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Albemarle County School Board Regular Meeting, Thursday, February 20, 2025

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-14. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] Just a note to listeners, this is a funding request prescribed by the Virginia code, the superintendent each year to start off the budget making season presents a school board with a needs based funding request.

[00:00:21] This is not the same thing as a balanced budget, but it is a first step into getting there, and we will adopt the FY27 balanced budget on May 8th.

[00:00:36] So if you hear about gaps or overspending, that is not the case. So to move forward, first item of business is roll call. Since I don't know that everybody has the same screen, I'll just go through my screen.

[00:00:53] First, Mr. Page. Graham Page, Samuel Miller District, and good evening to everyone. Leslie Pryor. Good evening. Leslie Pryor, Ryo District. Dr. Haas.

[00:01:09] Matthew Haas, Superintendent. Jennifer Butler. Jennifer Butler, she must have stepped away. Jennifer Butler, Deputy Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer.

[00:01:25] Thank you. Judy Lee. Judy Lee, Ravana District. Allison Spillman um Allison Spillman at large representative Joshua Black hi everybody Josiah Black school division council Miss Thompson Christine Thompson clerk of the school board Ellen Osborne Ellen Osborne Scottsville district representative Rebecca Berlin

[00:01:55] Rebecca Berlin Whitehall district Roslyn Schmidt Roslyn Schmidt chief operating officer Claire Kaiser. Claire Kaiser, Assistant Superintendent. Chandra Hayes. Chandra Hayes, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. Helen Dunn. Helen Dunn, Strategic Communications Officer.

[00:02:23] Isabel Wang. Isabel Wang, Albemarle High School. Sorry, Isabel. Christine Diggs. Christine Diggs, Chief Technology Officer. Margaret Lee. Margaret Lee, Western Albemarle High School. Daphne Kaiser.

[00:02:42] Daphne Kaiser, Assistant Superintendent for School Community Engagement. Erin Stone. Erin Stephen Stone, Assistant School Division Council.

[00:02:58] Kay Wood. Hi, Kenneth Wood, Department of Technology. Patrick McLaughlin. Good evening, everyone. Patrick McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Planning.

[00:03:15] Maya Kumazawa. Maya Kumazawa, Director of Budget and Planning. Cam Roper. Cam Roper, Community Lab School. And Gary Moore.

[00:03:33] Good evening, Department of Technology. Thank you, I think. And I'm Kate Acuff. I'm Jack Jewett District and Chair. um the next item we don't have a flag so we will omit the pledge of allegiance tonight but i'd like to just say a couple words before the moment of silence as you may be aware two of our community members were shot and killed tuesday and in crozet outside the harris teeter they were simply going about their business buying groceries one of the victims was the father of two of our

[00:04:08] elementary school students. We are all saddened by these losses, and I'd like us to take this moment to think about the impact of gun violence on the victims, their families, the witnesses to this

[00:04:22] event, and the entire community. Thank you. The next order of business is the approval of tonight's

[00:05:01] agenda. Do we have a motion? I move we approve tonight's agenda. Do we have a second? It was moved by Ms. Lee, I believe seconded by Ms. Spillman. Any discussion? The motion's passed. Now, at this point, I will yield the floor to Superintendent Haas for his funding request. All right. Thank you, Dr. Acuff. So we're going to get things started. Good evening, Drs. Acuff in Berlin,

[00:05:37] members of the Albemarle County School Board, staff, and community members. And thank you for the opportunity to present the Fiscal Year 2026 Draft Funding Request on behalf of Outmaw County Public Schools. This budget represents more than just financial figures. It reflects our commitment to ensuring that every student has the resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive. As the School Board prepares to present this request to the County Board of Supervisors, our goal tonight is to outline our financial priorities, explain the rationale behind

[00:06:13] our requests and provide you with the information needed to advocate for the funding of our our students deserve. Before I begin, I want to thank members of our cabinet for your ongoing input and support. I thank all of our advisory volunteers, staff, students, families, and community members.

