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# Henrico County School Board Work Session, Thursday, January 25, 2024

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[00:00:00] one more time. Good afternoon and a warm welcome to the January 25th, 2023 work session of the Henrico County School Board. Please prepare to embark on an informative session as we delve into crucial matters shaping the future of our education in our communities. The first item on the agenda is the agenda approval. Is there a motion? I move that the school board approve the

[00:00:34] agenda for today's meeting. Thank you. Is there a second? Second. All in favor say aye. Aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. The agenda is approved. The next item on the agenda is closed session. Is there a motion to go into closed session? I move that the school board go to closed session for the discussion of matters covered under item a1 of section 2.23711 of the code of virginia 1950 as amended pertaining to the assignment appointment promotion performance demotion salaries

[00:01:13] disciplining or resignation of specific school board employees including the evaluation of the superintendent is there a second second all in favor say aye aye any opposed the ayes have it we will now go into closed session we will reconvene the work session at the conclusion of our closed meeting all right we're back we will now move into closed move into certifying

[00:01:53] closed session is there a motion to certify closed session yep i move that the school board certified by a recorded vote that the best to the best of each school 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.

[00:02:18] Thank you. Is there a second? Second. Thank you. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. Closed session has been certified. Extraordinary Madam Superintendent, the floor is yours.

[00:02:36] Thank you, Madam Chair. Members of the board, good afternoon. for the first item i'm recommending that the school board approve the appointment of administrative personnel thank you dr cashwell is there a motion to approve administrative appointments i move that the school board approves oh yeah i move that the school board approve the appointment of the administrative personnel thank you is there a second second all in favor say aye aye any opposed the ayes have it the administrative appointments are approved thank you members of the board you

[00:03:15] have just approved elizabeth terrier principal at hungry creek middle school for the next item we have an opportunity to review the recommended fiscal year 2025 annual recommended financial plan and i'm so pleased to share our next steps for investing in our students staff and facilities in alignment with our strategic plan 2025 our plan reflects our continued commitment to academic excellence, safety and wellness, recruitment and retention, of course, of our exemplary educators and staff.

[00:03:48] This budget proposal includes significant investment for instructional resources for students, expanded programming for our ACE centers, staffing and curriculum for implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act. Additionally, there's funding for the new Center of Innovation at Rolfe Middle School and to establish Highland Springs as an Opportunity School.

[00:04:08] going to hear all of these details and more how we're continuing to prioritize student safety with permanent funding for 75 school security officers that were added this year for the the implementation of weapon scanners and permanently adding additional attendance officers for chronic absenteeism and maintenance assistance and of course we're planning for the expiration of federal one-time pandemic funds and shifting some of those personnel costs over there So, without further ado, we're very pleased to present you the recommended budget, and Mr. John Wack, our Chief Financial Officer, will take us on an overview of that.

[00:04:47] Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. So, good afternoon, Madam Chair, school board members. Today, I will be providing an overview of the superintendent's fiscal year 2025 recommended budget, highlighting the planned additions to our general fund budget within the overall proposal compared to our current year's adopted budget.

[00:05:03] Most of these net increases are establishing permanent, recurring funding for positions and initiatives established this year and in recent years using grant funding. At this time, I'd like to recognize the extraordinary efforts of our budget team, including our director, Debbie Hargrave, as well as Amy Barnes and Miller Hall.

[00:05:21] Thank you. So you will find copies of our hard copies of our 175-page budget document at your seats, and we are just now posting the full document online for public view. The funding priorities reflected in the fiscal year 2025 recommended budget directly align with the division's strategic plan, Destination 2025.

[00:05:45] In particular, they support our four cornerstones. Safety and wellness, providing support for social, emotional, cultural, and physical needs. Academic growth, focusing on core curricula, electives, and life skill development opportunities. Equity and opportunity, reducing disparities among students from varying demographics and backgrounds.

[00:06:04] and relationships, encouraging collaboration and engagement throughout the entire community. Before we look ahead to the next fiscal year, it is important to take stock of where we are now. The fiscal year 2024 adopted budget includes more instructional assistance, family engagement positions, English language learner supports, our historic 8.2% raises for eligible staff, and the second year implementation of our career ladder.

[00:06:31] We also have about \$17.2 million in amendments to our general fund budget, Effectively adding 75 school security officers, 36 reading specialists, 20 more English language learner teachers, and 10 attendance officers, among other items. Meanwhile, our Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief, or ESSER III, grant funds are covering a final year's personnel costs for 62 full-time positions, as well as expanded opportunities for our summer academy and capital improvements for the campus of Virginia Randolph.

[00:07:02] The fiscal year 2025 recommended budget reflects the following notable changes from our current year's adopted budget. Our general fund budget is increasing by about \$27 million, or about 4.2 percent compared to the current year, based on the target amount we received from the county manager.

