county funding hasn't kept up with the school's budget, which has risen steadily, from \$42 million in 1995 to nearly \$69 million this year. The difference has been made up



Fredrick E. Nunley

largely through tuition increases, which place an added burden on students and their families.

The consequences of inadequate funding of PGCC are numerous. The school needs \$26 million to upgrade its outmoded computer technology system, which it has planned out over five phases. Its faculty salaries are the lowest in the region. It needs more money to make capital improvements, to cover increased operating costs, and to pay for additional personnel to serve anticipated enrollment growth.

PGCC has asked the county government to increase its operating budget by \$2 million a year, and to provide \$20 million in capital funding for the first two phases of the college's strategic technology plan.

PGCC was behind in funding all along, and is behind even more because of the impact of state cuts.

What Business Can Do



Chris Van Hollen

Funding for public education will reach adequate levels only if the state honors its commitment to the Bridge to Excellence Act and if the county devises a way to raise more funds locally. This will require pressure on the governor and on members of the General Assembly from voters, school systems, local jurisdictions, and the business community.

“The passage of the Thornton legislation was a landmark day in the state of Maryland,” said Representative Van Hollen, who as a state senator in 2002 was instrumental in its enactment. “It was a commitment like no other state has made in decades to increase the resources for education. It’s absolutely essential we maintain and preserve that commitment.”

“Many people wanted to delay it,” Van Hollen recalled. “But we said that in the state of Maryland, our number one priority is the education of our children, and we will find resources to get it done. We need your voice” to do that.

Summit speakers emphasized repeatedly that the business community would benefit greatly from a first-rate, high-performing public school and community college system:

- Along with housing and public safety, the quality of public schools is what makes new businesses decide to come to the county and current businesses decide to stay.
- The more businesses that locate in the county—and the more workers who not only work here but live here—the better the overall economic climate is for everyone.
- Workforce development depends on having students who graduate from high school knowing how to think, learn, and act. It also depends increasingly on these students

achieving some degree of higher education, which they will receive—to a far greater degree than might have been known—from the community college.

The workforce needs of the county are expected to skyrocket, with an estimated 140,000 new jobs coming here, and turnover such that, over the next 25 years, county businesses could be creating more than 400,000 jobs. Ideally, those employees will be taxpaying county residents—which means that they have to be well educated and trained, from K-12 on to the community college, university, and continuing education levels.

Tom Tuttle advised Summit participants, “We have no time for ‘rock throwing,’ casting blame, ego-posturing. We must join forces to find ways to accelerate progress in all of our organizations. We will sink or swim together.”

Among his recommendations for business leaders:

- Drop the attitude that if schools would just act like businesses, they would be more effective. Recognize that you can learn as much from educators as they can learn from you.
- At the same time, provide resources and knowledge to enable education to improve its processes.
- Be a catalyst—force education to raise its expectations.
- Don’t expect the school system to produce entry level workers for your business—expect the schools to deliver people who are able to learn, who can compute, communicate, and make judgments.

Tuttle suggested that improving economic development, education, and businesses requires constancy of purpose. The political process makes it difficult for political leaders to “stay the course” for more than four or eight years, he noted.

“Therefore, the business community and the education community can and must together exert a considerable force for consistency in public policy as the elected officials come and go. Whoever is elected must deal with the education and business ‘constituents.’ If business and education can find ways on key issues to speak with one voice, they can have great influence.” Events such as the Business-Education Summit promote the consensus-building process, he said.

Tuttle also applauded the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, which represents “a continually evolving consensus about what a world-class leadership and management system looks like. It has versions for education and business. This framework can go a long way toward building a common language that will allow business and education to share knowledge efficiently.” His research shows “quite clearly how the model could distinguish between improving and not improving school systems.”

“Both business and education need a model to challenge the status quo and cause them to stretch far beyond current practices,” Tuttle said. “An integrated management system such as the Baldrige Criteria can do that. It can help us come together around common goals.”

“We don’t have any time to waste,” he declared. “We are losing jobs and losing kids every day.”