[00:06:33] I thank Maya Kumazawa, Rosalind Schmidt, Jennifer Butler, Lauren Hunt, Helen Dunn, Brooke Conover, jackson zimmerman sarah dusenberry andy bowman jacob sumner our whole fiscal services department thank you all right let's get started tonight we will cover key areas including our strategic plan and the budget development process an overview of our current budget status specific funding proposals capital needs the role of a strong public school system and the next steps in budget

[00:07:09] approval process our goal is to provide a clear picture of our funding priorities what we currently have in outlaw county public schools our students our staff our families facilities vehicles technology and operations our community support all lay the foundation for our future as an outlaw community outlaw county public schools serves more than 14 000 students across a geographically diverse county spanning 726 square miles. We are among the top third of school divisions in Virginia

[00:07:45] in terms of student enrollment, and our county is the sixth largest by land area. We operate 24 schools, including 15 elementary schools, five middle schools, three high schools, and one charter school. Looking ahead to the 2025-26 school year, ACPS will operate four specialty centers and programs, the Albemarle Career Exploration or ACE Academy at Seminole Trail, the Center for Learning and Growth, the Intensive Support Center, the Newcomer Learning Community. Additionally, ACPS

[00:08:21] offers Scholar Studios, a program that provides high school students with real-world learning experiences while building essential skills for success. Available to all students in grades 9 through 12. These studios are housed across our three comprehensive high schools and center one.

[00:08:40] The intensive support center is one of the most significant proposals in the FY26 budget. In fact, we will be standing up a new school. I know you've heard that we're soon to open our first school in more than 20 years in Albemarle, but it's not Mountain View Upper Elementary School.

[00:08:57] It is an intensive support center at Ivy Creek facility and you'll hear more about it later tonight. Our incredible workforce of 2,839 employees includes dedicated teachers, administrators, and education support professionals who keep our schools running. Nearly half of our staff are teachers, and more than two-thirds of our teachers hold at least a master's degree. While we're proud of our 86.8% teacher retention rate, we continue to work to attract and retain top talent, not just

[00:09:32] in the classroom, but also as teaching assistants, bus drivers, and transportation staff, building services staff, EDEP, after-school professionals, and more. ACPS serves 14,164 students from preschool through 12th grade, representing a wide range of strengths, needs, and backgrounds.

[00:09:54] More than 13% of our students receive special education services. 28% are economically disadvantaged as measured by the number certified to receive free or reduced price meals. 13% are English learners. Our students come from 103 countries and speak 78 different home languages.

[00:10:16] Beyond the classroom, we provide essential services, serving more than 7,500 meals daily and running buses that travel more than 9,400 miles each day, ensuring every student has access to technology they need to learn our budget is shaped by the acps strategic plan learning for all this plan focuses on four key values equity excellence family and community and wellness together our vision mission and values ensure that every student not only has access to high quality

[00:10:53] learning experiences but also the support they need to succeed our vision mission and core values guide this work while our strategic goals focus on creating engaging learning experiences, fostering inclusive communities, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. This funding request is a step toward making these goals a reality. Simply put, we want every student to experience engaging, meaningful learning that prepares them for leadership and active participation in a diverse, evolving world. Our mission is to work together as a school division

[00:11:31] to remove barriers, foster strong relationships, and create an educational environment where every student is known, valued, and supported, and wants to come to school. Our guiding values are

equity, excellence, family and community, wellness. Our strategic goals build on these values by ensuring thriving students, affirming and empowering communities, and equitable transformative resources. In ACPS, this is our theory of how we change through continuous improvement. It's our

[00:12:08] theory of action, our theory of change. Education is a collective effort from school board members and central office and school leaders to educators, support staff, students, and families. Everyone plays a role in fostering a positive and productive learning environment. Our draft funding request represents an investment in the partnerships and structures that support learning for all students.

[00:12:33] Without a theory of change, a theory of how we will change, how we will get change done, along with the resources needed to improve, the strategic plan will not happen. Learning for all will not happen. With resources, planning, action, and accountability, we can keep improving our students' learning and school experiences.

[00:12:58] annually re-report our progress on our strategic plan goals as well as our accountability and accreditation results in compliance with Virginia Department of Education and federal requirements. Our State of the Division Report presented in November is a key tool for our school board to use it to determine school system needs for the coming school year and to make plans to resource them in the funding request. For those who have a stake in our work, our students, family, staff, and community. I'm not sure how we can be more transparent than we are, but we are always open

[00:13:33] to feedback to improve. On all three goals of our strategic plan, we are making positive progress. And we know this because we set goals, we make plans, we do what we say we are going to do, and we have a number of key measures that tell us that our results are better than the year before.

