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Albemarle County School Board FY 25 Draft Funding Request Work Session #2, Thursday, March 7, 2024

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- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzoY4unOtVc>

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[00:00:04] Okay, I call this March 7, 2024 meeting of the Albemarle County School Board back to order. Do we have a motion? We do, Chair Lee. I move that the board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

[00:00:38] Second. Moved by Dr. Acuff, seconded by Mr. Page. May we have a vote for that? Roll call. Yes. Mr. Bram Page.

[00:00:55] Yes. Ms. Spillman. Yes. Dr. Acuff. Yes. Dr. Berlin. Yes. Ms. Osborne. Yes. Mr. Chuck Pace. Yes. Chair Lee. Yes. So moved. Okay. Next, we will have the roll call, starting with Josiah Black.

[00:01:12] Good evening, everyone. I'm Josiah Black, School Division Counsel. Matthew Hawes, Superintendent. Allison Spillman, At-Large Representative. Ellen Osborne, Scottsville Representative. Good evening. Rebecca Berlin, Whitehall Representative. Judy Lee, Rivanna District.

[00:01:29] Kate Acuff, Jack Jewett District. Graham Page, Miller District. Chuck Pace, Ryo. Hernandez, Cisneros, Student Rep. Chandra Hayes, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. Claire Kaiser, Assistant Superintendent. Christine Thomson, Clerk of the Borough 4th.

[00:01:47] Rosalind Schmidt, Chief Operating Officer. Next, we'll rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, for Jesus.

[00:02:13] Next, we have our moment of silence. I know a lot of us will be thinking about Maggie Kaufman, the first grader at Murray Elementary School who passed away.

[00:02:50] Thank you. Next, we have approval of the agenda. Do we have a motion?

[00:03:09] I move that we approve the agenda for tonight. I second. Moved by Mr. Page, seconded by Dr. Acuff. All those in favor, say aye. Aye. All right. Agenda is approved. Next, we have approval of the consent agenda. Is there a motion?

[00:03:30] I move to approve the consent agenda for today. Second. Is that Spillman? Okay. Moved by Dr. Berlin, seconded by Ms. Spillman. All those in favor, say aye. Aye. opposed hi all right consent agenda is approved next we have announcements do we have any school board or superintendent business you do not did you want to talk about our meeting today or not

[00:04:01] oh yeah did you want to you know um dr miss lee and i met with the um albemarle gsa students today the gender um sexual alliance sexuality alliance um and it was wonderful we really like heard about what their experiences are at Albemarle and got some really great feedback that she and I are going to be bringing to Dr. Haas in the central office and especially around professional development and how we can really support those students and it was just it was really wonderful they were

[00:04:35] really brave and authentic and shared a lot of wonderful stories and about their experience in high school and I just I really appreciated it so I'm grateful I got the opportunity. I definitely agree they shared with us um they had a lot of candor and that's always a gift so they were brave yeah so that's all i had great thank you okay next we have 7.0 um public comment um actually we're going to start with a public hearing first for the fy25 funding request and for that we have you want to go public hearing first yes all right so um so there's no we don't read these uh rules

[00:05:14] for that part you do okay all right so public uh comment we we invite and actively seek the public's input in matters relevant to the school board governance and provide time in our business meetings to hear from our residents and community members. During the public comment, we expect respectful and on-topic comments, disruptive behavior from speakers or from members of the public in attendance will not be tolerated. Anyone who willfully disrupts this meeting in a manner that prevents or interferes with the orally conduct of the meeting may be ejected by the

[00:05:53] chair. Individuals and or organizations wishing to speak during public comment must sign up prior to the meeting. Sign up is available online beginning at 9 a.m. on Monday of the meeting week until 2 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Sign up is also available by contacting the clerk directly.

[00:06:14] Public testimony guidelines are as follows. Speakers should adhere to the following protocol. state name and address and voting or voting district. Address comments to the school board as a whole. Limit comments to those matters that are relevant to the school board governance or school division operations. Give written statements or and other supporting material to the clerk. If you are unable to complete the presentation and time allotted a copy of supporting materials that will be provided to school board members. Three minutes will be allowed for each

[00:06:53] speaker who has signed up to speak well on the FY25 funding request public hearing this evening. The chair may reduce the time allocated for all individuals to speak to two minutes depending on the number of individuals who sign up. Given there are more than 10 individuals signed up for public comment, each speaker will be allowed two minutes to speak. A color-coded light system is used to time presentations. The yellow light means the speaker is two minutes or one minute if there

[00:07:27] are more than 10 speakers so one minute tonight into the presentation and the red light means the speaker is at the three minute or two minute limit for many of you tonight and must wrap up in order to maintain respect for all points of view the school board requests no clapping booing or any other audible form of support or non-support be used if members of the public wish to show their support for a speaker they may stand or raise their hands when multiple comments on the same topic have been presented the chair may request additional comments on the topic be limited to

[00:08:06] those who have new information to present debate and dialogue with the school board are not allowed and use of the projection system is reserved for staff scheduled agenda items item presentations So our first speaker tonight, this will be the public hearing portion, is Heidi Gilman Bennett.

[00:08:40] Hello. My name is Heidi Gilman Bennett, Samuel Miller District. I am here tonight representing Family Council following a consensus vote of our 37 countywide members.

[00:08:56] We support the Learning for All budget priorities and are grateful for the engagement process that led to these being identified, as well as the transparency demonstrated in the published proposal evaluation schedule.

[00:09:11] We support the compensation increase because nothing is more important than high-quality teachers and staff. We support investing in English learner and special education growth. Together these two groups of students comprise nearly a quarter of total enrollment and both have inequitable outcomes that must be improved.

[00:09:33] We support the social-emotional coaches because our kids are still really struggling with mental health post-pandemic, and classroom and school behavior issues are disruptive for all kids learning. And we support intervention services because, while ACPS has many important instructional initiatives underway, there are still far too many kids behind in reading and/or math.

[00:10:01] So we know that funds are not unlimited, and in fact, are more scarce right now. But we are still concerned that this priority funding merely maintains the existing level of services when it's known that expanding and improving the services is what's really needed for students.

[00:10:19] I've heard we can't tier three our way out of this, which means that the responsibility for intervention will fall on classroom teachers. we're also concerned that the instructional coaching improvements and math lead coach are unfunded as of now we look forward to hearing a detailed plan for how the new ambitious reading and math programs will be rolled out with limited on-site support for teachers available so as as you look to reduce the budget by up to 13 million dollars we urge you to find ways to

[00:10:55] direct funding to staff at the school level in alignment with both data and teacher feedback. Finally, we will also be advocating to the Board of Supervisors on the proposed capital expenditures. We appreciate the long-range planning committee's work to prioritize and articulate the priorities so clearly. However, what's proposed does not include expansions and renovations of school buildings that urgently

need to address that are urgently needed to address overcrowding that is just growing for example the elementary school renovations at stony point and other northern

[00:11:32] elementary schools impacted by the redistricting is not included within the next five years on behalf of family council we thank all of you okay next we'll go into public comment and our first speaker tonight is colin thomas hi um my name is colin thomas i'm in the

[00:12:07] revana district and i'm here to talk about the redistricting that you all are considering soon i'm going to be talking a little bit more from a personal standpoint a couple weeks ago dr haas actually talked about the importance of diversity and supporting neurodiversity and amongst all those and for our family that strikes true because my daughter is autistic and has adhd she is a second grader at stony at stone robinson she she's a wonderful kid who loves space she

[00:12:46] taught herself to read she can regale you with the current number of moons of jupiter or things that are in the kuiper belt or any number of other things she loves music she just started taking piano lessons um but her autism and adhd also cause a lot of struggles with school um she has difficulties with um with transitions with refusal she's had issues with elopement and over the past two years she has gotten a great amount of care over at stone robinson and

[00:13:23] they have learned her learned all about her and how she needs to be helped one of the things that you'll learn if you ever talk to someone who's autistic is that every autistic person is different and it takes time so my concern with the redistricting is that if she has moved to another school during this after it's been two years that's taken to get her into a place of stability that a lot of that work will be undone and will have to be at right at the beginning and i know my daughter is only one child amongst all but i hope that as you are making your decisions

[00:14:02] that you'll think about kids like my daughter and others who will be impacted by this really very important decision. Thank you. Thank you, sir. Our next speaker would be Justin Weiler.