[00:07:19] Our debt service budget, associated with previously approved capital project debt, is increasing by about 12.9 percent. The school nutrition fund is increasing by about 18.5 percent, and that's primarily due to the planned use of accumulated reserves. and our state and federal special revenue funds are decreasing by 4.8 percent with many of positions shifting from ESSER to our general fund budget. So overall our operating budget from all funds is growing by about 4.2 percent. And I want to note that our fiscal year 2025 figures don't yet include funding for pay raises which are a budget priority and will be considered later in

[00:07:53] the process. Now I'd like to walk through some of the most significant new initiatives included in the fiscal year 2025 recommended general fund budget. Starting with the items associated with our safety and wellness cornerstone recurring funding has been included to cover the 75 school security officer positions added this year along with the related operating expenses. Also included are the 10 attendance officers to address chronic absenteeism and 31 school counselors and two social worker positions are being shifted from the ESSA grant to our general fund and 12 maintenance

[00:08:27] assistants are being added for onsite support at our schools. Moving to items supporting our academic growth cornerstone. We are adding a new 10th opportunity school this year at Highland Springs Elementary School. A new curriculum is being purchased in order to implement the requirements of the Virginia Literacy Act. Meanwhile, we're making permanent the following positions. A total of 51 reading specialists are being added between this year's amendments and positions that were previously funded by ESSER. 20 English language learner teachers added this year are included, and 13 library assistant positions are being transferred to the general fund from our ESSER

[00:09:04] grant. Now shifting to items related to our equity and opportunity cornerstone, 10 positions are being added next school year for expanded opportunities at our A centers. That includes eight teachers and two custodians. We're adding four positions for the Center for Innovation at John Rolfe Middle School.

We're allowing for a tuition increase at the regional Maggie L. Walker Governor School and funding has been added to establish a replacement cycle for high school band uniforms. Moving to items associated with a relationship cornerstone, funding has been added to allow more supports at our community learning centers. More local funds are being provided

[00:09:40] to support our communities and schools partnership as outside grant sources are declining. We have allowed for an upgrade to our ParentSquare communications tool, which was initiated this year, and enrollment fees for student participation in virtual Virginia offerings has been added on an occurring basis. Finally, we have several items that support our strategic goal related to recruiting, retaining, and rewarding our employees. The number of career ladder opportunities is expanding from the 50 participants this year to 125 participants next year. The budget for employee health benefits is increasing, with the employer picking up all the increases that took

[00:10:18] place in calendar year 2024. We are making our referral bonus program part of our baseline budget moving forward, and we are also allowing for more employees to participate in our new teacher academy while earning their respective hourly rate. Again, as in prior years, the recommended budget does not include funding for salary increases, which will be considered later in the budget process for both county and schools employees under the county's unified pay plan. The governor's budget proposal for fiscal year 2025 that is now being considered by the House and Senate includes some notable components.

[00:10:52] It would provide about thirty three point nine million dollars more in general fund revenue than is included in our current year's adopted budget. An additional thirty three positions now fall under the standards of quality for cost-sharing purposes and that includes twenty one reading specialists. Funding would only be provided for a one percent bonus and not towards recurring salary increases, and no additional funding related to the recommendations from the recent Joint Legislative Audit Review Committee or JLARC report are included. We are hopeful that the General Assembly will be able to incorporate more statewide revenues as they consider amendments

[00:11:26] during the upcoming months to provide more state aid for education. As previously noted, our fiscal year 2025 general fund budget allows for an increase of about \$27 million compared to the current year. There remains some uncertainty regarding state aid next year, while noting that fund balance reserve has been established that will essentially cover the costs of the 62 positions that have been supported by the ESSA grant for the next two years if more general fund revenue becomes available during the fiscal year 2025 budget process we could consider adding funds to address such hcps priorities as adding positions to support expanded programming at the campus of

[00:12:03] virginia randolph covering electric electricity rate increases that have compounded in recent years adding pre-kindergarten and gifted resource teachers and more maintenance and facilities positions these pie charts illustrate the major revenue categories of our general fund budget we can see that the target increase of about 27 million dollars makes up the difference in fiscal year 2025 and that will likely come from a combination of local and state funds these pie charts illustrate the major spending categories of our general fund budget and we can see that instruction remains the lion's share of our expenditures budget at over 75 percent in fiscal

[00:12:41] year 2025 looking backward and looking forward this afternoon we are presenting the superintendent's fiscal year 2025 recommended budget this will be followed by the ensuing significant

events on february 8th we will hold a public hearing on the recommended spending plan on february 22nd the school board is scheduled to approve the budget with any amendments and on april 18th after the board of supervisors adopts the overall budget including funds for salary increases the school board will adopt the final budget that concludes the overview of the recommended budget and I'd be happy to answer any questions at this time.

[00:13:23] Thank you, colleagues. We've received a presentation on the financial plan, and now I will open the floor for comments. I'll start with my right with Mrs. Kinsella. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Mr. Wack and team, the entire team, and Dr. Cashwell for listening and continuing to incorporate all the feedback that we've received into this budget.