[00:13:52] And we're not seeing improved results. We will make new plans for the coming year. Let's keep going. Our budget is built on six guiding principles to ensure responsible funding decisions that align with our long-term goals and maximize resources for student success. We prioritize fiscal responsibility, aligning resources with our mission while maintaining financial stability, community engagement, ensuring families, staff, businesses, and the broader community have a voice in shaping budget priorities. To attract and retain top talent, we offer competitive compensation

[00:14:32] with market-aligned salaries and benefits. We also maintain sustainable operations by using best practices to manage facilities, transportation, and services efficiently. Every budget decision supports strategic alignment with our school board priorities and strategic plan. And finally, we rely on data-driven decisions using performance measures to ensure funds are used effectively. These principles keep our budget focused, responsible, and centered on student success and our anchor is transparency. The budget development and appropriations process

[00:15:11] spans from September to May and involves extensive analysis, planning, community engagement, and multiple levels of review. Transparency and collaboration are critical and the school board plays the key role in advocating for this funding. Budget development is a shared effort involving division leadership advisory groups and extensive community engagement by working together we can ensure that our funding priorities reflect the needs of those we serve as we make our way through

[00:15:45] the next several slides i will use the terms expenditure and spending and cost quite a bit let's take a minute to reframe what we are really talking about public education is not a cost it's not an expenditure. It is an investment. Public education is one of the most powerful investments a community

can make, and just like any other investment, it pays short-term and long-term dividends to the community, the people making it. Public education is a powerful mechanism for the

[00:16:25] fair treatment of our kids and families. By investing in public education, communities ensure all students have access to quality learning, gain essential skills, earn higher incomes, and contribute to the local economy while supporting future generations. A skilled workforce from public education leads to higher earnings, boosting local and state tax revenue, while reducing reliance on public assistance, as shown by a 2023 Economic Policy Institute study. Strong

[00:17:00] schools, like Albemarle County Public Schools, attract businesses that need a skilled workforce, driving job creation and economic investment. Albemarle County's technology and healthcare sectors rely on ACPS graduates in STEM fields, contributing to local industries and economic growth. High-quality public schools boost property values, benefiting homeowners, and increasing real estate tax revenue. A National Bureau of Economic Research study found that every \$1 invested in

[00:17:34] public schools raises property values by about \$20 over time. So, a \$200 million local investment in schools could generate a \$4 billion increase in local property values over time. Higher education levels are linked to lower crime rates, easing the strain on law enforcement and the justice system. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, raising high school graduation rates by just five percent nationwide could save 18.5 billion dollars annually in crime-related costs.

[00:18:12] Education plays a vital role in improving community health by equipping students with the knowledge to make healthier choices and empowering them to support the well-being of those around them. Through ACPS career pathways in health care, students gain skills to address the medical needs in their communities, reducing workforce shortages, and lowering overall public health care costs. Higher education levels decrease reliance on government assistance programs, reducing costs for taxpayers. A Georgetown University study found that high school graduates

[00:18:50] are 40 percent less likely to depend on food assistance and Medicaid than those without a diploma. Everyone wins. The ACPS class of 2024 made a remarkable impact on the community, embodying the values of service, civic engagement, and workforce readiness, all before even graduating from high school. In just one year, 267 out of an approximately 1,000-student cohort dedicated an estimated 10,680 hours to clinical and direct internship/externship

[00:19:27] experiences, gaining hands-on skills while providing essential services. Additionally, the whole class of 2024 dedicated approximately 15,000 hours through service learning projects, reinforcing their commitment to local nonprofits, governance, and volunteer organizations. Together, last year, ACPS seniors gave back 25,680 hours without pay to the community, an effort valued at approximately \$318,813 based on Virginia's minimum wage of \$1,241 per hour. These contributions

[00:20:07] not only strengthen local industries and public services, but also exemplify how education fosters active citizenship, preparing graduates to lead, serve, and invest in their communities to give back to their communities for years to come. Investing in public education generates a strong return with every one dollar spent producing four to seven dollars in long-term economic benefits.