[00:14:23] Members of the board, thank you for your time this evening. My name is Justin Weiler. I'm a Stone Robinson parent in the Rybana district. I appreciate the effort that the redistricting committee put into their study, but their proposed plan for Baker, Butler, Holly, Mead, stone stony point and stone robinson is severely flawed given the rapid growth that is occurring in the baker butler and hollymead attendance areas any redistricting solution needs to involve moving

[00:14:59] students from baker butler to stony point the committee completely lost sight of the big picture when recommending to move students from stone robinson to stony point this then left them in a bind when choosing how many students to move from baker butler to hollymead because all of their options caused overcrowding at one or both schools when choosing to move cascadia to stony point the committee also ignored the opinions of over 700 community members that took the time to fill out the survey and provide feedback the committee's recommendation does not meet the objectives of

[00:15:34] the study because it does not move enough students to stony point to have two classrooms per grade it leaves both baker butler and hollymead overcrowded and it needlessly hurt stone robinson by cutting the number of teachers at that school. If you feel obligated to pick between one of the Stoney Point scenarios that the committee selected, you should pick Scenario B, Bentivar, because it's clearly the best option.

[00:16:01] It gets Stoney Point the same number of teachers as Scenario A, while not harming Stone Robinson, and it also shifts students away from Baker, Butler, and Hollymead, and it also has the support of the community. A better option than either one of the committee's Stoney Point scenarios would be to redistrict Gilbert Station and Burnley Station to Stoney Point.

[00:16:22] This moves a stable number and more importantly the right number of students to Stoney Point so they can have two classes per grade while also reducing the overcrowding at Baker Butler. Most of these students live closer to Stoney Point than Baker Butler and there's alternate bus routes if Stoney Point flooding is ever a concern.

[00:16:44] Thank you for your time. Thank you, sir. Our next speaker will be Denise Holman.

[00:16:51] Hi, everybody. My name is Denise Holman. I live in Cascadia in the Rivanna District. I have two children who attend Stone Robinson, a rising second grader and a rising fourth grader. I'm here tonight because our family does not support the recommendation being brought forth by the committee and Dr. Haas, and I'm here to fight for my kids to keep the school community that they have grown to love and rely upon. Cascadia should stay at Stone Robinson, and here are just a few reasons why.

[00:17:32] The areas of Gilbert Station and Burnley Station and Watts Passage were prematurely eliminated as viable alternatives for solving multiple study goals, including decreasing enrollment at Baker Butler and increasing enrollment at Stony Point.

[00:17:49] Roslyn has repeatedly said that Stony Point needs an urban neighborhood to provide Stony Point with study enrollment. This statement is not supported by data. The enrollment patterns of Gilbert Station and Burnley Station from over the last seven years, as provided by the redistricting committee in presentation number one, page 20, show these areas, while rural, are very stable and would provide Stony Point with the 12 classrooms they are hoping to achieve.

[00:18:16] The issues of flooding are true for these families regardless of where they attend school. And these areas are twice as close to Stony Point as they are to Baker Butler. Second point I'd like to make is the primary goal of the study is to increase enrollment at Stony Point.

[00:18:35] The Long Range Planning Advisory Committee ranks Stony Point's facilities as inadequate. The primary goal of increasing enrollment at Stony Point should not overshadow addressing the inadequate facilities at the school. Albemarle County Schools should address the facilities at Stony Point before redistricting.

[00:18:55] Stony Point deserves equitable resources, but the county should not move children away from a school where they are thriving to accomplish this goal. According to Stony Point parents and Albemarle County Public School employees, the trailers are unsuitable for student learning.

[00:19:11] In closing, the redistricting recommendations set forth lacks a comprehensible and sustainable solution that considers the well-being of students, addresses facility inadequacies, and incorporates community input. It is crucial to re-evaluate the options and strive for an outcome that ensures

[00:19:31] positive educational experience. Our next speaker is Katie Whitman. Hi, I'm Katie Whitman and I was one of the Stone Robinson representatives on the redistricting committee. I have two kids at Stone Robinson and a rising kindergartner. We live in Cascadia in the Rivanna

[00:20:07] district. I'm here tonight to ask you to please reconsider the superintendent's redistricting recommendation. Redistricting makes sense when students leave an overcrowded school and move to one that is not. This is tricky but it's an understandable aspect of a public education. Redistricting Cascadia from Stone Robinson to Stony Point doesn't make sense. Stone Robinson is not overcrowded and it will not become overcrowded in the next 10 years according to the data given to the committee. Cascadia is Stone Robinson's second largest neighborhood and Cascadia leaving does not solve any problems at Stone Robinson because there aren't any enrollment challenges there but it definitely has the potential to create some problems. Cascadia moving to Stony

[00:20:47] Point does not solve the enrollment issues at Stony Point. It does not help with the goal to raise the art and music teachers from 0.4 to 0.5 FTEs. Moving Cascadia does not solve any of the challenges that Stony Point is currently facing, and it does not meet the study objectives. Stony Point shares a very large border with the severely overcrowded Baker Butler. The committee ruled out the Gilbert and Burnley station areas without any concrete data. I asked Ms. Schmidt if the parents in those areas were asked if they want to be redistricted. Maybe they want to leave an overcrowded school and go to one that's much closer and under crowded. She told me that they could share their opinion in the survey.

[00:21:24] However, there were not any questions framed around these areas. So we have not gotten feedback from these families, nor do we have data to support eliminating these areas. What I'm asking for you all tonight is to leave Cascadia at Stone Robinson and put the time and the effort into truly solving the enrollment challenges at Stony Point and Baker Butler.

[00:21:44] Cascadia moving to Stony Point is not going to solve these enrollment challenges. Ms. Schmidt said multiple times in the redistricting meetings that Cascadia moving to Stony Point is a unique situation. it is because we are not at a school that is facing enrollment challenges so if this is such a unique situation maybe this is a sign that in fact it's not the solution maybe it's a sign that it's creating more problems than it's solving thank you very much our next speaker is bridget

[00:22:18] rogers excuse me karen egan hi i'm karen egan from the ravana district i'm also speaking about redistricting in the northern feeding pattern specifically to hollymead elementary school the current plan puts hollymead elementary school over capacity on day one of the upcoming school year with no consideration for the additional development that is coming over the next five years we have a thousand units already going in at brook hill with more developments in the pipeline so let's show the data that shows hollymead is over capacity since this seems up for debate

[00:22:57] the slides you all presented in october said hollymead has 408 open spaces unless we remove pre-k. The current enrollment at that time, 332, 76 available seats. The update in February, 15 kids were added to Hollymead. We take out 15 of the 76. We have 61 available seats. You are redistricting 88 if you approve this plan. Over capacity on day one. Meanwhile, the slides used to justify this to say that there is not overcrowding had errors in the numbers. So if we look at slide 27 of the February presentation or slide 37 of the superintendent presentation, they say the same

[00:23:31] thing the enrollment capacity somehow is now at 314 and when it should be 349 it is somehow at 448 are we removing pre-k or are we adding two trailers if we are adding trailers are you transparent with the public that kids are being moved from baker butler where there are trailers to be an over capacity school at hollymead where there would be trailers please address the overcrowding baker butler and hollymead are can continue to have high development there are seats available at Broadus Wood, seats

available at Stony Point, according to your data. Ruling out Broadus Wood without creative solutions that wouldn't move children twice is ruling out seats

[00:24:07] that we could use in a creative fashion to not do harm. Please don't overcrowd as a solution to overcrowding and move children to then have the same result. Also think about the timelines. If you approve this next week, the families at Hollymead need EDEP after school staff in place by May. This is when the lotteries occur. The rest of the staff must be in place by August. That's a really tight timeline for 88 new children. Thank you. Now our next speaker is Bridget Rogers. Hi I'm Bridget Rogers, Riviana District. I'm here tonight to talk about redistricting since this is the only

[00:24:46] public forum available since the final proposal was published by the superintendent. The first redistricting advisory committee information was published in October of 2023 and as Karen mentioned showed that Holly Mead had space for a maximum of 74 to 76 students. The data varies. In February of 2024 another report was published that showed that 15 children had been added 76 minus 15 equals 61 students all four of the final scenarios brought forward by the committee for final consideration included more than 61 children 73 76 88 and 101 these capacity numbers remain unchanged until

[00:25:22] meeting number six just prior to the release of this final proposal i understand that baker butler has a problem and other schools also have some capacity problems baker butler has had a capacity problem for the last 10 years. This is not a new issue and the proposed solution doesn't even solve the Baker-Butler issues. In addition to this capacity issue, the elephant in the room is that absolutely no future development or projections are included in the set of recommendations in front of you for approval. In Hollymead's proposed scenario, there are 2,800 new development homes that have been approved, 425 children. For scale, this is twice the amount of homes in both Forest

[00:25:59] Lakes North and South which cannot house Holly mean they can't be housed in Holly mean by the way this proposed plan begins the 24/25 school year at Holly mean over capacity and it will only get worse all of those numbers assume that we are on the path that we've been on with no additional development and this is simply not true by voting for this plan you will create another elementary school with capacity issues in addition to Baker Butler I was shocked when I spoke to Bayla LaPiestro our district Board of Supervisors representative. She told me not to worry. There will be another northern school feeder pattern in

[00:26:31] 2026. I did not misspeak. The divide there between the two is shocking. There are two other schools in the northern feeder pattern, as folks have mentioned, that have been largely ignored, and I would like you to reconsider your proposal. Thank you. Murray Elementary Environmental Club is up

[00:26:54] next. Hello, we are some of Murray Elementary's Environmental Club members, and we would like to talk to you about about getting reusable metal utensils for Albemarle County schools.