[00:13:50] I'm grateful for all the work. That being said, I have a question under the, let's see what slide it is, slide 11. Can you just explain electricity rate increases compounded in recent years?

[00:14:13] Is this kind of like how our transportation and our roofing and mechanical costs went up, yet the budget item remained at the same number for a long time? Is that similar? It is similar. As even private customers know, energy providers have been increasing their rates every year.

[00:14:31] So we have, for example, in the current year, we had to use about \$3 million in vacancy savings to cover the electricity line item. Now, when the Virginia Department of Education does re-benchmarking, they look at cost increases like operational increases and specifically for utility costs.

[00:14:50] So there are additional revenues, state revenues, that will be associated with that, but that was really kind of not considered during our initial budget target. So we do hope to address that prior to the finalization of the budget. And we would hope, actually, to get that money from the state, is what you're saying?

[00:15:05] Yes, ma'am. Okay, okay. Thank you for providing some clarity around that for me. Let me see. In addition to everything wonderful included in this presentation, I'd like to note the specific funding of band uniforms. know the board has heard from constituents in high school around the district across Henrico regarding this so thank you for that item and then I'd also like to thank you for the additional operational support at the new Hermitage a center with custodians in this budget because I do know that

[00:15:43] currently the Hermitage high school custodians are having an extra lift caring for that building and then lastly I would like to highlight that this budget covers employee health care increases again and if I might just this isn't a question for you Mr. Wack this is just me highlighting this for whoever is listening now or will listen later that Henrico covers a significant portion or percentage of what employees pay for their health care while the

[00:16:18] The portion of total premium paid by the employer, which is Henrico, is different based on the plan selected and the level of coverage selected. Let me just highlight, in calendar year 2024, that's this year, our employer, which is Henrico Schools, our employer pays between 70% and 94.8% of your health care costs.

[00:16:44] For all the folks who don't really understand the line item each year, and there are quite a few that ask me or they just make off-the-cuff comments about, you know, oh, well, you covered health care increases, big deal. It is a very big deal because we, Henrico Schools, is paying between 70% and 94.8% of health care for employees depending on the plan.

[00:17:07] So I just appreciate you letting me take a moment to highlight that because that's a huge cost in our budget. And it's worth it for our employees who choose to take the health care option. And then nextly, I just wanted to highlight, I'm proud of the budgets we've put together in recent years and the information that you summarized from this year's budget.

[00:17:32] I'm just as proud of this one, where we not only fund support for our students and our staff, we also have implemented all of the underfunded DOE initiatives. And we were also responsive to employee feedback along the way.

[00:17:50] So I'm very proud of that. Now to specific advocacy I've heard from my district. Filling transportation vacancies. Whether it's filling the spots or finding efficiencies in the routes, especially for secondary students in the Brooklyn District.

[00:18:10] If we can't fill the vacancies, I'd like for the team to consider staggered school start times because I just know students in my district can't continue to have scheduled late arrivals every day. That can't continue in my district. So I'm just asking the team to please revisit. I don't know what it looks like during this budget season. Is it money? You know, what does it look like, right? Is it that the employees just aren't there to fill the vacancies? So maybe now we are at staggered start times. Dr. Cashwell. Yeah, I just would point out certainly that remains a priority

[00:18:48] and so hopefully you see in the budget we've continuing to fund and make permanent, for example, our employee referral program that's been very fruitful in helping us secure new drivers and all of those incentives you can see financially we're committed to continuing and we've also increased pay along the way and later in the budget season we'll be looking at employee compensation. So

[00:19:10] Certainly, it remains a budget priority, and I can assure you, outside of the budget, looking at all of the operational aspects with routing efficiencies, nothing's off the table, and we'll look forward to reporting back to the board in the coming months on how plans are shaping up, and staffing continue to look well before we roll into the next school year.

[00:19:30] Thank you. And then other items I'd like to put forward for consideration are continuing to look at our fee schedule to see what other fees we could possibly eliminate for our families. In addition to that, to support our college and career readiness composite index, I would like for career and transition coach positions to be considered for our high school students, specifically during superintendent student committee feedback.

[00:20:01] Students have shared that on that committee as well as some of our ACE students and for those who might not understand what I'm asking for, it's any kind of support for what their next path is outside really of what our school counselors do.

[00:20:17] It really is a college and career readiness person that would also support the transition. So it's career and transition coach. And then I'd also like to ask the question that doesn't need an answer today, but I'd like to highlight it knowing that driver's ed in Henrico schools, a lot of families are paying hundreds of dollars outside of Henrico schools for that.

[00:20:44] And I don't know if it's because the instructional day, there's not time for their student during the instructional day or if that we don't have the space available in in the day or the team to teach it during the day but I'd like for that to be looked into and then I would also like for us to consider any changes that

we could make additional changes to our prep program our retired employees who choose to participate in this not only appreciate what we changed by adding days to

[00:21:16] the program this year, but I'm just wondering if, as we have the vacancies in both the classroom and substitute positions, if we could make any movement there. I think maybe our employees would appreciate that. Also, feedback from teachers. Would it be possible to increase the credentialed teacher rate for daily substitutes versus paying them the same as a non-credentialed substitute when they substitute in our schools.