[00:20:34] These gains stem from higher wages, increased property values, economic expansion, lower crime rates, and reduced social service costs. In Virginia, the VDOE estimates that each additional high school graduate adds an average of \$200,000 in net lifetime economic benefits to the local economy. With a

clear vision for our future and a strong foundation in place, we now turn to where we stand today. Our budget overview provides a snapshot of our current financial position,

[00:21:09] including our revenue outlook, key expenditures, I mean investments, and the challenges we face. Understanding these factors is essential as we work toward a budget that sustains and strengthens our schools. For the first time ever, we are starting our budget overview by showing the big picture, our total budget, including revenues from all sources. This total, just over \$304 million, represents the revenue we expect to receive from local, state, and federal sources, as well as a

[00:21:45] small amount of our fund balance or savings. Most of our funding, about 71%, or \$216.5 million, comes from local sources, primarily from county tax revenues. The state contributes nearly 25%, or \$75 million, while the federal government provides just under 4%, or about \$12 million.

[00:22:07] This total budget figure includes both our main operating budget, known as the school fund, and our special revenue funds, which account for our self-sustaining programs like child nutrition and EDEP, as well as federal, state, and local grant funds. Because money moves between funds for specific purposes, we make adjustments to avoid double counting these transfers when calculating the total budget. The key takeaway here is that this \$304 million reflects all

[00:22:42] revenue available to support our schools for the coming year. On the previous slide, we saw that ACPs anticipates receiving nearly \$12 million in federal funding as part of our total budget. However, most of that, about \$11.5 million, is designated as federal special revenue funds.

[00:23:03] These funds are separate from our main operating budget and are restricted to specific programs that serve students with the greatest needs. More than 90% of this funding supports just three major programs. School Lunch, which provides free and reduced-price meals to students and helps offset food costs.

[00:23:23] the DEA, Individuals with Disabilities Act, which helps cover federally required special education services, though the federal government provides far less than the 40% share originally intended by law, and Title I, which directly supports reading and math interventions for students facing the greatest academic and economic challenges.

[00:23:47] It is important to note that these funds are not flexible. They must be used for their designated programs. If federal funding for these programs were reduced, the services they support would be at risk, forcing the division to rely on local funding to maintain them.

[00:24:02] This would severely limit our ability to serve students and families, especially those who depend on these programs, for the support they need to succeed in school and life. While federal funding plays a critical role in supporting specific programs, our primary operating budget, the school fund, is what keeps our schools running day to day.

[00:24:25] This fund covers core expenses such as teacher salaries, classroom resources, and school operations. Our proposed school fund revenues for FY26 totaled \$281 million, reflecting a 4.4% increase from last year.

[00:24:41] The majority of funding in our operating budget comes from local sources, 74.5%, supplemented by state and federal contributions. As we talked about, most federal funding is accounted for in our special revenue funds.

[00:24:57] The federal revenues shown in this table as part of the school fund reflect \$460,000 in Medicaid reimbursements. While state revenues have increased compared to last year, they remain significantly lower than two years ago, an estimated \$10 million loss per year.

[00:25:17] This is due to a change in the state's local composite index. Let's take a closer look at that. A change in the state's Local Composite Index, or LCI, reduced the amount of state funding ACPS receives.

[00:25:35] Virginia's Local Composite Index, or LCI, determines the ability of a locality to fund its public schools and is based on three primary indicators of local wealth. True Value of Real Property, this is the assessed value of real estate within the locality adjusted by the Virginia Department of Taxation.

[00:25:57] Adjusted gross income is the second factor, the total adjusted gross income of residents in the locality. Taxable retail sales, the total taxable sales within the locality. These factors are used to calculate a locality's composite index score, which in turn determines its required local share of K-12 education funding relative to state contributions. Had our LCI remained the same as it had been two years ago, we would have received approximately \$10 million more in both

[00:26:32] FY25 and FY26, funds that could have helped close our budget gap. Instead, last year's shortfall continues into this year, making it even more challenging to keep pace with rising enrollment, inflation, and compensation costs. Out of 133 school divisions in Virginia, ACPS has the 14th highest local composite index. That means that Albemarle ranks 14th out of 133 school communities in terms of the localities calculated ability to pay for public schools.