Summing Up and Moving On

In the closing session of the Summit, Alliance Executive Director David R. Merkwitz acknowledged the numerous issues that had been raised and posed several questions: What's next? How can the Alliance enlist the public in meeting the needs of the schools and the community college? What research should be done? And, perhaps most important, how can the business community become more engaged in the schools directly and through the Alliance as an advocacy organization?

"The Thornton funding structure gives us a mechanism for moving the money in the right direction," Merkwitz said. "Now we need to attract businesses as supporters by addressing their concerns. We need to show them—and the county and the state—that quality education from pre-K through college will benefit everybody—especially economically."

As the state's flagship educational institution and one of the county's largest employers, the University of Maryland's College Park campus is



John D. Porcari

Every organization, every government entity, every business ought to get together and come up with jobs for these kids. That's what they want. They want to work.

"a jewel hidden in plain sight" in terms of its economic impact, argued John Porcari. "The university does over \$100 million per year in construction and reconstruction of our 260 major buildings," he said. "Our procurement of goods and services is over \$60 million per year. The state requires that we have a 25 percent minority business enterprise goal, and we have a new 10 percent small business goal. We need to focus on how we take those goals and specifically target Prince George's County."

Porcari also detailed several of the "spinoff activities" that represent some of the largest ventures in the county: the Center for Advanced Study of Language, a joint venture between the federal government and the university that will occupy 128,000 square feet of office space and employ 300 people, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's new research park, with 260,000 square feet of space and a workforce of 800.

In addition, "our funded research is \$350 million and growing every year," he said. "This means enormous opportunities for the county, and we need to be more sophisticated than we have been in tying into Prince George's County."

Dr. James D. Greenberg, director of the UMCP College of Education's K-16 Partnership Development Center and its Bladensburg Project in Prince George's County, asserted that, "In terms of research activities, minority achievement and urban education, and partnerships with the



James D. Greenberg

community college, we have to be more proactive. We can't sit back and wait. We need to work synergistically."

Alvin Thornton saw a parallel between the Alliance and the Thornton Commission. "You have very significant people, representing various and diverse interests. The most important thing that could happen is to have a publicly known operating consensus about education in Prince George's County. That has to be developed, articulated, massaged.

"The Alliance first ought to say, 'We are available to be the consensus builder and projector of the image; everyone else has their role to play—the county exec, the County Council, the Board of Trade' . . . but acting alone, they can't do it,"

Thornton contended. “We need something that says, **This** is what we are all about when it comes to education.’ . . . That’s what we need in Annapolis, urgently.”

Keith Howard of Maryland Sports and Entertainment said he would like to see the Alliance “use a model of what we use at the [Prince George’s] Chamber of Commerce education committee. . . . Find something—one thing—that we can impact and make a difference—and do it. Trim the rhetoric and find one thing we can hang our hat on.”

Arthur Whitaker of the Prince George’s chapter of the NAACP stressed the need for a coordinated summer youth program in the county. “I deal with kids in the high schools every day, and one thing they are always talking about is money,” he said. “We have to give these kids a job sense, that relates to money sense, which relates to economic sense, which is going to give them pride.”

“Every organization, every government entity, every business ought to get together and come up with jobs for these kids. That’s what they want. They want to work,” Whitaker asserted. “You need to talk to the kids and the only way you can talk to them is to show them that you’re doing something: you got them a job.”

Several participants urged the Alliance to play a role in helping students determine what their potential is, while they are in the K-12 system and as they attempt to find their places in the world. PGCC President Ronald A. Williams contended that, with respect to students’ college aspirations, “what students say they want to do and what they said 25 years ago are light years away” from one another. A 2001 study by the Association of American Colleges and Universities found that close to 85 percent of high school students planned to go to college, he said. “Now, that’s not the number that’s going. Kids in huge numbers see college as a possibility and a necessity.

We don’t have any time to waste. . . . We are losing jobs and losing kids every day.

You can put all the money you want into education and send those kids to schools with the best teachers, but they’re not going to learn if they’re fearing for their lives or if they’re coming to school without food in their stomachs.

In the 1980s, it was 30 percentage points lower. . . . Something’s happening in the student population. But what is missing is that K-12 is not putting the chassis under that set of expectations.”