[00:21:50] And then here's something that I really want to share with my colleagues as well as the budget team and Dr. Cashwell. With enrollment generally declining, I continue to be very interested in reducing class sizes and having ongoing discussions as to what that looks like and how it would impact a budget.

[00:22:10] Not necessarily this one, but I would like for us to start having those conversations if my colleagues are in agreement. And then I'm almost done, I promise. The last thing I'm just gonna say is, I'm so excited about our new ACE Center at Hermitage.

[00:22:28] And I would just like to throw out there that if there was any additional funding to ensure completion of the second floor of our building ahead of schedule, I support it. And then lastly is just a statement I'd like to share with my new colleagues, as well as Ms. Atkins and Mrs. Shea that I've had the pleasure of serving with, that I would like for us to continue together to consider financial and non-financial gifts that would decrease the workload and burnout for our employees so that they continue to feel heard, valued and appreciated.

[00:23:05] And then just lastly, I also support employee raises, but of course that comes later in the budget process. Thank you, Madam Chair. - You're welcome, Dr. Cashwell. Did you have any response before I move forward? - I will, I don't, I know you didn't ask an answer to everything right on the note but just wanted to let you know your feedback certainly noted and in alignment very much with the priorities the team's been considering and appreciate that i did want to note just as a point of interest you brought up student fees and the board actually considers those separately from this budget and you'll see those come forward at a later time but certainly appreciate the feedback on now and just mr wack this board

[00:23:45] has been committed i know along with the work we've done administratively to remove those uh fees over time do you have a figure of the fees we've reduced just recently yeah just in the last few years it's about one five one point five million dollars per year that parents no longer need to contribute back to the pockets of parents and some of those are related to things where there would be inflation now so i think that yeah so we've made significant progress there but again look forward to coming back with our next fee schedule and hopefully some continued progress um just wanted to note that we wouldn't be considering that in this budget process but but later on, thank you, Mrs. Kinsella.

[00:24:21] - Mrs. Kinsella, did you have any further remarks? - No, that's all I had, thank you. - All right, you're welcome. Mrs. Shea. - Thank you, Chair Atkins. Just a handful of questions for you, Mr. Weck. Ms. Burton, would you get a slide three for me, if possible?

[00:24:37] So this is just painting the landscape of where we are, including, it mentions our ESSER III funds, and so I just wanna check in, since they are expiring in the next eight to nine months, Are we poised to spend those in especially the Virginia Randolph improvements?

[00:24:53] We're poised to be on schedule to be able to spend that down to zero. Yes, ma'am. Love it. Don't want to leave any funds on the table, so appreciate it. And then in slide four, we have a decrease of about \$4 million for the state and federal grants.

[00:25:09] Is that all, is that ESSER or where is the decrease coming from? It is completely attributed to ESSER. Over \$5 million in personnel costs are shifting from our special revenue funds to the general fund. Okay, thank you. I appreciate that clarity.

[00:25:26] And then if you can scroll to number 13. And while she's doing that, I really appreciate how you put this slideshow together where it highlights what's new versus what's being rolled from ESSER into the general fund. because this is the year we hit that kind of financial ledge with ESSER that we were very careful to save for and plan for because we did decide to spend some of those funds on very important recurring costs as opposed to one-time costs. And so the amount of foresight that had to go in that over the last three years is significant, but it has a significant impact on this budget.

[00:26:04] And so the clarity around what is kind of us taking ESSER and scooping it into our general fund versus what's new is really helpful for me as a board member, and I'm sure will be helpful for our staff and our public as well. So well done on that organization.

[00:26:21] Yes, a number of school divisions are looking at a fiscal cliff, so we essentially split it in two pieces. So in the current year, we added over \$4 million for instructional resources. That's now part of our baseline budget. and there's over, as I mentioned, over \$5 million in personnel costs. We're going to keep all those 62 positions actively on our payroll, and we have worked with the general government counterparts to have a reserve of over \$10 million, so that can cover that for two years without affecting taxpayers' recurring revenue for multiple years. I'm so glad to hear that in terms of both keeping our personnel and also having been smart fiscally planning prior so that we're ready here, so thank

[00:26:57] thank you for that. In slide 13, it shows the differential between last year's budget and this year's budget. And when I look at the percentages, the biggest percentage change is in the administration attendance and health piece. Is that all or mostly wrapped up in absorbing the rate of the health insurance rate increase for employees? Actually, the health care would be spread across personnel, across the different functional areas, but we do have 75 school security officers. We have 10 attendance officers that are not in the current year's adopted

[00:27:37] budget. I think those would be some of the bigger pieces there. And those would fall under that kind of a... The administration attendance and health is kind of a broader category than maybe... Great. That's helpful to understand kind of where that increase is. Thank you so much. And then Just want to echo Ms. Kinsella's praise for the ACE Center and some of those things, as well as I want to praise continued investment in the career ladders.