[00:27:10] Now we've reviewed where our funds come from. Let's take a closer look at how these funds are allocated to support our schools, employees, and students. This table provides a side-by-side comparison of our FY25 adopted expenditures and the proposed FY26 budget, broken down by expense category. Total projected expenditures for FY26 are \$289 million, a 7.2 percent increase over the previous year. As you can see, salaries and benefits continue to make up the largest share

[00:27:46] of our budget, reflecting our commitment to investing in our workforce, while expenses in areas like transportation and other essential services have increased, operational costs have decreased by \$1.6 million, reflecting strategic adjustments to meet budgetary needs. To help visualize these expenditures, the next slide presents this information in a pie chart format, making it easier to see how our resources are distributed across major spending categories.

[00:28:18] Understanding how we allocate our funding is essential to ensuring that our resources align with the needs of our students, staff, and schools. The two charts on this slide provide different perspectives on our expenses. The chart on the left breaks down expenses by category.

[00:28:36] As I mentioned, salaries and benefits account for the majority of our budget at 83.6%, reflecting our commitment to attracting and retaining the highest quality staff. Operations makes up 10.3%, covering critical costs such as classroom supplies, utilities, fuel, and contracted services.

[00:28:56] Transfers and other wages round out the remaining balance. Now the chart on the right shows how our expenditures are classified under state reporting categories. So we don't get to make up these categories. That's what we get from the VDOE.

[00:29:12] Instruction makes up the largest share, nearly 71%, which includes not just classroom teaching, but also school-level administration, counseling, and library media services, for example.

Building services at 9.4% and transportation, 6.6% reflect our ongoing commitment to maintaining safe and accessible learning environments.

[00:29:37] Administration, attendance, and health, 6.1% includes essential student support services such as school nurses, psychologists, and speech services. Ultimately, these charts reinforce a clear takeaway. The vast majority of our funding is dedicated to supporting students, schools, and instruction, both in the classroom and beyond.

[00:30:04] As required by state law, this is a needs-based draft budget, one that reflects the funding necessary to sustain and support our schools. The \$19.5 million increase in expenditures is driven by \$2.6 million in baseline adjustments maintain existing commitments, including transfers to special revenue funds, contractual payments, and a 26% increase in health care costs for plan year 2025, and that's our current year.

[00:30:34] \$11.3 million in mandatory or unavoidable non-discretionary changes, including inflation, enrollment growth, a projected 24% increase in our health care costs for plan year 2026, so that's next year, and technical changes such as funding for unbudgeted bus driver positions and additional English learner teachers to meet updated state staffing requirements, 2.7 million dollars in service reductions due to ongoing revenue constraints,

[00:31:09] 8.3 million dollars in new investments that support our commitment to learning for all. One major driver of rising costs in our draft spending plan is health care. Over the past two years our health care contributions have increased by more than 54 percent driven by higher premiums increased medical claims and necessary adjustments to our fiscal year budget calculations one key factor is that help is that the health care reserve which we contribute to and which is

[00:31:45] managed by local government has fallen below the recommended level based on industry standards for solvency. To restore stability, we must increase our contributions. Additionally, rising demand for medical services and an increase in high-cost claims compared to previous years are further driving up costs. We remain committed to managing these expenses while maintaining quality coverage for our employees. One important step in this effort is the new Alba employee care clinic, which is expected to help control costs and improve access to health care over time. You

[00:32:24] will recall that Dan Redding presented information about the care clinic at our last board meeting. Another key factor driving costs is higher enrollment growth, and we, of course, budget for student growth. The FY26 budget includes a budget-to-budget increase of \$1.3 million to accommodate enrollment growth. This is based on a projected-to-projected increase of 178 students in FY26. While projections inform budget planning, actual growth – this year's actual enrollment

[00:33:01] compared to next year's projection – is expected to be 45 students. And in preparation for future expansion, enrollment growth extends beyond our K-12 population. In recent years, we've seen a significant increase in our post-high student population – students ages 18 to 22 who require specialized support to transition successfully to adulthood. This growth has outpaced our current capacity with 29 students now enrolled in a space designed for just 24 in the house near Burleigh