County Councilman Tom Hendershot asserted that, while young people may aspire to college, “they don’t make the connection between getting there and working to learn day in and day out. There is a huge disconnect between those who say they want to be doctors and how much they understand about how to get there.”

“Kids don’t know what the possibilities are,” said Florence Hendershot, who chairs the social studies department at Northwestern High School in Hyattsville. “Their world revolves around serving a meal at McDonald’s and going to school. Beyond that, beyond serving somebody a meal, they don’t really have a horizon.”

“It is incumbent upon us in the community to do a better job of making families understand what it will take for young people to get where they want to go,” she insisted.

“We’ve got to have a much better sense of what the kids want to do,” said James Greenberg. “We need to make students part of the conversation more regularly. I’m just pleading for much more direct involvement of the people we’re talking about.”

Former school board member Catherine A. Smith linked poor student achievement to the inability of low-wage-earning parents to be involved in their children’s education because they often work “two or even three jobs to make ends meet.”

“You can’t talk about success for kids in schools without talking about a living wage,” she stated.

Noting that businesses that secure contracts with the county government must pay a living wage, Tom Hendershot said he wanted “to applaud the Prince George’s Chamber of Commerce, the only Chamber of Commerce I know of anywhere that formally supported living wage legislation.”

“Similar Chambers elsewhere have fought it tooth and nail,” he commented, “and the business community’s instinctive reaction to requiring a living wage is to oppose it. Maybe that’s



Elizabeth S. Casto

something we could discuss in the Business-Education Alliance—a business community that has a broader view towards the need for a living wage among the working poor.”

Discussion among Summit participants also focused on how county government, businesses, educational institutions, and others could balance competing demands for scarce resources.

“We recognize that education is very important, but the problem of crime and economic development go hand in hand,” observed Elizabeth S. Casto of the Greater Prince George’s Business Roundtable. “You cannot separate one from the other two.” Those issues surfaced repeatedly at four community forums the Roundtable held around the county to explore citizens’ major concerns, she reported.

In addition, Casto served on a task force that dealt with modifying TRIM, “and I will never forget when they were talking about how if we lift the cap, all of the money is going to go to education. But one of the nurses in the school system said we also have to deal with social services. She said, ‘You can put all the money you want into education and send those kids to school with the best teachers, but they’re not going to learn if they’re fearing for their lives or if they’re coming to school without food in their stomachs.’”



Keith Howard



Audience members at the Prince George’s Business-Education Summit on December 4, 2004.

“The business community is out here,” Casto continued. “We are involved, and we’re trying our best to solve some of these problems, because it hurts us. We can’t get the skilled help that we need, and we’re very concerned about taxes because that hurts us, too.”

On the subject of taxes, Tom Hendershot remarked, “We talk a lot at the Council about growth issues and whether or not we should develop the rural tier. Few people know that the majority of the \$700,000 houses being built in Prince George’s County are being purchased by people who already live in Prince George’s County, who are moving up the socioeconomic ladder and getting their dream home.

“Don’t think for a minute that if we don’t build those houses here, those folks are going to stay here. They’re going to go somewhere else to buy that house. So just at the time they’re making more money, and we could get more tax money from them to make the kind of investment we’re talking about for education, we’re suggesting perhaps we ought not to be building those houses, that somehow those houses are part of our problem.

“So it’s important that we underscore the extent to which these matters are interrelated. We’re going to invest, and that means our people are going to invest, and we need to have people who can afford to invest.”

If business and education can find ways on key issues to speak with one voice, they can have great influence.

Conclusion

The economic outlook for Prince George's County is bright indeed—but only if it puts in place the infrastructure needed to attract new businesses and the jobs they bring. An excellent system of public education is one of the principal things businesses look for—not only because their employees want good schools for their children, but also because an educated workforce is so critical to their success.

It makes good business sense to advocate for an increase in education funding from all levels of government and to form alliances with county schools that generate excitement among students about possible job opportunities when they graduate and/or go on to the community college or a university.