[00:28:04] I think that is a game changer for Henrico. It's something that sets Henrico apart and also giving our employees opportunities to have professional growth and still not leave the classroom, which I think is so important. And so I certainly support many of these budget recommendations, but specifically that one.

[00:28:24] And are we, including in this budget, is it included to continue to waive tuition for staff members' children? Yes, ma'am. Awesome. I want to continue to see that as well. I think it's important on many levels, but particularly on the retainment of our staff.

[00:28:45] And then also echo Ms. Kinsella's sentiment on reducing class size. I know that was a priority for the prior board, even four years ago. Hit some roadblocks with COVID and all sorts of other things since that time.

[00:29:00] But I would like to really revisit that on. And I know it's not as easy as it sounds, but really look at what investments can be made there. So thank you for bringing that forth, Ms. Kinsella, as well as support those raises coming through.

[00:29:16] So thank you. Thank you, Ms. Shea. And now I'll move on to my left, starting with Mr. Irving. Sorry, didn't get the mic to work.

[00:29:33] So thank you so much for the presentation. I think it's incredibly useful to show the county the work that is being done. Ms. Shea and Ms. Kinsella both took a couple of my questions. So thank you for doing that ahead of time. I mean, it's good to be on the same wavelength, I think.

[00:29:49] For me, I would like to reference page 42 and 47 in the proposed budget. And just looking at the discrepancy between money being spent to increase for instructional staff and elementary versus secondary.

[00:30:11] Elementary is a 4.8% increase, where secondary has a 0.7% increase. and I'm just curious what's explaining like the big difference is it just we we had a stronger need in elementary schools or um like what what explains the you know the difference between them so that this is not related to any salary increases so this is additional positions that were not in the adopted budget uh we did include all all of the reading specials in elementary probably need to go back and move I believe 10 of those were really going to be in the secondary budget so that's as we refine things at the adoption level um there will be a little bit more of an increase in secondary

[00:30:47] and again, moving 10 of those positions, about \$900,000. - Okay. And yeah, I second Ms. Kinsella on the, you know, the concerns around transportation and classroom sizes.

[00:31:03] I think, you know, those are big drivers to student success. So if we can, you know, continue those efforts, that would be much appreciated. And yeah, my other ones were taken, so thank you. - Thank you, Mr. Irving.

[00:31:19] Mr. Young. - Mr. Wack, thank you for your presentation, sir. I really appreciate it. If we can go to slide five, I just need a point of clarity on a few things. All right, under the 31 school counselors and two social workers, as I understood it, all positions rolled over, all 62 from the ESSER fund.

[00:31:41] Is that correct? - That is correct. - So no positions got cut at all when the transfer happened, correct? - We will not have any reduction in force related. - All right, perfect, and then the 10 attendance officers to help address chronic absenteeism. Are we gonna target certain schools? Are schools understaffed right now when it comes to attendance officers?

[00:32:00] - I can answer some of that. So we actually made these positions available during this current school year most recently, and that was made possible by additional funds that were part of the all-in funds that had very specific use cases. One was around increasing attendance efforts within the division, so not only did we leverage that make those positions available now to help fill that gap we know our schools are feeling regarding having some full-time support across schools will also carry that into the

next budget and make it permanent so this is really an effort that's just getting underway we're continuing to assess the right

[00:32:38] ratios of support personnel for these efforts but certainly you know we when we prioritize placement we're looking at data to help us drive that decision making so that staff goes where it's most needed. Yes, they'll be strategically located. Perfect. Awesome. Can we move to the next slide? Slide six. Just want to echo that I am really excited about the 51 reading specialists coming on board. That's been a big thing of mine. So I'm definitely excited about every elementary school having a reading specialist along with other interventionists

[00:33:09] that deal with schools. So if you can move to slide seven now, the Maggie Walker Governor's looks like I think it was a 5% increase last year is the increase this year just in funding or are we getting more slots it is related to a salary increase I'm actually on the the Finance Committee of the Maggie Walker School and it is related to teacher retention so they're increasing their tuition I think about 9% and we did add slots last year so that's to continue those slots but as well as addressing and we'll continue yeah all right and if we can I guess

[00:33:46] this is just the overall question with the vacancies that we have in the county the money that's already allocated and for those vacancies what happens to the money if we don't fill those spaces or those slots at the end of a fiscal year so typically and I've been I'm the chief financial officer about three years now and so as we approach the end of the fiscal year we tend to look at where we have vacancy savings and we have been working with our general government counterparts to transfer some of those funds to operating line items in order to fund year-of-end items that we need to purchase.

[00:34:19] But any unexpended balance would typically fall to the county's general fund balance at the end of the fiscal year. I do work with our general government counterparts. We have specific reserves that are established in the name of Enrico County Public Schools. One of those is the Federal Positions Reserve that we grew to over \$10 million.

