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Chesterfield County School Board Special Meeting, Tuesday, February 24, 2026

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[00:00:04] All right, starting. Good evening. I'd like to call the February 24, 2026 School Board Special Meeting to order. We will now have an invocation by Dr. Darby, followed by the flag salute led by Mrs. Coker.

[00:00:20] Thank you, Madam Chair. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we come before you tonight acknowledging that every good gift comes from you, including the responsibility to serve this community. As we consider this budget, give us wisdom that reflects your truth, humility that reflects your son.

[00:00:37] Thank you. and a spirit of stewardship worthy of the trust our community has placed in us. Guide our decisions so that every child in Chesterfield is given the opportunity to learn, grow, and flourish, each one made in your image and worthy of our very best. May our work tonight honor you and serve our students well.

[00:00:56] In your son's name, amen. Please join us at this time for the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members, may I have a motion to approve this evening's agenda as drafted?

[00:01:30] So moved. Is there a second? Second. Madam Clerk, would you please call roll on the motion? Ann Coker? Aye. Jennifer Darby? Aye. Dominique Chatters? Aye. Stephen Pronto? Aye. Lisa Hudgens? Aye.

[00:01:46] The agenda has been adopted. Next, we have public comment. For this meeting, citizens were given the option of submitting their comments online or in person. Comments submitted via the online form were sent to the board prior to the start of this afternoon's meeting, posted to the board doc site, and will be included in full as an addendum to the meeting minutes.

[00:02:08] In-person comments will be summarized by the board clerk and included in the official meeting minutes. Documents submitted along with in-person comments will, upon request, be distributed to the board, but not included as part of the board's official minutes. Madam Clerk, would you please announce this afternoon's in-person speakers?

[00:02:28] Madam Chair, we have one speaker this evening. May we have Christy Foldenauer. You will have four minutes to address the board. There's a timer set up on top of the podium that will turn green when you begin speaking, yellow when you have 30 seconds remaining, and red when your time has expired.

[00:02:44] As a reminder, no personal belongings other than a cell phone and speaker notes are allowed at the podium. Please have your materials organized in a manner that as you arrive at the podium, you are prepared to start speaking. Please note that comments equivalent to campaigning for any public office are in violation of school board policy 1110 are prohibited.

[00:03:01] Ms. Foldenauer. Thank you. Good evening. My name is Christy Foldenauer, and I'm here and I wear several hats. I serve on the board of directors for communities and schools in Chesterfield, and I'm also a business owner in Midlothian, Virginia, and I'm an ordained pastor.

[00:03:19] I serve as a pastor at large within the Midlothian community. So thank you so much for making time and hearing my comments tonight. I wanted to sincerely thank you for including communities and schools in your budget for fiscal year 2021.

[00:03:35] and continuing to walk alongside us as a really vital partner in the work. I know that many of you are familiar with the program. Communities and Schools partners with CCPS to place full-time site coordinators on site in schools who connect students to the supports that they need in order to be able to achieve in school and in life.

[00:03:56] And I have seen the work firsthand over the last seven years. I started as an occasional volunteer and an every now and again financial supporter. And I have steadily moved to becoming more and more involved because I've seen the impact of this work.

[00:04:12] And that includes mentoring, speaking in classrooms, advocating, this year also coming alongside the Manchester Middle School program to provide funds for buses so that the kids could visit colleges. So I really believe in this work, and I just want to thank you for coming alongside it.

[00:04:30] Students learn best when they feel supported, stable, and connected. And your support of CIS helps meet students where they are and invest in the whole child. And so CIS is already reaching students in 16 schools, serving more than 14,725 students.

[00:04:48] The results speak for themselves, but I just want to share a couple with you. During the 24-25 school year, CIS Chesterfield served 746 case-managed students. That's our deepest level of support with the following outcomes.

[00:05:04] 74% improved their attendance. These are good numbers. 78% improved their behavior. 79% improved their academics and their SELs. That's huge. 95% were promoted. 98% graduated. And 99% when CIS was present of students remained in school for the year. The pastor in me celebrates that's a real impact the businesswoman in me says these are numbers that we need to keep keep multiplying because this is working and so we can do more by expanding into additional schools with

[00:05:44] staffing and infrastructure to support delivering high quality academic social emotional and basic needs supports ccps support not only helps cis grow but it also gives other partners the confidence to come alongside the work, and I'm one of those, like private businesses, foundations, that continue to invest alongside all of you.

[00:06:09] And that allows us to bring even more outside resources into Chesterfield schools every single year. Ultimately, the braided funding puts more caring adults, more targeted supports, and more opportunities in place for our students who need them the most.

