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Loudoun County School Board, FY25 Operating Budget Work Session* (Dept. of School Leadership; Support Services & Adoption Steps), Thursday, February 1, 2024

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[00:03:24] Good afternoon. I call to order this February 1, 2024 Loudoun County School Board work session. We will start the agenda item. We'll start with agenda item 2.1, disclosure, and I'll start. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and any related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically as a school board member, I am eligible to receive

[00:04:00] health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be effective, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:04:19] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically, as a school board member,

I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three

[00:04:58] employees whose interests may also be affected of which i am included i can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest this disclosure will be reflected in the public record of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you mrs griffiths thank you madam chair as a member of the loudon county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically as a school board member I am eligible to receive

[00:05:38] health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits however affect thousands of employees while in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be effected of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly objectively in the public interest. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you. Ms. LaBelle. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public

[00:06:18] in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees specifically as a school board member I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the three statutory employees whose interests may also be affected of which I am included I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:06:55] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the Clerk of the School Board for five years. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Chernoff? Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the School Board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affects benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:07:21] Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits, however, affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:07:39] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you. Ms. Donohue? As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on tonight's agenda regarding employee salaries, the budget, and or health insurance, and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:08:04] Specifically, my spouse and I and my two minor children are enrolled in LCPS health insurance that may be affected by any potential changes to employee salaries, the budget, and or health insurance. Additionally, my sister-in-law is an LCPS employee who does not reside with me and is not dependent on me These subjects include thousands of employees while in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected of which My spouse my children my sister-in-law and I am included I can and

will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you

[00:08:42] We will now move on to agenda item 3.1 budget process and questions with Ms. Willoughby. Ms. Willoughby. Thank you. So I just have an update regarding the budget questions. So the third packet has been uploaded into board docs. The print version is currently being printed and they will be distributed during the break. This packet included answers to 34 additional questions bringing questions answered in total to 75.

[00:09:08] And as of this point in time, we have three open questions. And that is all that I have.

[00:09:28] board members do you have any questions miss Griffiths thank you madam chair I do want to thank the staff for all the time that has been dedicated to this process and also acknowledge how responsive and helpful they have all been in answering questions the taxpayers have entrusted this board with the responsibility for the budget allocation I do not take that obligation lightly it is a lot of information to take in so I was hoping for more time

[00:10:05] But we'll try our best. Thank you. Thank you board members. Any other questions? Seeing none we will move on to with item 3.2 from the Department of Student Services Presented by Ms. Tedra Richardson our assistant superintendent of student services. Ms. Richardson. Good evening chair Mansfield

[00:10:42] Vice chair Estreffi members of the board Dr. Spence and distinguished colleagues I appreciate the opportunity to present the Department of Student Services budget for your consideration this evening. Our commitment to fostering a supportive and enriching educational environment is reflected in the thoughtful allocation of resources outlined in this presentation.

[00:11:07] As we delve into the details, I invite you to join me in exploring how these budgetary provisions align with our overarching goals of student success, well-being, and overall academic excellence. I thank you now for your time and attention.

[00:11:27] The 1LCPS Strategic Plan for Excellence continues to be the driving force for all actions of the Department of Student Services in LCPS. As we move through the FY25 budget request, you will be able to see clear connections between the strategic plan and the request of the department, beginning with our main priority of students at the center of our work with \$9.6 million of our FY25 budget requests dedicated to meeting the needs of students we serve.

[00:12:01] Our next priority focuses on staff compensation and benefits with a request of just over \$100,000 to support those serving in the role of special education deans across our school locations.

[00:12:18] Our final priority focuses on the reallocation of resources for new and ongoing e-initiatives for the department, coming at around \$1.1 million. During our time together this evening, it will be more evident that student services staff focus on prevention and intervention approaches in our schools and are committed to the education of the whole child to ensure safe healthy and supportive learning environments for all students

[00:12:52] the department budget is focused on several initiatives that continue to move forward our strategic actions that are defined in our one lcps 2027 strategic plan for excellence addressing academic, behavioral, social and emotional, and mental health needs of our students in LCPS.