[00:34:37] Basically, our unspent money is now coming back to us to fund those positions without creating any burden on Enrico taxpayers for multiple years. - All right, that's all my questions, thank you. - You're welcome, thank you Mr. Young. Thank you Mr. Wack and your team for consistent efforts and time and hours and expertise that have led to the presentation that we are reviewing today.

[00:35:02] Colleagues, I have heard your request to revisit the conversation on class sizes and transportation and Dr. Castro I'll ask that we ensure that we get that done. I also had one piece of feedback that I want to share around transportation.

[00:35:19] I'd like for us to explore how we can secure additional vehicles so that we can move forward and try to offer opportunities for after school programming and transportation for it.

[00:35:36] Oftentimes students aren't able to participate in after school programs because of transportation or we have schools that are offering the clubs during the day so that students can participate. Oftentimes it's before school. However, I think we might be more productive if we are able to secure maybe passenger vans to allow for more opportunities for students across Henrico to participate in activities after school.

[00:36:03] So those conclude my remarks. Thank you so much, we appreciate you. Dr. Caswell. Thank you for the feedback and comments related to the proposed budget. As was pointed out, we have miles to go

yet to the adopted budget and look forward to continuing to work with you and continue to lean into our stakeholders as we work towards final development of the budget.

[00:36:27] And would just point out again to our incredible employees that while we haven't addressed compensation at this stage in the budget, It is a critical stage and something we're working on right now. We work towards that towards the end of the budget process when we'll be able to announce compensation related budget items.

[00:36:48] All right. So the next item coming forward for the board's information is an update regarding our strategic plan and thinking of actually now beyond destination 2025. It's hard to believe we're rolling upon the expiration of our current strategic plan.

[00:37:05] So Mrs. Coy and Dr. Hinton are here to provide us that overview. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, members of the board, Dr. Cashwell. We are pleased this afternoon to bring forward a presentation about the HCPS strategic plan. And I'm here, as Dr. Cashwell mentioned, joined by Dr. Tiffany Hinton, our director of the Department of Assessment, Research and Evaluation.

[00:37:29] So today we're going to provide a bit of a historical perspective on the creation of our current plan, Destination 2025, and an overview of our anticipated work in the coming year as we prepare to bring stakeholders together to inform a new iteration of our strategic plan.

[00:37:46] As with the previous endeavor, we envision this to be a highly collaborative effort which will involve the board, students, families, staff, and the community as we strive to build on the success of Destination 2025. Our presentation today includes an overview of the timeline and some of the processes by which we'll gather that feedback and bring updates and drafts back to you for your consideration and input.

[00:38:13] And so now I'll turn it over to Dr. Hinton. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board, and Dr. Cashwell. In 2017-18, Henrico County Public Schools undertook a comprehensive effort to craft a strategic plan for 2018 through 2025, which is known as Destination 2025.

[00:38:33] The creation of the plan included diverse stakeholders and a variety of feedback mechanisms. Throughout that year, the HCPS community participated in focus groups, community input events, work groups, online public comments, surveys, and a public hearing to share their input on what the school division was doing well and how we could improve.

[00:38:56] A key component of the creation of Destination 2025 was the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, which included representation from students, families, staff, and community members across all magisterial districts, as well as two school board representatives.

[00:39:15] This committee examined school division data and used community feedback to create the plan's strategic goals, action steps, and progress metrics. Since adoption of the plan in 2018, the Steering Committee has met annually to review the plan and ensure progress towards our goals.

[00:39:35] Any proposed revisions have been taken to the school board for consideration and approval. I would like to take a moment to express our gratitude to Ms. Kinsella and Ms. Shea for your ongoing commitment and service to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. Your dedication and insights have been instrumental in shaping the progress of our school division over the past six years.

[00:39:57] Also, a warm welcome to Mr. Irving, our new school board representative on this committee. We are looking forward to our collaboration with you and Ms. Shea in our planning efforts as we move forward in this process. Our current plan will guide us through the spring of 2025.

[00:40:16] However, we want to share an overview of the process for the creation of a new strategic plan, which will be adopted by the 2025-26 school year. The plan development process will continue to be a collaborative effort between all stakeholders within the HCPS community and will build upon the successes of Destination 2025.

[00:40:39] Throughout the remainder of the school year, a range of activities is underway to set the foundation for the development of the 2025-2030 plan. This fall, division leadership began the process of defining key planning components and throughout the winter will work on drafting HCPS's vision, mission, and core values.

[00:41:02] In January, staff will begin conducting focus groups with each school board and superintendent advisory committee, along with other essential community partners, to gather valuable insights into HCPS's strengths and areas for improvement.

[00:41:19] To capture additional community perspectives, annual stakeholder surveys will be conducted in February. This feedback will be instrumental in the fall and winter of 2024 when the new Strategic Plan Steering Committee will be tasked with refining the strategic plan components and identifying strategic goals.