[00:06:25] So we are deeply grateful for this partnership and your shared commitment to Chesterfield students and families. Thank you all for your leadership and your continued support of this vital program. Yellow, I got it done. Thank you.

[00:06:42] Thank you. Madam Chair, that concludes this evening's public comment. Thank you, Madam Clark. Next, we have action items. Mr. Meister. Madam Chair, pursuant to the Virginia Conflicts of Interest Act, I am disclosing that my spouse is employed by the school division.

[00:07:01] The FY27 budget before us includes a proposed compensation increase, funding of my spouse's department, and other funding that affects all division employees. I recognize that my spouse, like other employees, may be affected by these compensation and funding decisions.

[00:07:17] However, because these budget provisions are generally applicable to all employees and do not uniquely benefit my spouse, I am able to participate in these discussions and the final FY27 budget vote fairly, objectively, and in a manner consistent with the public interest.

[00:07:33] Thus, I will participate in tonight's discussion and vote, and I request that this disclosure be reflected in the minutes. Awesome. Thank you, Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, Dr. Doherty, other members of the board. Dr. Doherty, wow, where did that come from? Dr. Murray.

[00:07:51] Several apologies. I'm living in the moment. What is in front of you this evening is memo 020-26, not 23 or 4, I promise, and the final approval for your operating plan here today.

[00:08:11] Keep in mind that this is a step in the journey. From here, we hand this over to the Board of Supervisors, and I'll walk through that a little later. Several attachments, but first I will walk through the presentation very quickly. Good news is there's no new information here as we look forward. Total CCPS financial plan of just over \$1.1 billion is in front of you today at just over 4.8% increase.

[00:08:35] About the same percent, but \$1.035 billion in the operating plan. This does include \$47.9 million of new spend, still based on the governor's budget from December. I know there's been new news in the General Assembly over the course of the last few days.

[00:08:52] I'll talk a little bit about that. I may ask Mr. Smith to come up to shed a little bit more light a little bit later in this presentation, but the numbers you're seeing here still reflect that December action by the then-Governor Youngkin. Again, county process kicks off immediately after this, so we'll roll right into

our presentation today, reminding the board and the public proposed revenue of an increase of just under \$48 million is presented to you here.

[00:09:20] The bulk of that from the state, you can see just over \$33.5 million largely on the back of re-benchmarking and a 2% compensation supplement. As a bit of a preview, I'm happy to say that both the House and Senate versions of the bill kept these two items intact and only adds from here.

[00:09:36] So happy to say that there's no adjustments downward from here. We'll see what happens over the course of the period with other amendments from the state. The county holds tight at 15 million transfer with a little bit of reduction in one-time funds, mostly made up for in increases in local funds, as you see here, to get to the just under 48 million.

[00:09:56] Just about 57.9% of our total pie from the state, about 40.5% from the county, and a little bit from a few other sources, but 47.9 million being the magic number. And once again, happy to share with the board a balanced budget, not just now at the final approval, but throughout the process today at 47.9, you can see where that comes on the revenue side and the expense side. We were also fortunate enough to be the beneficiary of a technical adjustment on the state side with lower VRS required contributions from the employer, CCPS,

[00:10:32] which opened up additional spending opportunity, which made our spend asks quite frankly possible. You can see the bulk of that money coming through to compensation, other required increases in inflation and student support, as we've talked over the last month or so and outlined here.

[00:10:48] Once again, the headline number in this year's budget is a 5% compensation adjustment pretty much across the board. For teachers and administrative positions, that looks like a 4% COLA and a 1% step, give or take. The graded positions look like a 5% increase. They take our headline numbers to just over 57,000 and just over \$15 an hour. Still on our way towards both the goal of \$60,000 and \$16 an hour, which we hope to achieve the year following. A few other targeted adjustments there, most notably transportation, including some increases to

[00:11:25] subs, stipends, nurses as well. Required increases, a big contribution to debt, including bus financing and major maintenance, which we're really excited about, and other items that largely look like inflation, and student and other supports, maintaining our ability to perform tutoring and attendance specialists from the all-in monies that is expiring this year, being the headliner in this camp.

[00:11:50] Some other targeted adjustments, including special ed, TSAs, mental health support, and you'll notice also CIS, as our speaker mentioned earlier today. So all this puts together, still right around 70% invested in instruction, another 10% or so in operations, and you can see the bulk of the remaining dollars in the other categories here today.

[00:12:10] And as we lay it out, you're not just approving your operating line, but also grants and food service as well as Argus here. Very minor technical adjustments from what we've shared over the course of the year. The grant number is up about \$100,000 as we've got better information on some of the grants.