[00:27:24] Switching to reusable utensils will help the environment by avoiding thousands of plastic utensils being thrown away every day. Reusable utensils will also save lots of money because we wouldn't have to keep buying plastic utensils over and over again. As an example of how much money we can save is that a school in Minnesota saved \$23,000 over three years by using reusable utensils. The metal utensils Albemarle County Public Schools used to use may still be in storage so we wouldn't need to buy as many, saving even more money if

[00:28:00] we can find them. If we do need to buy some, we suggest buying heavy-duty utensils because kids would bend the cheaper ones. Some utensils will get lost but do not get enough but not enough to cost more than the disposable ones. If needed we need to do a pilot program for the metal utensils at Murray but we'd prefer to have all schools switch back to metal utensils right away. We really care about the environment and think that this is a simple way to reduce waste in our community. We also it would also save a

[00:28:37] lot of money for the school board. Thank you for listening to a request about using using responsibility. Thank you. Next up, Erica Weiler. That's great. My name is Erica Weiler.

[00:29:16] My daughter, Lily, is a first grader at Stone Robinson Elementary. We're in the Rivanna District. I'm here along with many others to ask you to reconsider the superintendent's recommendation to redistrict Cascadia to Stony Point. You've heard from many of us why this proposal is flawed. But I'd like to use my time to tell you how this potential move impacts my daughter specifically.

[00:29:34] My mother, Lily's grandmother, was part of her daily life for the first five years of her existence. To say they were close is an understatement. Our lives came crashing down when Lily's grandmother was diagnosed with ALS, a fatal condition that causes the nervous system to shut down. Lily saw her active, energetic Grammy lose the ability to move, speak, chew food, and eventually even breathe on her own. On August 21, 2022, two days before the start of kindergarten, Lily's grandmother passed away. I'm not sure that there are words to describe the trauma of starting kindergarten immediately after a loss like this. The Stone-Robinson staff embraced us, helped my

[00:30:14] husband and I to carry our child through her heartbreak. Her kindergarten teacher, Ms. Carol, the counseling staff and administrators helped her to grieve while also adjusting to being in the classroom. Over the past two years, the Stone-Robinson community has become her extended family, the people who love her and help her tackle the most challenging days that life throws her way. This redistricting choice would inflict another trauma and uproot her from that community.

[00:30:38] I know that every family has an emotional story. I know that we cannot make redistricting decisions made solely upon our hearts and I could accept this decision if I saw any logic in the choice but the facts simply do not support moving Cascadia to Stony Point. It does not make it does not get Stony Point their 12 classrooms. It does nothing to address overcrowding at Baker Butler. My daughter and the kids in Cascadia are being asked to leave their SRE community where they are thriving for a proposal that does not solve the existing problems.

[00:31:07] I'm asking you to keep Cascadia at Stone Robinson and select a different option that accomplishes the objectives of the study. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Our next speaker is Carol Kozak-Lester. Good evening. I am Carol Kozak-Lester. I am a brand new resident of the Cascadia neighborhood in the Rivanna district and I am the parent to two students currently enrolled at

[00:31:44] Stone Robinson, Hayes is in fourth grade, Eli's in second grade. And even though I imagine that my children would be grandfathered in and allowed to stay, I'm still here to support my neighbors because I believe that the redistricting committee has gone astray. I'm here this evening to express my strong opposition to the proposed Stony Point redistricting plan, Scenario A. Scenario A does not meet the objectives that were originally laid out by the committee. The goal was to decrease enrollment and overcrowded schools like Baker Butler as we've heard from other parents and this

[00:32:20] does not alleviate any overcrowding in schools like Baker Butler in addition it does not accomplish the goal of increasing enrollment at Stony Point to the threshold where the school will have 12 classrooms without the extra funding beyond teacher allocation it does not have the support of the community as evidenced by the survey responses and it could significantly harm the community that we love at Stone Robinson by cutting teachers and the full-time designation for multiple special positions I personally do not support any of the scenarios proposed

[00:32:56] by the redistricting committee I think it's clear that the committee must be reconvened to determine alternatives that would actually serve their objectives keep our kids at Stone Robinson where

[00:33:06] they're being very well served thank you next up Delana this is that right thank you for letting me speak today. Delaina Vizier. I'm from the Ravonna District and wanted to discuss

[00:33:45] the redistricting plan scenario A. I am also opposed to the choice that has been proposed. I am a mother of Weston, who is a rising third grader. The proposed redistricting is harmful to four different schools, collectively impacting almost 1,700. From what we know and understand, my Cascadian neighborhood parents and I have the following perspectives to share.

[00:34:06] Baker-Butler will still be overcrowded every year in the five-year projections, even when using all six trailers as classrooms. Hollymead will also be overcrowded in three of the next five years, even when using both of the older trailers as classrooms. Stony Point will not have enough students to have two classes per grade, K-5, in four of the five next years.

[00:34:27] Stony Robinson will lose three teachers next year, and the art and music teachers will lose their full-time designation. Losing teachers means that SRE will lose the balance of having four classrooms per grade. If SRE loses Cascadia or Riverview, it will not have enough students to get back to 24 teachers any time in the next 10 years.

[00:34:48] In addition, we feel like it's highly likely that in order to get our children from Cascadia to Stony Point, another resource or bus will need to be used to do it because of the size of the bus and the likelihood that more parents will need to have the children take the bus instead of drive. It feels as if this is being framed as a short-term problem because there are plans to have a new elementary school open in the next six years but five years is practically a child's entire elementary school experience we need to do everything we can to think thoughtfully and critically about our next steps and not hastily press on to check the box to the this complex

[00:35:23] issue and I understand it's a complex issue thank you for your time thank you next up is Ben Zoo Good evening. My name is Ben Xu, Cascadia, Rwanda District. I have a nine-year-old son who is a rising fourth grade who is currently attending Stony Point. I'm here to express my concerns regarding the proposed redistricting of our community to Stony Point for several reasons.

[00:36:02] First, the results of the survey clearly indicate that a majority of parents or community members oppose option A and endorse option B. It is very puzzling why these survey results were not formally presented during the previous board meeting, but merely shared as a link in the presentation. Ignoring such crucial feedback from our community renders the entire survey process filtered and a waste of available resources.

[00:36:31] Second reason, after two years of virtual school due to pandemic, like my son, they have bonded with their peers, formed a strong bond with their peers at St. Robinson, many of whom residing

neighboring communities. Moving our children to a new school next year would disrupt these valuable friendships and could significantly impact their academic and social developments. As a parent, I'm deeply concerned about the potential repercussions of such a move on my child's well-being. In conclusion, I respectfully urge all board

[00:37:04] members to oppose option A for the starting point and reconsider option B as a final solution. It is imperative that we prioritize the well-being and education needs of our children and address the overcrowding issue at Big Butler effectively.

[00:37:21] Thank you for your time. Thank you. Kyle Smoot. Next. My name is Kyle Smoot, and I'm from the Rubana District.