[00:41:40] The draft plan will be shared with the HCPS community in the spring of 2025 and feedback will be used to further refine the plan before seeking school board approval. The new 2025-2030 strategic plan will be launched beginning in the summer of 2025.

[00:42:02] As we gather insights in the coming months, our attention will center on three key areas. First, we'll explore foundational principles, diving into how HCPS's vision, mission, and core values align with community expectations and needs.

[00:42:20] Next, we'll focus on identifying current successes and practices that work well, seeking ideas to enhance and build upon them. Finally, we'll engage the community in discussions about the challenges and opportunities facing our school division.

[00:42:35] This input will shape the strategic plan, aiming to elevate the student experience and contribute to overall community well-being. This spring, we'll kick off the recruitment and selection process for the steering committee.

[00:42:52] Following our past approach, members will be chosen through applications and a blind scoring method, considering factors such as stakeholder group representation, experience and objectivity and responses. The committee's composition will guarantee representation from each magisterial district and encompass diverse stakeholder perspectives.

[00:43:14] Additional details about committee recruitment and selection will be provided later this year. This concludes our presentation. We look forward to our next update towards the end of the school year, where we'll share the results of the HCPS survey and focus groups and announce the members of the selected steering committee.

[00:43:34] At this time, we are happy to answer any questions. Thank you so much for the presentation. I will start with Ms. Shea. Oh, goody. Thank you. I want to thank you for the presentation. I want to start by thanking my colleague, Ms. Kinsella, for all of her work on the strategic plan. Not only have we served together as the board member for the last four years, but she was involved even before she was on the board on the steering committee in the early development of the plan. So, Ms. Kinsella, you've been really instrumental in getting us to 2025. I know you will be instrumental getting us

[00:44:10] beyond, but thank you for your years and years of dedication to this plan. I just want two quick pieces. I want to offer praise for the progress that this plan has made in the last four years. I think about kind of the form it was when it was a baby, it initially, and just how much more digestible it is, how much edu-speak we took out of it, the revamp of the website so it really is accessible not only in language but also in kind of its presentation.

[00:44:46] And so it's been a real delight to see the modifications and the fact that it really has been kind of a living, breathing document that has been tweaked to best meet the needs of our students and that also Dr. Cashwell has really used it as the plan going forward and continue to tie things back to the initiatives in the strategic plan to show evidence that this has been our steering document.

[00:45:17] So praise for all of that. I'm excited that we will continue to use community involvement. I saw in the steering committee, will we also be launching, I know last time it was, I can just imagine, a really big lift doing all of those work groups.

[00:45:33] But do we foresee having some of those similar community work groups for the subcommittees? Yes. So once the steering committee is formed and starts their work this fall, they'll come up with strategic goals and then we'll create some work groups around each of those goals to determine kind of the more detailed plans of how we're going to achieve those. Awesome. I think that's so important. And I think it casts a wide net for some of our community members that may not have been involved in some of our groups before because there's so much opportunity for and input i'm excited to see kind of what community members come forward to participate

[00:46:10] since there's so many opportunities and then just one question you you mentioned doing the feedback survey in february in order to to inform this is this going to be the same as our typical annual survey just done earlier or is this an additional survey it's the same survey but we've added some additional questions to get at some of the kind of the overarching components of our plan such as vision mission and core values i'm trying to see where the community is in terms of those kind of big picture items so it's the same survey we've just added a few things well i'm very glad here

[00:46:47] it's not an additional survey because i know it's already a lift to try to get kind of a critical massive response to the annual survey anyway it'll also be really interesting to see if moving it earlier, since as Ms. Kinsella's brought forth with the survey many times, as our school year has moved earlier, if moving the survey earlier also will give both our building leaders and our central office level leaders kind of more time to reflect on the outcomes of that survey and how the timeliness of that will mesh together. So that'll be kind of an unintended benefit or

[00:47:25] consequence we'll wait and see um so that we can evaluate moving forward that is all from me thank you you're welcome mrs gonsella yes thank you um yes i have served on this committee even since before i was on the board and i certainly have enjoyed the work and um watch and uh i'm proud of the

baby that has grown per you mrs shea um i cannot underscore enough the importance of a strategic plan because it truly for us is the roadmap the division follows. Everything goes back

[00:48:02] to it. The budget, which that's one of outside of the website improvements, how you, I guess at later stages in the budget, how everything, well, even today's budget, right? It's just, it's even done by the strategic plan, right? Our, our major goals. So I'm just proud of how far it's come and that you remain committed to it.

[00:48:25] Not only did we make a plan, but we actually follow the plan and we have metrics and the board receives updates and then we give feedback and things actually happen in response to the feedback that we give and that we get.

[00:48:42] So really, I can't wait to see where this goes. I have one question regarding our last meeting, which was March, 2023, where we had a round robin session. Are we going to use some of the feedback gathered there as we move forward, or are we just going to disregard that?

[00:49:01] Because I can't imagine we would disregard the work that we did that day. Just a question. Yes. So we have all of that documentation of the work that we did last year, as well as kind of this year when we meet with the steering committee. we're going to be doing kind of the same protocol that we're doing with the other superintendent and school board advisory committees, gathering their feedback into the process. Thank you for that.