[00:13:16] Now we will review the changes for the FY24 adopted budget to the proposed FY25 budget request. This slide is not unfamiliar to you as the information has been shared with you in the superintendent's estimate of needs.

[00:13:37] The notable changes are in the areas of personnel as well as operations and maintenance for the department. Personnel expenditures for DSS account for 97.7% of the total budget for the department.

[00:13:53] The operations and maintenance expenditures account for 2.3%. Personnel expenditures will be highlighted later within the presentation. I'd like to take this opportunity to share the increase in operations and maintenance for the department.

[00:14:10] The 42.1% increase can be attributed to the following in FY25. An increase in staffing for Claude Moore Early Childhood Special Education Reverse Inclusion Programming, as well as our George Mason University cohort.

[00:14:31] A shift from COVID funds to operating funds for the renewal of TeachTown, which serves our students across specialized educational programs. An increase in FastBridge licenses, which is used through our multi-tiered system of supports.

[00:14:50] An increase in contracted staffing for hearing services, speech language services, orientation and mobility services, vision services, sign language and interpretation services, as well as consultation and coaching for our autism programs.

[00:15:26] An increase in learning language with augmentative and alternative communication, professional health services, an increase in specialized math intervention materials, an increase in funding needed for teacher training and specialized literacy, and finally, an increase in classroom setup for specialized programs, which for FY24 was supported by year-end funds. To educate the whole child, the DSS has identified some areas of enhanced personnel needs.

[00:15:52] The chart reflects the following staffing increases for the 24-25 school year. Here's an overview for each office. The Office of the Assistant Superintendent, there's no additional staff. For the Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services, we are requesting an increase in three personnel, one eligibility coordinator and two educational diagnosticians.

[00:16:20] For the Office of Student Services, an increase of 8.9 personnel positioned to serve schools through school nurses, school nursing assistants, the McKinney-Vento liaison, nurse practitioner, and registration services.

[00:16:39] For the Office of Special Education, it's an increase of 76.3 personnel focusing on special education teaching and support positions to serve students with disabilities across LCPS.

[00:16:55] For the Office of Student Mental Health Services, it's an increase of 10 personnel with positions focused at the school level as school counselors and student assistance specialists. For the Office of Procedural Support, it's an increase of one personnel in the form of a procedural support facilitator to assist schools in the management of special education and Section 504 processes.

[00:17:26] Now, we'll explore the purpose of each of the offices of the Department of Student Services. First is the Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services under the leadership of Mr. John Lodi.

[00:17:41] The Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services is responsible for the leadership, management, and provision of services and supports to schools and students in the areas of educational

diagnostic services, behavioral threat assessment, child find and eligibility for special education, Section 504, Identification, Evaluation, and Placement, Early Childhood Identification Services, and multi-tiered system of supports which includes positive behavior in positive behavioral

[00:18:17] interventions and supports response to intervention and social and emotional learning to serve the students schools and families of lcps the office of diagnostic and prevention services are currently staffed in FY24 with 67 dedicated professionals. For FY25, the office anticipates 70 professionals to continue to serve our students, schools, and families with a total operating budget of just over \$12 million. Some notable celebrations from the Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services

[00:18:55] During FY23, they implemented the Phoenix MTSS module in 51 schools to document interventions in the areas of literacy, math, behavior, and mental health. They also conducted 1,964 educational evaluations to comprehensively assess the academic functioning and educational needs of students that are suspected of having educational disabilities and to assist the eligibility team in determining whether a child qualifies for special education.

[00:19:33] In FY25, this office looks forward to continuing this work. Our next is the Office of Student Services, which, as of the end of yesterday, was led under the leadership of Dr. Clark Bowers, who retired after 36-plus years in education.

[00:19:54] We thank him for his service. The Office of Student Services educates the whole child by supporting a full range of services. These services include student health services, outreach services, the special permission process, tuition, kindergarten and religious exemption, student registration and enrollment, homebound and home-based instruction, residency determination and verification, McKinney-Vento eligibility and support, the community school e-initiative, child protective services coordination,

[00:20:34] and family liaisons the annual revision of the student rights and responsibilities and code of conduct is also an essential service of the office of student services to serve students schools and families of lcps the oss are currently staffed with 250.6 dedicated professionals for fy25 the office anticipates 259.5 professionals to continue to serve our students, schools, and families, with a total operating budget of just over \$28 million.