[00:37:41] And I'm a parent of a first and third grader at Stony Point Elementary and live in the Fontana community adjacent to Cascadian Riverview. I want to thank the redistricting community for the careful consideration given to the complicated questions involved when moving kids from schools they consider home it's a serious responsibility and the committee and the committee treated it as such there is no perfect solution that will solve everyone's issues over enrollment at Baker Butler is an important goal of redistricting but it is not the only goal the long-term solution to Baker Butler overcrowding is the new elementary

[00:38:20] school period. Under enrollment at Stony Point is as serious as over enrollment at other schools. ACPS resources are allocated according to enrollment. This is an equity issue. Due to under enrollment, Stony Point receives less resources than other schools. I'm here tonight and not next week because my son is in a musical next week produced by the amazing Ms. Ferber who is a part-time music teacher, talent development instructor, and the English learner instructor.

[00:38:51] our kids deserve dedicated support in these areas and more but I do not want you to conflate the lack of learning resources with the quality of the facility or the quality of the education Stony Point is not crumbling it is a well-maintained building that has been and continues to be a pillar of the Stony Point community for over 90 years we have a slogan at Stony Point that says we have dragon magic and part of that magic is a first-class education despite the lack of resources from the district the solution is sustainable increased enrollment alternatives which pull students from rural areas along the northern border of the county are band-aids

[00:39:31] do not make these families endure a second redistricting when a new school is built in their backyard so in summary the board should approve the committee's recommendation to redistrict Cascadian Riverview communities to Stony Point Elementary thank you thank you next up Logan Henry so my name is Logan I'm the parent of children in the Rivana school district

[00:40:07] and I'm here to discuss moving Stone Robinson students to Stony Point first thank you for volunteering to be on the school board I appreciate your leadership and dedication to our children's education and I'm here tonight to express my support for scenario B I'd like you to reconsider moving Cascadia to Stony Point scenario B will achieve two of the listed objectives by increasing student population at Stony Point Elementary while decreasing the overcrowding at Baker Butler. It's hard to grasp how we could possibly move students who are in a great situation at Stone Robinson instead of moving

[00:40:44] students from Baker Butler that is over capacity. I understand the teacher to student ratio at Stony Point is an issue and I feel we should be able to provide more teachers despite the budget. When

you look at the data it appears another option would be moving students from Gilbert and Burnley station which would create a more stable population of students at stony point and allow for appropriate teacher to student ratio i think holding off on changes and evaluating this further is even a better option than scenario b there are known social and emotional effects that many children endure when having to move to new schools social anxiety stress and a decrease in academic

[00:41:23] performance are some of the documented challenges as a parent of a daughter who struggles with social anxiety, I dread the possibility of her having to change schools. It took more than a year for her to become comfortable with the environment and classmates in her grade. Her academic performance notably improved once she became more comfortable and that has been life-changing for her. I know that she is not the only student who has experienced social and emotional challenges and with my concern for all children and their well-being, I feel it is best to move the least number of students possible and currently the scenario b option moves that lowest number of

[00:42:00] students thank you again for your time and listening to our concerns thank you i'm not sure how to say this uh first name here but let's see tasia rober tell me if i did that right hi i'm tasia at a user rober said good job um i am a mother of three in the ravanna district in cascadia noblehood i'm speaking to you guys as um as a single mom of three when i recently made a move

[00:42:36] i asked my realtor to exclusively look in the stone robinson district and the reason i did so is because my oldest had gone to several albemar county schools and i had a lot of challenges and my middle son who's in first grade now has special needs and i knew based off his needs that son robinson would be the best fit for him i i am finding that sometimes my daily challenges are changes to routine and it is harder for my son to grasp things that most children can take quickly for example he needed to be guided to his classroom for well into the school year when other

[00:43:13] children could have done so independently and although ultimately most children are resilient to change i can attest that i went to 10 different schools in my childhood in six different countries but my son unfortunately is not so resilient and so if we're going to up into my life and create chaos on a daily basis for me for a while i'd like for it to be a good reason and when I was at the district meeting I mean the the meeting regarding the data about these changes I was kind of shocked to hear that the community that everybody there seemed to see logically made the most sense was ruled out because this transportation

[00:43:52] didn't like it. And I would really like that to be reconsidered because there was no data to really support why this community was ruled out. If these changes are going to happen to me, I don't mind it if it's for a really good reason. And I thought most likely the best reason would be because of overcrowding in one school could be solved to move to an under-credited school and not one from an under-credited school to another under-capacity school, I mean. So I just really implore you to reconsider these redistricting, please.

[00:44:27] Thank you. All right. That concludes public comment. Thanks to everyone who came to speak. Next, we have 8.0, our school division work session, budget work session number two, Maya Kumazawa. Oh, sorry. We have a break, which we typically do not have, but so we'll be back at 725.

[00:44:56] I call this meeting back to order. Ms. Kumazawa. Good evening. I'm Maya Kumazawa, Director of Budget and Planning, and this evening I will be introducing our work session number two, which is a follow-up from the draft funding request for fiscal year 2025.

[00:45:22] This evening, this is our agenda as follows. We will be diving into three of these proposals that were presented as part of the draft funding request. The first will be the Tiered Interventions Overview and Proposal presented by Craig Domer, Director of Tiered Services.

[00:45:39] And second, we will go over the Special Education Overview and Proposal presented by Katie Kompel, Director of Special Education. And third, we will review the English Learner Program Overview and Proposal presented by Lauren McLean, Assistant Director of EL. We'll have time to pause for questions and discussions after each of these sections.

[00:46:01] And when we get into each section, there are references to what they present throughout the budget book. And so as a reminder, this is the structure of both our budget and the budget book. It separates out school fund expenditures and special revenue fund expenditures.

[00:46:20] You will see that throughout these proposals, there are impacts in the special revenue funds. So we will provide page references for everything at the beginning of each area. If you have questions about any of it, please feel free to reach out or stop and raise your hand because we do want you to be able to find everything on your own in case you need to go back and review it.

[00:46:43] So with that, I'll invite Craig up here for the first proposal.

[00:47:04] Good evening. I'm Craig Domer. I'm Director of Instruction for Tiered Supports. I'm here tonight to talk about the request for 10 additional FTEs for tiered supports to replace some funding that was coming from the federal government and some grants and to talk about how we would allocate it a little bit differently moving forward since it will be local money and how we feel it will better support the students of Elmore County.

[00:47:29] In this current year's budget request, we have 63 FTEs total.

[00:47:45] Six are funded through the IDEA response intervention and 15 are Title I reading specialists. As we move to this next budget request, due to the increasing cost of reading specialists and interventionists due to inflation over the last several years and kind of a static amount that we received from the federal government for title one part a we're only going to be able to fund 11 reading specialists out of our title one grant allocation this year and due to some changes with idea that miss compel will talk to you about a little bit later we're unable to fund the six intervention

[00:48:19] positions that historically we've been able to fund with that grant staffing is primarily used for academic intervention to provide support to students in the classroom through pullout intervention and to provide support to teachers making sure that their tier one and core instruction meets their differentiated learning needs students are identified in needing academic support and intervention through assessment data their performance and intervention and their

[00:48:53] classroom performance i was here speaking to this group about a year ago we've made some changes over the last 12 months we have adopted several programs to help support intervention across the schools, including Alex for middle school math. I'm sure you've heard about UFLY in our kindergarten and first grade core classrooms. We're also using it for intervention in grades two through eight, and we, through the all-in Virginia program, are able to access Lexia Core 5 and Power Up, as well as CERN for math. We expect that those programs will continue into next year

[00:49:30] through that grant funding, and Lexia has been approved through the Virginia Literacy Act to be approved intervention service for our students. We've made some changes in how we screen for literacy. We're screening DIBELS really in 6th through 12th but we committed as a reading intervention group to screen all sixth graders at every middle school and all ninth graders at every high school and then to our staff's capacity we've screened some seventh and 10th through 12th graders as well who we feel are in need of intervention supports. We switched from palace devals in kindergarten through third grade as part of getting ready for the virginia literacy

[00:50:09] act both those screeners are more based on evidence-based literacy instruction and the kinds of tasks that tend to indicate if students are going to struggle with science-based reading instruction and we funded some more staffing last year that particularly went to kind of small non-title one elementary schools and our high schools to fund the reading specialist three at Albemarle, two at Monticello, and one at Western Albemarle. I'd also like to preview some changes that we're expecting to occur for next year as we think about budget. The Virginia Literacy Act

[00:50:46] is set to change from kindergarten through third grade to kindergarten through eighth grade. There will not be a year of getting ready for that change. Everything that was supposed to go into effect for K through three is now going to go into effect for K through eight. I think we're well positioned with our staffing to kind of meet the staffing demands there.