[00:12:28] And Hargis is basically flat. The other numbers are identical as well. So where are we in the state budget process? We had crossover, give or take, a week ago. Budget Sunday was just this past Sunday, and we're here approving. There are further steps from here. But in lieu of me saying something I shouldn't, I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Smith to comment on what he's hearing at the state at this moment, and I'll be back in a moment.

[00:12:54] Thank you, Bob. Board members, I thought I'd just give you a quick update where we are with the budget process. Some of this is consistent with my notifications from the weekend. Over the weekend, the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Appropriations Committee outlined their budget proposals.

[00:13:11] Generally, there was increased funding for education. There were some specific things dealing with social education, early childhood education. I would note they both had language in there with regards to the Joint Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Funding. What that essentially is, is an ongoing committee that's been in place for a couple of years.

[00:13:30] And that's the committee that keeps looking at, I say keeps looking at, keeps looking at education formula for funding pieces. And so they are putting money towards that again to look at changing the funding formula. That's been discussed. I've been doing this for about 25 years and it's been discussed for more than 25 years.

[00:13:49] So we're hoping something will happen, but that certainly is something that they have in place. What I do want to highlight, though, is there's some really significant differences between the House and Senate. The House has their large proposal for education is essentially a \$400 million one-time payment to school divisions.

[00:14:10] With that, there's no local match that comes with that. Inherently, there's flexibility that would go across all school divisions. The unfortunate part of that is it's a one-time funding for that. So think in terms of it could not be used necessarily for salary increases for compensation purposes.

[00:14:26] The Senate, one of the largest proposals is taking the outgoing governor's salary proposal for a raise for 2%. They took it up to 3%. So I'll pause there and say one of the more concerning things is even given the political parties controlling both chambers and the governor's office, they are very different in how they've determined their revenue structure.

[00:14:52] And the biggest piece on the Senate side is that they have taken, the quick version is tax revenue with regards to data centers, and they're getting rid of a tax exemption, which generates for the Commonwealth, Virginia, almost \$1 billion in revenue.

[00:15:07] The House does not do that. So when you look strictly at the ledger side of that, they both have two entirely different structures for how they're obtaining revenue and then how they're distributing the revenue. So with that, we're likely to see some differences that are going to come about.

[00:15:24] They have to be compromised. On this week, both chambers will essentially go through the parliamentary procedures of accepting and rejecting the different proposals. They'll form a conference committee. They'll begin to negotiate over the next 10 to 14 days, hopefully airing itself out before they adjourn for session.

[00:15:43] So a lot of things still to move. That's not even taken into consideration in legislation. but that's certainly the budget process. I'm happy at that point to answer any questions you have with that before I turn it back over to Mr. Meister. Thank you, Sean. Thank you, board.

[00:16:04] Moving forward, just wanted to also highlight that this budget does include a specific outline of other needs, sort of should additional funding from the state come forward. We've been talking about

these throughout the course of the time, that there are several additional items that the school feels are important that we do want to continue to look forward to.

[00:16:25] You can see we've grouped those largely into three categories, operations and technology, ongoing support for maintenance, technology replacement being the two headliners in there, as well as debt service. We could always use more to contribute to that pot. Staff and student supports, gifted special education, behavioral supports, administrative supports, federal grant risk are the items highlighted in that bucket.

[00:16:48] And lastly, but certainly not least, is continued on our path towards our compensation goals of both \$60K and \$16 per hour, or perhaps other compensation. So as we look towards whatever comes out of the state, should there be more money that's made available, we'll look to this list, we'll look to the board to understand what to do with it.

[00:17:05] But keep in mind, what's presented to you today continues to be anchored to that Governor Youngkin proposal, and we're hoping only for upside from here. So with that, I present you, Madam Chair, with Memo 020-26, our FY26 financial plan and associated attachments.

[00:17:28] Thank you, Mr. Meister. Board members, may I have a motion to approve Memo 020-26 as presented? So moved. Is there a second? Second.

[00:17:50] Board members, is there any discussion? Okay. There's been a motion and a second. Madam Clerk, please call roll on the motion. Anne Coker. Aye. Jennifer Darby. Aye. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. Memo number 020-26 is approved. Next, we have memo number 021-26, Mr. Meister again.

[00:18:24] Thank you, Madam Chair, Dr. Murray, other members of the board. I also wanted to, I got thrown off at the first one, to also thank a few other people before I get started on this one. First of all, my budget team, thank you, Denise especially, and others of the team for their support.

[00:18:42] Other chiefs, other members of the district staff who have supported us throughout this process. This is not something that I've done alone. I wanted to specifically take a moment to thank them. So I will do that now when I'm not thanking Dr. Doherty for whatever reason. So with that, I present to you 021-26, our capital improvement plan for this year.