[00:21:13] Some notable celebrations from the Office of Student Services, the office achieved a 95% graduation rate of high school seniors that were receiving homebound instruction. They provided 13 trainings in the area of McKinney-Vento for LCPS staff to develop plans to support improved graduation rates for students that are eligible for McKinney-Vento services.

[00:21:41] And they implemented the community school's mobile health clinic through funding from a VGOE grant in partnership with Inova Loudoun Hospital and George Washington University, providing the required school entry physicals for uninsured students that are enrolled in our Title I community schools.

[00:22:03] This office looks forward to continuing this work in FY25. Next is the Office of Special Education under the leadership of Dr. Paige Carter. The Office of Special Education is responsible for the planning, development, and implementation of programs and services for students with disabilities as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Improvement Act.

[00:22:29] The IDEA mandates that school districts include the provision of a free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities who are ages 2 through 21 inclusive. Further, the IDEA mandates

that school districts provide services to students in their least restrictive environment in a location that is close to the student's home as possible, as well as a continuum of alternative placements.

[00:23:00] Requirements for services include that special education and related services be designed to meet the unique educational needs of children with disabilities, that they provide educational opportunities in the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible in accordance with this child's individualized educational plan, or IEP, and prepare children with disabilities for opportunities in post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.

[00:23:34] To serve the students, schools, and families of LCPS, the Office of Special Education are currently staffed with 2,245.3 dedicated professionals. For FY25, the office anticipates 2,321.6 professionals to continue to serve our students, schools, and families with a total operating budget of just over \$221 million.

[00:24:03] Some notable celebrations from the Office of Special Education, they refined the LCPS specially designed instruction reading instructional match matrix, which outlined specialized reading interventions designed to match specific student needs.

[00:24:25] They completed year two of the Early Childhood Special Education Tools of the Mind Curriculum Cohort, supporting 70 classrooms across our school division. And they collaborated with the Special Education Advisory Committee, SEAC, to provide collaborative and informative monthly meetings.

[00:24:47] The Office of Special Education looks forward to continuing this work in FY25. The next office is the Office of Student Mental Health Services under the leadership of Mrs. Jennifer Evans. The Office of Student Mental Health Services oversees attendance, student assistance, school counseling, school social work, psychological services, and restorative practices, and offers comprehensive and holistic services provided by our unified mental health teams.

[00:25:21] Embedded in each school, these teams work together with families and other school-based staff to provide resources and services to address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of our students. To serve the students, schools, and families of LCPS, the Office of Student Mental Health Services are currently staffed with 592.5 dedicated professionals.

[00:25:47] For FY25, the office anticipates 607.5 professionals to continue to serve our students, schools, and families with a total operating budget just over \$78 million. Some notable celebrations from Student Mental Health Services.

[00:26:05] Our school counseling services team has successfully adopted and implemented a new college and career platform in April of 2023. LCPS has observed an increase in student interest and participation in the implementation of this platform.

[00:26:25] As of August 2023, roughly 9,000 secondary students had completed the onboarding process. The office also celebrates the Sources of Strength program, which is a program that promotes school-wide resiliency and mental wellness, which was implemented in 16 high schools and 14 middle schools across the county.

[00:26:47] The office also celebrates the establishment of a chronic absenteeism workgroup with stakeholders from various offices to monitor division-wide data as it relates to accreditation. This

workgroup was essential in drafting the new LCPS Policy 8140 and developing effective strategies and interventions to address the problematic attendance patterns for both excused and unexcused absences.

[00:27:18] The Office of Student Mental Health looks forward to continuing this work in FY25. The last Office of the Department of Student Services is the Office of Procedural Support under the leadership of Mrs. Donna Smith. The overall goal of the Office of Procedural Support is to contribute to the smooth operation of student services by managing and optimizing the procedures and policies governing the department.

[00:27:46] The Office of Procedural Support staff facilitate the resolution of complaints and disputes, serve as the liaison to the Virginia Department of Education and the Office of Federal Civil Rights Complaints.