It will take a strong countywide commitment to maintain a healthy, vibrant economy over the coming decades and to ensure that our children have every chance to fulfill their potential. Our goal should be nothing less than to make the Prince George's Public Schools and Prince George's Community College among the best in the nation—and certainly in the region, where competition for new business will be fierce.

There is no time to lose, and much backtracking to make up for. For its part, the Prince George's Business-Education Alliance will work to create “a publicly known operating consensus about education” that government, business, and county residents can embrace.

Our children. Our schools. Our future. All depend on our willingness to fight for a public education system that meets the needs of every student—and, in the process, allows the county to fulfill its economic promise.

The Business-Education Connection

Among the suggestions for business leaders that emerged from the Summit:

- Call, write, or meet with the governor and with your state senators and delegates and insist that they fully fund the Bridge to Excellence Act.
- Forge connections with Prince George's Community College and the University of Maryland. Both offer opportunities for you to influence and benefit from the quality of their students. In the case of the University of Maryland, you also could benefit from the enormous business opportunities outlined by John Porcari.
- Get to know your public schools. Participate in existing mentoring and other programs the school system has developed, such as “Achievement Counts,” which pairs ninth graders with business people so that students can see more of the types of jobs available to them. Career Education days also are important, as is the Principal for a Day program, which brings business people into schoolhouses every April 14. “One hundred and ninety-eight schools are waiting for you,” said Susan D. Hubbard, head of business and community outreach for the school system.
- Create or look for other opportunities to be involved. For example, Joan Carol, president-elect of the Prince George's County Board of Trade, noted that the Board hosts an auction every year dedicated to education. This year's auction benefits students at DuVal High School. Participating in the Board of Trade's events—or initiating or supporting others—not only helps students but also improves the image of the school system by indicating that it has community support.
- Create internships and summer jobs for Prince George's youth. More than anything, even low-paying internships and summer programs are attractive to young people and enable them to see that they can strive for jobs that are not just manual labor.

“One hundred and ninety-eight schools are waiting for you,” said Susan D. Hubbard, head of business and community outreach for the school system.

Prince George's Business-Education Alliance 2005 Legislative Agenda

Following discussions at the Business-Education Summit, consultations with elected officials and business and education leaders, and deliberations by its Steering Committee, the Prince George's Business-Education Alliance identified the following as its key priorities for the 2005 session of the Maryland General Assembly:

- Support continued full funding of the Thornton Commission recommendations embodied in the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act
- Support funding of the Geographic Cost of Education Index established under the terms of the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act
- Support a substantial increase in state funding for the construction and renovation of schools
- Support full restoration of the Cade funding formula for community colleges
- Support enactment of legislation allowing retired teachers to be rehired by their school systems to fill vacancies, especially in fields experiencing teacher shortages, such as math, science, and special education
- Oppose any shifting of current state obligations, such as retirement contributions, onto local school systems
- Support the recommendations of the Task Force to Study Public School Facilities to increase the state share of school construction costs for projects in Prince George's County
- Support funding for planning of a new health technology building at Prince George's Community College

Dance student, Thomas G. Pullen K-8 School for the Arts.



The Prince George's Business-Education Alliance

Steering Committee

George A. Brugger
Fossett & Brugger Chartered

Elizabeth S. Casto
Director of Research
Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable

William F. Chesley
President
W.F. Chesley Real Estate, Inc.

M.H. Jim Estepp
President & CEO
Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable

Sidney Gibson
Vice President
South County Economic Development Association

Hubert "Petey" Green
President
Prince George's Black Chamber of Commerce

The Honorable Thomas R. Hendershot
Prince George's County Council

Susan D. Hubbard
Chief, Business and Community Outreach
Prince George's County Public Schools

David R. Merkowitz
President
Strategic Communications
Executive Director

David H. Michael
Senior Vice President
The Michael Companies

Peter N.G. Schwartz
President
Peter N.G. Schwartz Foundation

Ronald A. Williams
President
Prince George's Community College



The Prince George's Business-Education Alliance
P.O. Box 73
College Park, MD 20741-0073
Phone: (301) 277-8042
Fax: (301) 864-2977
E-mail: alliance@pgbea.org
www.pgbea.org