[00:51:04] the struggle in fourth through eighth grade will be the same in k-3 is making sure that we have a very concrete literacy plans for every student who needs additional support we will get approved universal screeners and progress monitoring tools from the state board of education it should be on their march agenda with final approval in april and we'll be coming back to you about approving some of those resources so that we can expand our toolkit in alamara county we'll have approved intervention lists and we'll have state guidance about who must be screened it looks like they're going to ask us to screen any student who failed in sol

[00:51:43] in the previous year in grades four through nine the other kind of change that we're kind of thinking about and i would say that this is certainly not finalized but we are starting to have conversations is that in some of the state trainings that have already occurred they've really talked about utilizing your reading specialists to help both with pullout intervention, but also to focus on improving the instruction that happens in the regular classroom. So we are working with our reading specialists in schools to think about what that might look like.

[00:52:16] I did want to obviously talk about some student data. These are students in need of support. You'll see kind of three lines here. The blue line is the students who are high risk depending on those literacy screeners. So vals in kindergarten through third grade and dibbles in six through nine is that blue line where it gets kind of flat between we didn't screen fourth and fifth graders this year so I left it flat so it wouldn't drop to zero but kind of kept the line going. The green line

[00:52:51] is the SO of fail percentage the students who failed the previous year's SOL so that fourth grade bullet point is the students who failed the third grade last year who currently sit in our fourth grade classroom. And the orange line is just the 20 percent. As I'm sure you're aware, typically when we are starting to design response intervention and multi-tiered systems of support programs, they say about 20 percent of your students will need additional support.

[00:53:17] So that orange line is 20 percent of each grade level. As you can see, we have more students who tend to need support. I think that makes sense when you think about our SOL pass percentages and coming off the pandemic, but we are in a time where our students need additional support and we probably would not want to lose 10 positions due to other funding sources.

[00:53:41] Where are the students most in need of intervention? This is every school. The number of students who are in need of intervention based on the high-risk screener and the SOL fail number. Again, another way to show kind of where the bars are, and you can tell, and I'm sure you're not surprised at which schools have the most need for intervention, and we provide them the most interventionists. The 10 FTEs were allocated to Title I schools and schools that

[00:54:20] through IDEA needed to have them based on a discrepancy in their data. As we kind of take this funding to the local level. We really considered two things when trying to think about how to allocate the funding. The first was who lost the most staffing, just kind of based on school setting up structures of support, but then also where are the students in need?

[00:54:44] We tried to base the assumptions kind of not on projections for next year based on free reduced lunch, but on kids who are actually in the buildings who are in need of intervention. We calculated our ratios prior to considering Title I staff, which is necessary to comply with that grant and we allocated really base 50 50 on using schools who had lost staffing versus where the ratios were off as far as students in need and the staffing that was currently at the school we plan to continue to monitor that through the next coming year to see if that kind of

[00:55:17] allocation model works and if it should even be expanded to better serve students i wanted to illustrate this concept. The orange line is the ratio of high-need students to staff currently in schools in 23-24. If we staff without the 10 additional FTEs, the green line would be the new ratio for 24-25. You can kind of see the ratios get even more off balance and they rise as far as

[00:55:55] the kids who are in need versus the staffing that's there. Finally, the blue line is with the 10 additional FTEs added. You can see it's the flattest of the three lines, which is kind of our goal and would be our long-term goal if we were to continue this kind of change in staffing allocation to try and equalize the ratios of students who are in need of support to the interventionists who are available in the building. And with all this talk of just 10 FTEs, we wanted to remind everyone that really there is a lot of staffing for intervention at the schools and so this chart

[00:56:30] just kind of shows where that staffing would be without the 10 and where it goes with the 10 at this time i'll pause for questions um i actually can you go back to the slide about um back a few about reading specialists i think you were talking about albumarl specifically but um so i've heard from community members and teachers that the way that we designate interventionists and reading specialists the way that they're working at the three high schools specifically is very different

[00:57:06] and i've heard feedback that at albemarle we have three i think right now and none of them are student facing not one of them is actually working with students and that's come i've heard that from teachers at albemarle high school whereas at western a large percentage of them are working with teachers so from a budgeting standpoint i'm concerned that we are funding positions that aren't even student facing so can you address that at all and how we're going to move forward with making sure that these are actually the students are actually benefiting from these or and if they're not going to be student facing then i don't think they should be called reading specialists if

[00:57:46] they're not helping with that sure um i would like to say i think that the all the positions are benefiting students i do think each of the three high schools took slightly different approaches to how they were going to use that staff and as we're going through our state training and talking about the virginia literacy act and talking to literacy experts kind of across the state i think that there is that advocacy for to have these positions both work with students directly as well as to help classroom teachers and high school teachers making sure that the instruction

[00:58:22] supports those students. At Albemarle, with a large number of students, I think that they targeted helping teachers as kind of their first priority. I think at Monticello High School, we see about a 75-25 split. They're very focused on ninth grade. They're trying to kind of build the program up. So they have supported the ninth grade students both by pulling some of them out, the neediest students, but also following them to their classes and really making sure that those teachers have good strong literacy routines and at Western there's just the one person and she does

[00:58:58] split her time about 50 50. Just this week we've had our fourth high school DPLC where they're bringing this data and bringing kind of their strategies and we're trying to look at student data and student growth on the dibbles across the year and so as far as how we're moving forward we're trying to create that model and we've looked at job descriptions for reading specialists and are looking at the state research and model for how reading specialists spend their time.

[00:59:26] So I would say that they're all trying to improve literacy outcomes at those three high schools, working directly with teachers in classrooms and pulling kids out to some degree. I know that the Albemarle High School Reading Specialists help the students with the Newcover Learning Center kind of in that way. So we, I feel good where we are at in year one of having reading specialists at high schools i think that they feel good about it and they're very they're a very data-driven group and so i know that we're going to find the we're going to find the strategies

[01:00:01] that work best and kind of amplify them moving forward so the the three that are alburmar then are more like instructional coaches at this point versus technically reading specialists right if they're not working with the kids then they're working more on the teacher side as like coaching the instructors i would i would say that they're doing some literacy coaching i wouldn't i wouldn't call them instructional coaches kind of in our model of instructional coaching they're very they are literacy experts and they're working kind of very specifically on kind of student-facing literacy strategies i'm just curious what the like correlation is between you know albemarro needing

[01:00:41] the most help from for reading and you know how that model is working you know with how much they are student facing so thank you um i have a question about uh so the vows norming process what's the timeline for that um this is about soft launch here so that they had they have i'm not the vows expert but i'll speak to it as best i can and how they've explained it to me they've had an extensive pilot over the last several years and so they um we met with dr solari actually this week

[01:01:18] or last week they are very close right to the point that when students take the test they're able to say whether a kid is above or below benchmark okay but they are trying to really hone in on exact numbers which is why they have this soft launch with 17 school divisions us virginia beach um arlington county are just three that i know off the top of my head um in order to their they have benchmarks for individual tasks what they're trying to complete this year is figuring out which tasks are not necessary so they're planning to eliminate a couple tasks

[01:01:54] which will help them better benchmark next year and then um we are piloting dibbles assessments in four or five for some of our elementary schools right and we are piloting just in the fact if there are some elementary reading specialists who are trained um in dibbles we we will um so i mean valves four or five is not ready next year we will do dibbles four or five next year across all the elementary schools okay thank you okay how do um the proposed changes

[01:02:31] line up with what uh the bellwether report was giving to us is there any correlation between those two that's a great question i think that um i think where the bellwether report and the virginia literacy act line up right is really thinking about how parents are informed about student progress and making sure that we're providing the intervention quality intervention and systematic menu of intervention resources across all the schools.

[01:03:02] I think which is why we're trying to allocate them a little bit differently for next year to actually look at where the students are that are in need of intervention so that we have the staffing ratios as necessary as we can get them to make sure that we can create those literacy plans that will be shared with parents and to make sure that they're based on high-quality intervention materials that we will talk more about when we get the state list of what can be used as a high quality intervention material.

[01:03:32] Thanks very much, Craig. Thank you. I'm supposed to introduce Katie Compel, Director of Special Education.

[01:03:47] Thank you, Craig. Good evening. I'm Katie Compel, Director of Special Education. Tonight, I'll begin with an overview of the Special Education budget.