[00:28:03] They support the mediation process and for special education claims for due process hearings. The Office of Procedural Support also provides direct support to division administrators, school-based administrators, and staff to support compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

[00:28:25] The staff provide guidance to schools about the provisions of services to students with an individualized educational plan, Section 504 plans, and they facilitate the implementation of federal, state, and local regulations for special education in Section 504 here in LCPS.

[00:28:45] To serve the students, schools, and families of LCPS, the Office of Procedural Support are currently staffed with 13 dedicated professionals. For FY25, the office anticipates 14 professionals to continue to serve our students, schools, and families with a total operating budget of just over \$3 million.

[00:29:07] Bless you. Some notable celebrations from the Office of Procedural Support. They provided case management and support for families of students with disabilities that are currently served in private day and private residential facilities.

[00:29:23] They also provided training to LCPS school social workers with regards to the Children's Services Act funded services and processes, and they provided school-based administrators and staff with support regarding systemic procedures for ensuring compliance and accountability for the implementation of the requirements of IDEA regulations.

[00:29:49] The office looks forward to continuing this work in FY25. Ensuring that students remain at the core of our endeavors is not merely a commitment, but a fundamental philosophy that drives our mission.

[00:30:07] By placing students at the center of our work, we prioritize their needs, aspirations, and growth. This approach guides us in crafting educational experiences, policies, and support systems that resonate with the unique journey of each learner.

[00:30:27] In doing so, we strive to create an environment where students are not just recipients of knowledge, but active participants in their own learning, fostering a holistic and empowering educational environment. We will now review some of the requested staffing enhancements across the department to maintain our student-centered focus.

[00:30:54] Our student body continues to change with students who require additional resources, which is continuing to outpace our overall growth as a division. For the 2022-23 school year, 1,964 general education students were referred for an initial special education evaluation, which represented a 22.2% increase from the previous school year.

[00:31:26] Of the 1,964 students, 1,473 students were found eligible for special education and related services during the 22-23 school year. This school year, there is a 16.8% increase in completed initial eligibilities as compared to this same time last school year.

[00:31:52] In addition to increases in special education, 941 students were eligible for Section 504 services as of our September 30th enrollment, which is a 17.6% increase from the previous year.

[00:32:11] Planning for the needs of students with disabilities is a collaborative effort across several departments in LCPS. Special thanks to my colleagues in the Department of Academics, the Department of Teaching and Learning, the Department of School Leadership, and the Department of Business and Financial Services.

[00:32:31] The staffing standard for special education in LCPS is driven by student enrollment. The staffing standard for special education is currently based on school averages and division averages for cross categorical staffing, which has a staffing standard of a 10 to one ratio.

[00:32:50] That's 10 students to one teacher. The factors that are considered in the enrollment projections for special education are as follows. The September 30th child count, which is our student record collection, which is submitted to our Virginia Department of Education.

[00:33:08] The December 1st special education child count, which is a formal child count of students with disabilities only, which is submitted to the Virginia Department of Education to secure federal funding for students with disabilities in LCPS.

[00:33:24] Our March 30th student record collection, which is submitted to the Virginia Department of education, and our end-of-year comparisons from current to previous years. This year, we've included the additional factors in preparation for FY25 in collaboration between academics, student services, and business and financial services.

[00:33:51] The rate of referral for initial eligibility, the rate of students found eligible for special education and related services, data tracking for student transfers in and out of LCPS, close monitoring of students found eligible that are in the IEP drafting process for our monthly data review with business and financial services.

[00:34:18] It's important to note that our leaders in the Office of Procedural Support pulled this eligibility data on a weekly basis to inform our staffing practices in special education. This slide represents all of the support positions across student services that provide direct services to students, schools, and families to enrich the instructional experience.

[00:34:43] The Department of Student Services sustains the heartbeat of LCPS, and its dedicated staff members are the Aung San heroes who breathe life into our commitment to student success. These individuals are the compassionate architects of support, the empathetic listeners in times of challenge, and the champions of a thriving student community.