[00:33:39] and in the Burleigh Annex. To address this, our FY26 funding request includes a \$649,000 proposal to expand the Intensive Support Center. This investment will enhance services for K-12 students with intensive behavioral needs while also relocating our post-high students to a more suitable facility,

ensuring they have the space and resources they need to thrive. Looking ahead to FY27, Mountain View Upper Elementary School and the ACE Academy at Lambs Lane will open,

[00:34:15] requiring significant staffing and operational investments. Our FY26 requests early staffing adjustments to assure a smooth transition ahead of these openings and the FY27 budget will reflect significant cost increase as these new schools become operational. The draft funding request includes 2.7 million dollars in service reductions addressing ongoing revenue constraints caused by decreases and decreased state funding and rising health care costs. These reductions come on top

[00:34:52] of the \$3.5 million in cuts made in the current 2024-25 school year, underscoring the continued financial challenges we face. These reductions are necessary to balance the budget while navigating persistent revenue shortfalls. While these decisions are difficult, they reflect our commitment to minimizing the impact on classrooms as much as possible. However, I want to be clear that all these reductions, including those in central and department-based staffing, will have both anticipated and unforeseen effects on student experiences and staff support. We remain committed

[00:35:31] to mitigating the loss of student opportunities and restructuring work responsibilities to preserve essential services and expertise wherever possible. Despite strategic investments and cost-saving measures, we face a \$7.8 million funding gap due to rising costs, such as health care, and a relatively flat state funding. To clarify, from FY 2024 to FY 2026, our health care costs are projected to

[00:36:03] increase significantly. The adopted FY24 budget allocated just over \$21 million for health care, while the draft FY26 budget estimates costs at nearly \$33 million, an increase of more than \$11 million dollars or 54 percent over this period. This gap between our projected revenues and projected investments or expenditures underscores the importance of advocating for the resources our students and staff need. And again, by state code, I'm required to present a needs-based

[00:36:41] draft budget to the school board. As we look ahead, let's turn our attention to strategic investments in our students, staff, and schools. The learning for all proposals represent our commitment to equity, excellence, and sustainability, ensuring that every student has access to the resources and support they need to thrive. To support Learning for All, our FY26 funding request prioritizes five key investments. Market compensation increase, instructional improvements,

[00:37:18] scholar studio sustainability, intensive support center, and school resource officers. To remain competitive, we propose a \$6.5 million investment in employee compensation, including a 3% salary increase for all employees effective July 1, 2025. Additionally, we are making targeted adjustments for special education teaching assistants and transportation assistants, whose salaries currently lag our market goal by 4 to 5%. These roles are essential for student success,

[00:37:56] particularly for our most vulnerable learners. By increasing their salaries and adjusting their pay grade, we strengthen retention and ensure consistency in student support. This investment aligns with our long-term strategy to maintain salaries 10% above market, helping ACPS attract and retain top talent across all employee groups. Our instructional priorities are driven by recommendations from the Bellwether Instructional Practices Audit, which identified key opportunities

[00:38:31] to strengthen instruction and address learning gaps. In year one, we are allocating half a million dollars toward expanded intervention programs, new assessment tools, and curriculum

enhancements. This includes a multi-tiered support system database, progress monitoring tools, and curriculum enhancements, and virtual intervention licenses to better track and support student learning.

[00:39:01] We're also making one-time investments in math and literacy interventions and new Algebra I and Math VIII textbooks to improve math readiness and secondary curriculum alignment. Additionally, as part of our long-term instructional strategy, we plan to invest a comprehensive secondary math and middle school ELA textbook adoption in year two, ensuring all teachers and, as a result, their students have access to high-quality, standards-aligned resources that support both state requirements and our division's instructional

[00:39:38] goals. To maintain and expand the Scholars Studios initiative, this proposal includes a \$406,000 investment in staffing and resources, ensuring equitable access to Scholars Studios for all students. This funding supports Studio Leads, dedicated assistance for English learners, and special education students, and operational resources to sustain and enhance programming.

[00:40:06] In year one, the focus is on stabilizing existing programs with core staffing and resources. In year two, we expand to additional EL special ed support, scholars physics, and advanced learning opportunities to strengthen pathways to high demand careers.