[01:04:03] On the screen is an outline of all of the different components of the Special Education budget. The right side column in green lists the different buckets, so to speak, of the overall special education bucket, along with where to find those in the budget book. The center column lists the detailed allocations broken out by subgroup, along with where to find those items in the budget book.

[01:04:26] Overall, I do not anticipate any changes for the next school year other than the two items that I'll walk through this evening. The first request is for five FTE to support students with disabilities in Admiral County Public Schools.

[01:04:42] This FTE will allow the Office of Special Education to respond to the increase in the level of service that students with disabilities are currently requiring. On the next few screens, I'll walk through data that I believe supports the need for this request. The data on this slide represents the December 1st count for the last 14 years.

[01:05:02] The December 1st count is a total number of all students in Albemarle County Public Schools that have individualized education plans or IEPs. The Virginia Department of Education uses this number, the December 1st count, as a common measure across the state to determine the number of students in special education in Amarillo County Public Schools.

[01:05:21] The data shows that our numbers of students in special education was steadily increasing each year up until the pandemic. While our numbers decreased during the initial pandemic timeframe, you can see that we are well on our way to pre pandemic numbers. The current December 1st count, which would be December 1st, 2023 was one thousand nine hundred and twenty three students in special education.

[01:05:44] Not only has the number of students rapidly increased, but the intensity of service need for those students has increased as well. The data on this screen shows the intensity of service need for those students. Students in the dark blue section or the top bar are students who require special education services for 50 to 100% of their school day.

[01:06:06] Students in the light blue section or the bottom bar are students who require less than 50% of their school day to have special education services. This current year we have 1,388 students who require 50% or more of services and 535 who require less than 50%. Next year, based on initial projections, data indicates that number will rise to 1,460 in the 50% or above category and 540 in the 50% or below category. In addition to our pre-k to 12 growth,

[01:06:40] we also have growth in our post-high program. Our post-high program is for our students 18 to 22 who have IEPs and have not yet earned an advanced or standard diploma. Those students are eligible to attend school through their 21st birthday. The data on the screen shows that post-high numbers have also steadily increased each year. This current year we have 26 students. However, next year based on projections of students who will move up we will have 34 students coming to post high due to a large graduating class finally this slide shows a summary of the special education

[01:07:18] student number data one item i want to highlight for you is on the left column where you'll see that this school year our fall men membership or our september 30th count was 1797 students But our December 1st count, just a few months later, is 1,923 students, which is a significant increase in students to serve.

[01:07:42] While the data is important and does tell a large part of the special education story, it is not the full picture. What the numbers don't talk about are the increase in high-level medical needs that we're seeing, especially this school year. For example, students who require one-to-one nursing to be able to attend school.

[01:08:00] It also doesn't show an increase in students that are moving into the school division after September 30th and we're seeing that many of those students require the highest level of service to receive a free and appropriate public education or FAPE. It also doesn't show the increase in contract services that my department has to secure in order to provide FAPE for these students.

[01:08:23] Granting the 5.0 FTE will allow the Office of Special Education to provide the required staffing to schools when students who need a high level of support enroll in Albemarle County. The final part of the special education budget request is the Special Revenue Fund. IDEA, or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, provides federal funding to public schools to support the education of children with disabilities. While back in 1977 that was supposed to be a hundred percent funded, it's never gotten there, right? So it's somewhere between 20 to

[01:08:58] 25 percent. That funding allows school divisions to provide FAPE, or free and appropriate public education, to students with disabilities from age 3 to 21. And then from there, when students are eligible, it allows us to create IEPs that tell us what services students need to reach their maximum potential. The part of the Special Education Revenue, the Special Revenue Fund that I'm addressing tonight, is called CCEIS, or Comprehensive Coordinated Early intervening services. The reason I highlight that tonight is that it is a shift in how we're

[01:09:35] utilizing these funds for the 24-25 school year. What is CCEAS? While it stands for Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services, that extra C really in my mind means it's mandated by the Virginia Department of Education. The Virginia Department of Education must approve this plan annually, and what it means is we're required to set aside 15% of our Part B federal funds for the CCEIS plan. You might ask, why is Albemarle County Public Schools a CCEIS school division? The data on this screen that I'll walk through shares why. The Virginia Department of

[01:10:14] Education calculates what is called a race risk ratio for each school division. This ratio looks at each race category and determines if students in that category are overrepresented in a given special education disability category the Virginia Department of Education uses the 3.00 threshold as cited student school divisions that have a 3.00 or higher race risk ratio are cited and have to participate in cceis the 2.0 threshold is a warning that the Virginia

[01:10:49] Department of Education used to say you're you're moving up to 3.0 but you're not required to set aside that 15 percent. The Virginia Department of Education began collecting this race risk ratio in 1999. Every year since, Albemarle County Public Schools has been cited, which means we're at the 3.00 or above line in the area of black students in the category of intellectual disability.

[01:11:16] This citation is what results in Albemarle County Public Schools being a CCEIS school division. The data on the screen shows that we have been at 4.00 or above for the last several years up until this year last year our race risk ratio for black students in the category of intellectual disability was 4.64 I am proud to say and I can't say it enough that this year our race risk ratio is 2.61 which is a significant decline and on this map decline is good right it's a significant

[01:11:52] decline this is due to the significant focus that our department has put on reducing the race risk ratio and the data is showing that it is working I should note I put an asterisk there for 2324 because the Virginia Department of Education will not consider the data formal or published until May of 2024. However the calculation is based on data we already have and in my conversations with the Virginia Department of Education I am confident that this will be our risk ratio so the first time

[01:12:25] since 1999 we will not be a required CCEIS school division it's a year out so it'll be this the school year of 25-26. For the 24-25 school year the CCEIS funds or the 15% set aside of our federal funds will be utilized for an 11-month special education evaluation and eligibility team this team will consist of two school psychologists one speech and language pathologist, one K-12 special educator, and one early childhood special educator.

[01:13:02] This 11-month team will facilitate all initial evaluations and eligibilities where an intellectual disability is being considered. They'll facilitate all re-evaluations where an intellectual disability is being considered. They will also facilitate all special education evaluations and eligibilities outside of the typical school year calendar or the summer months. Why is this our new plan moving forward? For me, the number one reason is that the Albemarle County Public Schools has been cited, right, as being disproportionate in the area of black students

[01:13:40] in the intellectual disability category since 1999, which is the first year that Virginia Department of Education began collecting this data. We're the only school division in Virginia that's been cited every year since. I've only been here 11 years, but in the 11 years we've had the same plan to address our disproportionality, our CCEIS plan. The data showed that that plan was not working.

[01:14:05] However, this current school year, we focused on one team doing all ID, intellectual disability, initial evaluations, re-evaluations, as well as reviewing transfer students who come into Albemarle County Public Schools already eligible as having an intellectual disability. The data on that screen shows that our work this year is working, right? We're down to 2.61 as our race risk ratio and while as a director i would like it to be a 2.00 it is well below the threshold that the virginia department of education sets the last area that we've identified as a need

[01:14:43] that this team will be able to fulfill next year is evaluations that have to occur outside of the 10-month school year window or the summer months special education evaluations don't stop in the summer they the federal timelines continue and so what we have had to do in the past is contract with outside providers they don't always use the sound research-based fidelity methods that we would like but we have to meet those timelines and so the last piece to fill in for next school year will be this evaluation team working to complete those summer evaluations that will

[01:15:19] further impact our data in the right direction and i'll pause now for questions i'd just like to say as the a sped mom i'm this is super impressive job well done um and i think that adding these ftes will be super helpful for all of these kids so i just wanted to say thank you it's much appreciated um katie i'm just curious do you have a sense of why we have an increase in students moving in after september 30th it was a pretty big chunk there right yeah um some of it is um there

[01:15:59] is a significant in partnering with my colleague lauren there is a significant increase in students who are coming through the irc after the school year there also is um in the past two years we've seen a increase in transiency between the locality that we surround and us they'll go back and forth three or four times during the school year often start an eligibility process in one end in another go back and forth and that has led to an increase in that as well as the last year we've seen an increase in families who are moving here as family members of doctor medical students at

[01:16:39] the university of virginia medical center and i i may have missed it before but i think this is the first year that i've seen the race risk data um so i'm the previous data is disheartening obviously but i'm i'm glad that you're really spending time working on it it seems that what you're doing is working so thank you very much for that thank you yeah i think it's interesting that as long as we've been on the school board we've never heard this i've never heard of it

[01:17:14] yeah and that we're the only division in the commonwealth to have been bad at this for so long every year kind of alarming it's alarming but i do appreciate your data-based approach to it i think that that's going to be very helpful in us making decisions moving forward on how to fund programs like this and i know the other people on the board too very much like to see the numbers and the concrete data so that's super helpful so thank you yeah I have a question on how the evaluations were done you said that that was what

[01:17:52] helped to bring the number down right oh the consistent team yeah mm-hmm so what happened with the evaluations this year that helped to bring them number down from previous years was there a different criteria used or no but there There was one team, so a school psychologist, a speech and language pathologist, a K-12 special educator, and a preschool special educator that completed any evaluation where we were considering intellectual disability, and that consistency allowed us to choose

[01:18:30] measures that are culturally sensitive and normed on that population, as well as ensure we're doing consistent best practices in working through the eligibility process. And I think that is based on my

personal review of the eligibility process is what led to making the right decisions instead of having 25 or 25 schools, right, 25 different eligibility teams make decisions in that category.