[00:35:08] As stewards of holistic well-being, the staff in the Department of Student Services exemplify unwavering dedication to fostering an environment where every student can flourish academically, emotionally, and personally.

[00:35:26] Their tireless efforts not only enrich the educational experience, but they also leave an indelible mark on the lives that they touch, embodying the spirit of care and service at the heart of our

educational mission as one LCPS.

[00:35:42] As discussed on a previous slide, the staffing standard for special education is driven by enrollment projections. In LCPS, our special education teachers and support staff play an indispensable role in shaping a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape for the 10,063 students with disabilities that we currently serve in LCPS today.

[00:36:11] At the forefront of educational advocacy, these professionals are the champions of diverse learning needs ensuring that every student regardless of their unique challenges receives the individual the individualized support necessary for for success with unwavering dedication they create a nurturing environment that celebrates differences fosters individual growth and empowers students to overcome obstacles the special education team at each LCPS school site

[00:36:45] stands as a beacon of inclusivity, embodying the belief that education is a universal right and that every learner deserves the opportunity to thrive with dignity and respect. Now we will review our ongoing and new initiatives for FY25.

[00:37:10] We'll begin with the Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services. Personnel is comprised of salaries and benefits for 70 full-time positions in FY25. Notably, there's an increase, as I stated before, for one eligibility coordinator.

[00:37:31] That stems from our staffing standard for new growth, which is we have new schools coming on board in FY25. Then we have two positions related to the enhancement of the staffing standard, and those would be our two educational diagnosticians.

[00:37:49] It's important to note in FY24, LCPS has 31 educational diagnosticians. And in review of the amount of evaluations that was completed last year for initial eligibility, the average was about 64 evaluations per educational diagnostician.

[00:38:14] The addition of two educational diagnosticians in FY25 will bring the evaluation workload to about 60 per school year. These numbers only reflect initial evaluations for eligibility and do not include any re-evaluation information.

[00:38:38] Next is our Office of Student Services. personnel is comprised of salaries and benefits for 259.5 full-time positions. For FY25, we anticipate five positions that are related to growth for new schools. That's one school nurse at the elementary level, one school nurse at the middle school level, one resource nurse, one elementary registrar, and one middle school registrar.

[00:39:12] We have 1.93 positions related to growth under the staffing standard in the area of school nursing assistants. We have two positions that are related to reallocation, as referenced before.

[00:39:28] That is our community school's nurse practitioner and our McKinney-Vento liaison. For the Office of Special Education, the expenditures provide funding for materials and equipment to support the needs of students and staff that are responsible for the provision of special education and related services.

[00:39:51] These funds include funding for nursing services for students with severe disabilities, cost for litigation to resolve disputes, contractual services for independent educational evaluations, and contractual services for related services providers when needed.

[00:40:11] Other operations and maintenance expenditures for special education include funding for instructional supplies, minor equipment, test protocols, such as professional development for staff, such

as our university cohorts for special education licensure. Funding also includes costs for maintenance of general repair of audiometers, as well as the repair and replacement of assistive technology equipment. In FY25, the increase in materials, supplies, and equipment

[00:40:50] is to support a communication software and new classroom setup costs for our specialized programs. The increase in computer and software is due to the reallocation of funding for TeachTown software. That was a cost that was previously funded through COVID grant.

[00:41:09] The increase in training and continuing education is to support training costs for teachers in specialized literacy and math. For the Office of Student Mental Health Services, personnel is comprised of salary and benefits for 607.5 full-time staff.

[00:41:29] In FY25, seven positions are related to growth in new schools with two elementary school counselors, three middle school counselors, one school psychologist, and one school social worker.

[00:41:45] There are five positions that are related to growth under our current staffing standard, and those would be in the area of school counselors. Then we have eight positions that are related to an enhancement. One school counselor for alternative educational programming.

[00:42:05] One additional student assistant specialist for alternative educational programming. Five student assistant specialists with FY24 funding. Five additional FY25 student assistant specialists.

[00:42:21] and then one school social worker for alternative educational programming. Recently, a question was asked by a board member regarding the role of the student assistant specialist and how many LCPS has currently serving our schools. Student assistant specialists have expertise in the mental health and substance use fields.