[00:40:24] Our investment reinforces our commitment to rigorous, innovative learning experiences that prepare students for success. The Intensive Support Center provides intensive behavioral supports in a low teacher-to-student ratio setting for K-12 students with disabilities who might otherwise be placed outside of Albemarle County Public Schools.

[00:40:47] Beginning in the 25-26 school year, the ISC, or Intensive Support Center, will expand its services to include intensive behavioral supports for K-12 students with emotional disabilities, as well as functional life skills instruction for post-high students ages 18 to 22. To support this expansion, our FY26 funding request includes a \$649,000 investment to establish ISC as a fully ACPS-run center, strengthening stability and continuity of care for students who require

[00:41:22] these services. This will reduce long-term costs associated with external placements while ensuring that students receive consistent, high-quality support within our school system. With this funding, the current post-high program, now located behind Burleigh Middle School, will relocate to the ISC at Lambs Lane campus, allowing the two centers to operate as one. Additionally, this transition will free up space for the Center for Learning and Growth to operate during the day.

[00:41:53] This move enhances our ability to provide specialized instruction and support services, ensuring that students with complex needs have the space, resources, and staff necessary to thrive. Our SRO proposal funds one additional school resource officer at Monticello and one at Western Elm Mall, ensuring that all three comprehensive high schools have a dedicated safety presence on campus. This quarter of a million dollar investment enhances school safety

[00:42:27] at no net cost, as it is fully offset by reducing three FTE in student safety coaches. These officers work year-round with school leadership and safety teams, focusing not only on security, but also on building positive relationships with students and staff. By strategically reallocating resources, this proposal reinforces our commitment to proactive safety measures and crisis support for students, staff, and families. Now that we've covered the budget overview and our funding proposals, let's take a closer look at our capital needs and long-term

[00:43:05] infrastructure plans. A needs-based budget that supports equitable transformative resources must also address our capital needs, which are critical to maintaining safe, modern, and effective learning environments. I want to take a moment to express our gratitude to our Albemarle County partners for their support of our construction of a second high school center and two elementary schools, critical investments in our future. Our sincerest thanks. While we appreciate current investments, additional funding is essential to support our growing student population. Our operating budget

[00:43:44] moves us forward in many ways, but our ability to meet student and staff needs will be significantly impacted without infrastructure that provides adequate capacity and optimal learning environments. A phased multi-year approach to funding these renovations would help bring our aging schools up to modern standards. This includes essential electrical upgrades to support technology, improved access to natural light in classrooms, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, enhancing outdoor learning spaces, and the reconfiguration of spaces to improve function,

[00:44:22] efficiency, and safety. As we move forward in this budget process, our focus remains on ensuring that every student has the opportunities and support they need to succeed. Because when we invest in education, we invest in a stronger future for everyone. Every dollar invested in public education generates long-term economic benefits. Research consistently shows that a well-funded public school system strengthens our entire community, leading to higher earnings and job stability for

[00:45:00] graduates, increased property values, lower crime rates and public safety costs, better health outcomes and reduced health care expenses, higher civic engagement and stronger communities, economic growth through a well-educated workforce. Behind every budget decision, every investment, every reduction, and every initiative, there are real people. Our students, our ACPS educators, support staff and leadership, our families, our partners, and our community members.

[00:45:39] Their dedication, passion, and potential are what drives us forward. Together, we secure the future because investing in our students today shapes a future of opportunity and success for all.

[00:46:02] Over the coming weeks, we will continue shaping this budget through thoughtful discussions and community input. Our first work session, originally scheduled for tonight, been rescheduled for next thursday february 27th during that session we'll take a deeper dive into revenues expenditures and special revenue funds as well as provide more details about our health care fund also next week we'll host a public hearing to gather community feedback on the budget then at our second work session on march 6th we'll focus on compensation service reductions

[00:46:38] and budget balancing scenarios we appreciate your engagement in this process as we refine our budget and continue seeking community input your advocacy will help secure the funding needed to provide the best possible education for our students thank you for your leadership and

[00:46:56] commitment to acps and thank you for your time hey hey you're muted thank you dr haas uh as we schedule this, our working sessions will be the opportunities to ask questions about the various

[00:47:29] elements of this of this presentation. So we can move. So we will have a few days to digest this, and we will come back to the drawing board with Maya Kumazawa and other staff to dive into what dr haas has presented um given that we are moving forward then to other business i know that miss lee has something as well as dr haas and maybe others as well thanks uh dr rickhoff

[00:48:08] i would like to nominate ms prior to take my position on the discipline committee i second that nomination miss prior do you have anything to um to say about about that nomination are you Are you familiar with what the responsibilities are?