[01:19:00] So the centralized special education evaluation and eligibility team, are they on an 11-month contract? They will be next school year, which is why we're adding that to do this. Is there enough, I'm just curious if the board needs to consider a 12-month contract at some point, will there be enough work?

[01:19:20] I think that we're starting smaller, I don't, I have some of my most skilled people doing this work who do not want 12-month contracts, so I'm starting next year with 11 months, just to see if that makes a difference, typically it's that June and August time that is our most challenging and so we'll start there and if it doesn't make an enough impact that i want to see which is getting below that 2.0 then the next year i'll look at 12 months okay thank you sure

[01:19:55] okay one other question with the cceis data are any other racial background or racial groups separated out like blacks and if so do we have a problem with any of those groups they are all separated out right all 12 disability categories and each of the race groups we do not we aren't we have not been cited for any other group thanks very much katie thank you and now i'll turn it

[01:20:30] over to lauren mclean thank you katie good evening everybody i'm lauren mclean and i'm the assistant director of english learners and world languages and so first i'm going to be talking to you all about english learner staffing and the pages are noted for the budget book i want to note that this also includes our Title III funding. This is supplemental federal funding that we receive each year based on our number of English learners. And this year we also received immigrant youth

[01:21:06] funding due to the increase in immigrant youth in our school division. And so when we look at our English learner population, we see a chart that looks very similar to the one that I think you just saw for special education. So the percentage of our students in our county that are identified as English learners continues to increase.

[01:21:30] And when we look at our student totals, we see something similar, particularly what I want to highlight is the continued increase we are seeing of high school English learners. This is not a reflection of the education that these students are receiving in Albemarle County.

[01:21:47] These students are largely newcomer English learners who are joining our community for the first time, often from abroad. And so when we think about our English learners, we know that our population is growing, but it's also growing in ways that we haven't necessarily seen before.

[01:22:04] So our students continue to come in with different levels of language ability. We have students who have had prior English language instruction. We have students who have never had English language instruction, and we get to work with all of them. We're also seeing a lot of differences in prior education history.

[01:22:20] We've got to welcome 16-year-olds and even 18-year-olds this year who have never been able to attend school. And oftentimes that has actually been because of their identified disabilities and the way that disabilities are treated in other countries.

[01:22:35] As a result of the prior education history, we're also seeing students enter with different levels of native language literacy. And so for our students who come in with strong prior schooling, it's much

easier. And there's research that shows that they can transfer their literacy skills between their first language to their new target language, which for us is English.

[01:22:54] But for our students who haven't made that print connection, it's much harder for them And so it just requires some different skills for us. And so when we look at our English learner growth we also see a difference between What we have in our fall counts and what we have when we get to the spring And so last year I stood in front of you guys and made a projection for fiscal year 24 And we actually hit it exactly right for September 30th on But that has already changed.

[01:23:29] And so we continue to see a large increase in students throughout the school year as families continue to move to our school division. And like my colleague in special education said, some of that is the continued transiency that we're seeing between neighboring divisions, but also as we welcome new families to our area.

[01:23:48] And so for that reason, we are requesting to have five additional FTE. This five additional FTE is to match what we're seeing right now in our classrooms. Our projection for next year is particularly challenging due to the political situation.

[01:24:05] Just political years and EL projections tend to have some challenges. And so we're asking for the 5-FTE to be able to staff for the students who we know are in our buildings right now because we know that we're going to continue to have this number of students.

[01:24:23] But when we think about our students, I know I'm a broken record sometimes, we want to think about what they bring to our classroom and not how we need to help them right and so we want our classrooms and our Albemarle community to have an increasing plurality of languages that's something that's important to all of us in this county and that means that we need our teachers to be in these classrooms and using trans languaging practices so that they can build on these rich backgrounds that students are bringing we also know that our county needs an increasingly diverse workforce. And that means we need our teachers who are supporting our English

[01:24:59] learners in graduating and hopefully pursuing education careers. That may be a little bit of a goal. And we also want to make sure that we have learners who understand the ways in which people communicate and that people in our community know how to communicate with each other. So we need teachers who are building the scaffolds to support listening, reading, writing, and speaking, but also the teachers who know how to bring those scaffolds down so that the learners are able to be independent. And so when we think about the instructional strategies that we want in English learner world, we often look at the Thomas and Collier graph. And this is

[01:25:35] particularly fun because this research all comes from Virginia. And so a little extra. And so when we look at what's effective for our English learners, we look at different program models. And the research shows that the most effective model is two-way dual language immersion, which is what we provide at Mountain View currently. We also see that one-way dual language late exit transitional and early exit transitional can all be effective all of these are program models that work in a student's native language that's never going to be something we can provide for all students because we're so lucky to have a plurality of languages and so

[01:26:11] the next most effective model that we know is available is content english language development this is when our teachers are able to embed content into their instruction and to do that they

need to be co-teaching in classrooms and they need to be collaborating with their peers and the way that we're able to do that is having enough teachers to serve all of our students and be a part of those professional learning communities with their core content teachers when we're not able to provide that we often have to provide pull out esl that's not to say pull out esl can't be effective for our students but it is to say that it's always better to have it grounded

[01:26:47] in our content and so that's why we are requesting more staffing so that we can support our teachers and being able to provide this research based instruction. I was also asked to speak briefly about foreign language elementary school staffing.

[01:27:03] I will be clear, foreign language elementary school is not an English learner program, but I'm also the person who does world languages. There's lots of research benefits to foreign language elementary school programming that I'm excited to discuss with all of you in our upcoming two by twos.

[01:27:19] And we've recently completed a program evaluation of the current state. we're in the process of completing this program evaluation this year we've advised that schools should pause any expansions or programmatic shifts while we're in this conversation and so on the right you'll be able to find the current staffing at our schools as well as which languages are provided i'll note there is an error ivy provides french language instruction and i'm

[01:27:51] happy to take any questions on those foreign languages that are those uh full ftes yes those are all full I'm looking sorry those are all full FTEs there's an additional teacher who provides a partial FTE who's not reflected on here I'm curious how you do your projections it seems tricky like you said giving given political and world news how do you determine that and what happens if you see

[01:28:28] a huge influx mid-year because of fleeing from a war or something like that good news I think we all all have some experience in how we respond to that and so when we look at projections we're really looking at trying to see kind of the growth over the past five years and then looking at an average of that and that's what I consider to be our growth so that's how I'm trying to do the projection and that being said sometimes strange things happen and you get a hundred new students in one month and so when that happens we often will go back to looking at some of the emergency staffing that's set aside not specifically for English

[01:29:04] learners and so a couple years ago when this happened we were able to do that and we freed up some staffing to support hiring some additional uh instructors as well as some additional interpreters and translators and teaching assistants because english learner teachers can be pretty hard to find and so sometimes in those types of emergency situations we want to figure out how to do that we also know that we need to be nimble that's why i'm also not saying this is where our five fte that i'm requesting are going to go we want to continue to look and see kind of as we're seeing our enrollment trends where our students are going because that has

[01:29:44] shifted each year thanks what sort of special approaches do you take for the high school students especially those with limited content for education prior yeah so this year we launched our newcomer learning community. And this is a program for students in grades six through 11, who are in their first year of attending school in the United States, and whose WIDA scores, which is the English screener that the Virginia Department of Education mandates demonstrate that they're beginning their English language acquisition process. And so those students

[01:30:23] are able to come to us in a small class setting, in terms of being in a small school. And that's really important because for kids who haven't been attending school consistently they need to kind of rebuild that relationship with school and that trust and that's easier to do when you have three teachers or four teachers who you're seeing consistently every day and in your hallway and so we're fortunate to get to work with the boys and girls club and use their beautiful building on lambs lane which is where we're able to have this instruction and when we are able to do this we also are able to work on how we adapt our curriculum so our students are taking english

[01:31:01] nine paired with an esol class so that the teacher is able to really consider how to break down the english nine curriculum so that we can kind of build our students up to meeting that rigor similarly our students are taking um algebra one and we're working on kind of how we scaffold that we work really closely with our lead coach in mathematics our math teacher does and then our students also are taking world geography which is a subject where they're able to draw on an enormous amount of background knowledge that they have and so we're able to see some pretty incredible things with their increase that they produce there particularly because since we use locally awarded verified credit those students can write in whichever language

[01:31:41] they choose or a mixture of languages and then our students are also taking earth science which is co-tapped by a science teacher from Albemarle High School to ensure that we're we're providing both English learner scaffolds and that high quality science education.