[00:19:04] This includes a FY27 through FY31 CIP, which totals just over \$700 million, including 117 of which, which you are looking to appropriate for the FY27 plan, which is split largely into two buckets.

[00:19:20] The first is current construction projects of about \$74 million, largely related to the remaining funding for the high school, Grange Hall, and the New Dale Elementary project, as well as major maintenance, bus financing, and lease payments, making up the remainder roughly \$43 million in FY27 appropriations.

[00:19:38] I will note for this board that this assumes a \$21 million issuance for major maintenance. As I said throughout this, the actual timing and size of the major maintenance bond will be dependent. ongoing discussions with uh the county and what they ultimately look at in terms of the bond market to fund that but for the sake of the cip this ensures that we have at least 30 million dollars to spend on major maintenance over the course of the year so with that a reminder of our school opening plan you can see

the items currently in process to the left uh Bensley Deep Creek the whole renovation as well as the west area high school and the ongoing work with

[00:20:17] Falling Creek that will start soon. The two new items that we've talked about with dates on them this year Grange Hall Elementary to open in August 29 and the Newdale Area Elementary School/Pre-K Center in August of 2030. You can see the other five items that remain as future projects in no particular order there. We know that these are all important projects that we want to get on the radar just as soon as possible when funding and sites are available. The other major piece of this is major maintenance. You can see here I'm not going to walk through Bob's budget math again, but suffice it to say that this plan will enable us

[00:20:54] to continue to spend roughly \$30 million in major maintenance over the course of FY27, and I know Dr. Waddick and staff are actively working on what that looks like, and you saw a preview of that a few weeks ago. School buses, another huge piece of the pie here, a plan that puts us on a, not a 29-year cycle anymore, but a 15-year cycle, which includes about \$3.5 million of debt funding and about \$3.5 million, \$3.4 million of cash for a split purchase of buses as proposed in this plan, and continuation of our Chromebook lease, which we rolled out last year.

[00:21:28] So with all that, super quick, but memo 021-26 is in front of you for your consideration, which includes both the \$709 million for total over the course of 27 through 31, as well as the roughly \$117 million to be appropriated in FY27.

[00:21:45] Madam Chair. Okay, thank you, Mr. Meister. Board members, may I have a motion to approve memo number 021-26 as presented? So moved. Is there a second? Second. Board members, is there any discussion?

[00:22:02] Ms. Chatters. Thank you, Mr. Meister. I just wanted to reiterate how grateful I am to the board here to continue to support our new Dale Elementary School. I'm really excited about that possibility and when it's going to happen. I want to thank the Board of Supervisors for their continued support in that project as well.

[00:22:20] and our future projects list I wanted to thank Dr. Hilton for taking a tour of the facility with us on Friday to actually see what our concerns are and what the community is advocating for so I appreciate him taking his time to to walk through the facility with us that's all I have thank you thank you Ms. Chatters there has been a motion and a second Madam Clerk please call roll on the motion Ann Coker aye Jennifer Darby aye Dominique Chatters aye Stephen Pronto aye Lisa Hudgens Aye. Memo number 021-26 is approved. Next, we have announcements, communication, and school board

[00:23:00] comments. Anybody? Okay. Ms. Chatters. I just want to say, what's the word tonight? It's going down in Dale. Go Knights. You were not recognized, Madam Clerk. So tonight, the Thomastale Knights are playing Elsie Byrd tonight, so we are having a friendly banter up here with myself and Ms. Coker.

[00:23:28] I already took down one board member last week. I'm going for back-to-back. So let's go, IHOP. Okay. Madam Chair. Me. I'd just like to give an update on that. Thomas Sale is at 26 at halftime with Bird at 27.

[00:23:57] So I have something. Midlothian High School class of 2026 is partnering with Rise Against Hunger, And they are raising money. They're going to feed, they want to gather like 10,000 meals, pack the meals on March, I think it's the 14th.

[00:24:19] And so between now and March the 14th, they are raising money. So if anyone would like to donate money to a good cause, the, I don't have anything, you just have to remember it or find it somewhere, but it's bit.ly slash midlowhunger26.

[00:24:38] bit.ly slash midlow hunger 26 and you can donate until midnight on the 13th of march so yay that's all anybody else so the school board will hold a work session on tuesday march the 10th 2026 at 4 p.m here in the public meeting room it'll be followed by business meeting at 6 30. if there's no further business, we need a motion to adjourn. So moved. Madam Glenn, would you please call roll

[00:25:17] on the motion? Ann Cooker. Aye. Jennifer Darby. Aye. Dominique Chatters. Aye. Stephen Pronto. Aye. Lisa Hudgens. Aye. The motion carries. The February 24th, 2026 School Board Special Meeting is adjourned.



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