[00:49:27] And then I just, as to Mr. Shea's point, really the fact that all of our stakeholders should be involved and giving feedback in numerous ways. I found remembering some of the focus groups. I know we have a student at least one or two typically on the steering committee, but the student feedback was extraordinary last time.

[00:49:51] And I would expect that they would bring extraordinary feedback this time as well. And I thank the students for giving it readability that makes sense without all the acronyms and without all the things that people just lose interest in because they don't understand it.

[00:50:07] So just thank you for this presentation of a timeline of what to expect. That's all I had, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mrs. Kinsella. Mr. Young. Thank you for your presentation. My only ask is if we could get some of the information that happened in the fall of 2023, if I could get that, that would be extremely helpful to me.

[00:50:30] No further questions. Thank you. Mr. Irving. Yes, first of all, thank you for giving the presentation. I would second what Mr. Young said about just requiring that information. Maybe that's something I'll receive being on this committee. Having said that, I am certainly excited to be a part of this process moving forward so we can set the next strategic plan.

[00:50:52] I think it's extremely important to have an idea of where you want to go before you figure out how you're going to get there. And I think, you know, being pragmatic about how we get there and using metrics, like Ms. Kinsella said, to make sure that we're measuring our success throughout the way is extremely important.

[00:51:08] And I just, you know, look forward to those future endeavors. Thank you, Mr. Irving. I also want to just take a moment to thank Mrs. Kinsella for her passion and sharing her expertise even before she received the title because that's how deep she wants the division to have a roadmap and moving

forward and making sure that not only the superintendent but the staff, school board, and school communities have a stake in the future, which is our children.

[00:51:37] Additionally, I have a few questions around the application form. Do students have access to that form electronically as well as paper? Yes, so the form will be available. We'll be communicating that through all of our typical communication mechanisms, and we can certainly provide a paper copy.

[00:51:58] So will students actually receive a memo, if you will, through the Schoology? so is there a direct way that we're going to give this application to students not necessarily through their parents through parent square or some other avenue but is there a way to for them to receive the message directly yes we can certainly send it through schoology to them i would ask for you to consider that so that you know our students can take ownership and accountability as well without it having to go through other channels so thank you for

[00:52:32] consideration of that. The second question that I have is around the process in which we select folks. So individuals will use the form. Once the form is received, can you tell me a little bit more or have more details on how we're selecting the individuals that are going to be on these steering committees? So we haven't worked through all of those details yet. I can speak to the process that we used last time. We had a blind scoring process, meaning that we removed the

[00:53:09] identifiers of the individuals and we had two different people look at those applications and kind of score them using a rubric. We looked for things like representing a variety of groups. So if you were a parent and a community member and maybe a staff member, you know, you had a lot of different experiences. We also looked at a variety of experiences across the county as well as making sure that we had representation from our kind of our student groups that were monitoring like our English learners, our students with

[00:53:46] disabilities, like we had a teacher who was a teacher of students with disabilities on our committee. So we're looking for a wide representation making sure that we have representation across magisterial districts but also across various groups. Thank you for sharing that. Once you get further into the process and have clarity around that rubric and how individuals are being scored, I'd love to see that and as well as my colleagues, if you would share it with all of us. So we have a better understanding of the makeup of

[00:54:19] the committees to ensure the, you know, equity and all of those things. And let's see. And then the last item I have for you for consideration is around PTAs and making sure that we communicate with our PTA groups. That's a great source in getting folks to participate and be engaged.

[00:54:46] Even if you're not selected, let's make sure that we continue to offer ways for folks to still be engaged. And I think there's a variety of ways. So I offer that to you for your consideration. Other than that, I'm ever so grateful. This board is grateful for all the work that has been done, and we know all the work to come.

[00:55:05] So thank you very much. Thank you. All right. Thank you again for the presentation related to what's next for the next iteration of strategic plan. Look forward to that journey. All right, the final item I have for the board's consideration is related to my seeking your approval for a revision to policy P11-08-001 school visitors.

[00:55:35] You'll recall this policy came before the board previously at a meeting based on the board's recommendations to add specificity within the policy related to allowable identification that's also compliant with our safety plans and our Raptor visitor system, we have added that clarity and are now seeking your approval.

[00:55:56] Thank you, Dr. Cashwell. Is there a motion? I move the school board approve the proposed revisions to policy P11-08-001 school visitors. Is there a second?

[00:56:14] Second. Thank you. All in favor, say aye. Any opposed? The ayes have it. The policy is approved. The next item on the agenda is unfinished business. Colleagues, do you have any unfinished business?

[00:56:31] Hearing none, the next item is new business. Colleagues, are there any new business? The last item on the agenda are the announcements of meeting dates. The school board's next meeting is this evening, Thursday, January 25th at 6.30 p.m.

[00:56:53] This meeting is adjourned.



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