[01:31:59] - Do we have data on, and I'm not sure what term is being used, if they're still using twice exceptional, students who are English learners and special education. Do we have any numbers that kind of show what percentage or number of kids fall in that category?

[01:32:16] Or is that something we could get in the future? - We can definitely get that in the future. I'm like, I put it in an email last week, but I don't remember it off the top of my head. We do check pretty regularly just make sure we don't have concerns around over identification or under identification and so that's something we constantly work with the special education department on as well as just general processes particularly as we continue to get some students with really complex medical needs can you said that you aren't an expert on the foreign language elementary school program but is there any correlation or can you sort of correlate um the chart on the screen before this

[01:32:54] With the foreign language elementary school programs at those schools? So I can't because foreign language elementary school doesn't exist to serve English learners. So when we look at like our dual immersion program, that's part of a language instruction educational program that the Virginia Department of Education says we can use to support English learners. So when we look at our FLESS program, we're really looking at the benefits for the entire school community, and we're not looking specifically at, you know, a population.

[01:33:27] One of the things we're working on as part of our program evaluation is looking at how we're measuring the efficacy of this programming, and I'm excited to talk to you guys about the different ways that's happening at our different schools currently. Okay, thanks. I was at Broadus Way the other day, and they were just, the kindergarten kids were just finishing up their foreign language instruction.

[01:33:51] it's Spanish right now, right? Is there any other languages yet? Ivy is the only school that has a language other than Spanish. They provide French. Okay. And then as far as is the so I is there somewhere is there a breakdown of where these FTE might go? Like for instance, I know Woodbrook really struggles

with the number of kids that they're getting all times of the year that are coming in with the need to learn english um is there some place that i could find that or

[01:34:26] so right now we're really looking at trying to figure out where those five fte would go one thing i'll be transparent on is i'm waiting to see what you all decide on redistricting because that could impact some of those numbers including for woodbrook there's certainly somebody who we keep a close eye on and are in pretty much daily contact with around their numbers and trying to figure out how to support their staffing but we're just not in a place of trying to figure out numbers while we wait to see um some of the the redistricting work that's happening and this is a newbie question for me but the newcomer academy which schools does that serve yeah and so it's

[01:35:03] open to students who are enrolled in any of our middle and high schools and currently we work with students who are from all of our middle schools except walton just because they haven't had any newcomers this year and all of our high schools except western albemarle we had one western albemarle student but he transitioned back to his base school at the semester point because he was ready to be in his western albemarle classes and not elementary no we do not have an elementary program what we've seen is first a lot of our elementary schoolers are really well served in their elementary classrooms because our elementary teachers are providing really high quality

[01:35:41] literacy and language instruction as part of their tier one instruction but we also know that that would add kind of some additional logistics layers yeah i can imagine thank you i think that this is really cool and uh how creating a sense of community for them since they're a lot of them are coming in from different countries um because i know a lot of people that they find it a little hard to transition and learning english so they just give up and go you know work so i think it's

[01:36:13] pretty cool that they're creating like a sense of community i'd also encourage any of my fellow board mates to go visit it i went one morning last year i can't remember one but it was it was really uplifting so what does the data look like in terms of i'm still focused on the high school students coming in and what happens to them i mean are they directed to a gre i mean whatever

[01:36:50] so a lot of it depends on the individual student so for our students who are between the ages of 14 and 16 we're really focused on how do we get you into school and kind of if you're not on track which 14 year olds ninth grade and 16 year olds end up in ninth grade too with 17 year olds we try and have a conversation with the student to figure out what they want i'll be transparent that there are a lot of factors that go into that that are outside of our control including some of the ways that immigration looks at students school enrollment and so the majority of our

[01:37:27] 17 year olds choose to enroll in school for 18 years old students and older we're also having those conversations a lot of that depends on how far they are in their high school journey it's easy if you're you know an 11th grader who's coming in and realize you have one more year to say okay i'm fine graduating at 19. it's a little harder when you're 18 and realize you're going to graduate at 22 we're able to keep students who enter in high school for the first time until age 22 but it's not something that's particularly common and our EL dropout rate continues to be a concern both for us but across the Commonwealth and nationwide and so that's something we're also trying to

[01:38:06] monitor and consider what additional supports we can put in place thank you would you mind sharing that dropout date at some point with us I can tell you that last year, our data was, I was like, now I said I could do it, and I'm not sure I can. It's around 25%, unfortunately, and we're about 0.2% below the

state. So this is a problem that we're all working on. But transparently, our EL dropout rate is our lowest. They're our high subgroup of non-completers of high school. I'm sure it's exacerbated by the fact that their parents

[01:38:43] probably aren't needing English language support as well. Yeah, I think. Which is on our wish list. It's on my wish list too, so it's certainly something that we continue to work with, is how to connect parents to English language services through TJ ACE, through the EL classes for adults that are offered through our own adult education programs and through literacy volunteers.

[01:39:15] Thank you so much, Lauren. Thank you. Thank you, Lauren. So just to close us out, that was the second of our two scheduled work sessions. Our next steps is to present the draft funding request to the Board of Supervisors by the Chair and Vice Chair on Monday, and just for awareness, the CIP portion of that work session has been moved to Wednesday, March 13th, so if you're interested in listening to the discussion around the proposed CIP, that'll be on March 13th at the Board of Supervisors work session.

[01:39:52] Next week's school board meeting, you're scheduled to approve the funding request, and then from there we'll work on getting to a balanced budget in time for our adoption in late April if you have any questions or look for other information you can go to our website that's listed here and you can always feel free to send me an email at budget at k12albemoral.org. Thank you, thanks for all your work on this. Maya, thank you. I also wanted to thank everyone who um presented tonight. I could see throughout all of the presentations on the four years that I've

[01:40:26] been on the board a lot of improvements that have really eluded us to this point that are now happening and I really appreciate them so thank you very much for all your work on those things so okay. Next we have other business by board member superintendent Miss Lee. I do want to recognize one of our members of our budget finance committee is here tonight, Alan Swinger. We appreciate your dedication coming out to this meeting and then also one of our principals in

[01:41:01] the audience tonight, Josh Walton. Thank you, Josh. I just wanted to bring up one thing I was really happy to see the number of public commenters we had tonight and how engaged they were. In the Murray students were amazing and this is something that I've been going back and forth about but I would like us to go back to allowing public comments sign up at meetings. I know we moved away from that during COVID out of necessity but I would move that beginning with our board meeting.

[01:41:37] Next week that we allow public comments sign up at our school board meetings. I'm not sure they could start next week. I think we'd have to give a little bit more public notice about the change. Okay, but I think um moving to uh direct staff to work toward that make that happen. Sure, I think is perfectly reasonable. Great. Well then I will change the motion to directing the staff to work towards

[01:42:08] allowing uh public comment sign up at our board meetings. All right, moved by Miss Film and seconded by Dr. Berlin. Any discussion? All right, can we get a roll call vote on that? Please, yes. Excuse me, but uh Charlie who was the second on that, Dr. Berlin, Dr. Berlin, yes, Miss Osborne, yes, Mr. Chuck Pace, yes.

[01:42:42] Mr. Graham Page? No. Ms. Spillman? Yes. Dr. Acuff? No. Chair Lee? Yes. With the vote 5-2, the motion carries. Thank you. Any other business? All right. Then this meeting is adjourned. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much.



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