[00:48:30] - I am. Judy sent me an email in reference to it and I've spoken to a couple, so I'm okay with that. - Well, I think that's an excellent nomination. We have a motion by Ms. Lee, a second by Mr. Page.

[00:48:46] Any further discussion? All those in favor of Leslie Pryor assuming a role on the disciplinary committee, say aye. - Aye. - Opposed? Motion passes. thank you Dr. Haas so I just want to share my screen very briefly at first I want to I also want to really thank Jennifer Butler for taking care of the slides and just being my partner in developing that presentation working together I just want to share my screen I just want to brief

[00:49:21] the board okay so can you see this yes okay so I just want to give a quick briefing to the board I I want to correct a recent public statement regarding teacher compensation in Atomal County Public Schools. During a meeting last month, a speaker stated, quote, first-year teacher salary is roughly \$60,000. By the way, it is less than it is in Rockingham County, where it is a lot cheaper to live. That statement is incorrect. ACPS's starting teacher salary on the bachelor scale

[00:50:00] is nearly \$3,000 higher than Rockingham County's. Rockingham does not have a master's degree scale, so we cannot make that comparison. Additionally, while Rockingham County has 42 steps on its teacher pay scale, ACPS has 32 steps. At step 32, our teacher pay is \$15,050 higher than Rockingham's at their step 32. Our maximum salary on the bachelor scale is \$3,867 higher than Rockingham's

[00:50:34] step 42. With regard to compensation increases since 2019-20, coincidentally the first budget I developed as the superintendent, we have re-increased our stat our salary and when it's compounded by approximately 29 percent so you can see over time the different increases of course in 2021 there was no salary increase we were because of the budget we planned in anticipation or during the

[00:51:11] onset of COVID-19 and then made up for that the next year with two salary increases in the same year an employee in fiscal year 20 earning fifty thousand dollars now due to these compounded increase would be at \$64,691 a year over this period of time. The aggregate gross increase is 26% and the compounded is 29%. I share this because I want public discussions about ACPS to be based

[00:51:50] on facts. Rockingham County Public Schools is a strong division and a competitor in our regional market we continuously monitor compensation to ensure we remain competitive and attracting retaining high quality educators to our students i also encourage members of the public to contact me or my staff when seeking factual information about our schools we are committed to transparency and continuous improvement and welcome discussions informed by accurate data thank you thank you dr

[00:52:22] Jaws. Thank you. Does anyone else have any business to present at this time? Dr. Acuff, I would just like to maybe add something to what you had mentioned at the very beginning of the meeting about the incident in Crozet. Really, three families were tremendously affected.

[00:52:42] The family of the young man who shot the people at Terrace Theater is a graduate of west and out mile he attended james madison university and on facebook his family has really been posting however a long period of time they had tried to uh get some type of mental health help for this young man and also to try to make sure that the state would confiscate his gun under the red flag law they were unsuccessful with both of those things and so just given what happened

[00:53:20] and being here in our community, it's really sort of, I think, very special, really essential that we recognize that three families have been just tremendously affected and that our mental health laws and our red flag laws here in Virginia really need some work. So I just wanted to sort of add that to what you had mentioned earlier. Thank you, Mr. Page. That was an important addition. I just wanted to add on to that being out here in Rosé. Graham, thank you for saying that um there's a lot of efforts underway in the community and a lot of stuff's going to be coming

[00:53:56] out but region 10 is going to be um meeting with me and a couple other community members tomorrow to see what the community needs as far as mental health um support and trauma support not just for the people that witnessed it but they also offered help if we want to connect them with some acps people so i just wanted to let you know for anybody that's watching this there's a lot of community things going on behind the scenes to try to get people the support that they need from all the trauma that's happened this week. Thank you, Ms. Spillman. Is there anything else?

[00:54:36] Well, if there's no further business, this very brief school board meeting is now adjourned.



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