[00:42:42] They have master's degrees in social work or counseling and are licensed by the Virginia Department of Health Professionals as clinical social workers, professional counselors, or substance abuse treatment practitioners. As members of the Unified Mental Health Team, student assistance specialists support LCPS initiatives that promote student connectedness, enhance student resilience, and educate about mental health and substance use issues. We provide educational presentations

[00:43:21] for students and parents, restorative practices, and an individualized and group support. They also manage referral services and coordination with providers, staff development and consultation with parents and staff.

[00:43:39] We currently have 26 student assistant specialists. Next is the Office of Procedural Support, which underwent a reorganization during FY24 to establish a separate office of procedural support.

[00:43:55] Prior to this school year, it was a function of the Office of Special Education. This department, this office is anticipating one position for FY25, and that is the procedural support facilitator. New initiatives.

[00:44:14] All right. Our alternative educational programming will be highlighted on the next slide as it is the primary budget driver for new initiatives across student services and the Department of School Leadership. The community school's nurse practitioner is a transition from grant funding to operating funds.

[00:44:37] The educational diagnosticians, they have previously been highlighted as a need to support instruction to students through the evaluation process. The McKinney-Vento liaison is a transition from

grant funding to operating funds.

[00:44:54] The expansion of TeachTown is a transition from COVID funds to operating funds. And the stipend increase for special education deans has been identified through our Human Resources and Talent Development Cyclical Review Process.

[00:45:13] The identification of our needs for alternative educational programming has been a collaborative endeavor between academics, student services, and the Department of School Leadership. LCPS has identified seven different needs to better serve our student population through alternative educational programming.

[00:45:35] In review of current data reflecting student discipline and overall needs, the following alternative educational programs have been identified for LCPS to explore and create to better serve our students.

[00:45:52] Two disciplinary placements, one with in-school options and out of school, a Title IX placement, transition programming, which include a 30-day substance use program, and then a step-down placement for residential or hospitalizations, and then special education intensive programs focusing on emotional and behavioral needs and autism spectrum disorders.

[00:46:19] In review of school divisions across the region, 10 out of the 19 school divisions in Region 4 have alternative educational programming options or non-traditional programs to serve students.

[00:46:34] Common themes across the region in these programs focuses on meeting the needs of secondary students, behavior, discipline, mental health, an emphasis on smaller class sizes, a focus on improving attendance, and a curriculum that thrives on project-based learning for students.

[00:46:57] For the 2024 school year, LCPS, again, has prioritized, out of our seven identified needs, alternative educational programming to support two primary focuses, disciplinary placements and those that require targeted assistance with managing their academic and mental health needs while accessing the educational setting.

[00:47:25] Again, this is a shared initiative between the Department of Student Services and the Department of School Leadership. We've had the opportunity as a department to look at some of the intensive supports for mental health needs through a review of data provided by our unified mental health team staff.

[00:47:49] Through working with teams from 18 high schools and 14 middle schools, they identified the following needs across our student population from the 22-23 school year. We had 239 students that were hospitalized in residential settings for mental health.

[00:48:09] Of the 239, assessments have indicated that 138 of those students, which is about 57.7%, would have benefited from a more supportive, alternative, or transitional setting upon their return to LCPS.

[00:48:29] Of the 239 students, 82 students, or 34%, were placed on homebound or home-based instruction following their hospitalization. As a department, we continue to gather data to inform our planning for alternative educational programming needs in LCPS.

[00:48:50] It's important to note that the LCPS alternative educational programming is a separate initiative from the recovery school model that we are seeking to develop in our region. The recovery

school is not in the budget because budget amendments to support a school in our region are in the General Assembly.

[00:49:15] Our thinking is that if we get funding for this program through the General Assembly, that we would use the funding to plan and then start with a small group of LCPS students as we build it out. In year two, which would be FY26, we could fully open, and it would be open to students from districts across Region 4.

[00:49:41] Now, we will review the areas the DSS has been able to identify the cost savings for FY25. In collaboration with Business and Financial Services, the DSS completed a three-year review of the categories listed on the slide and have identified a total cost savings of \$1.1 million to be reallocated within the DSS budget for FY25.

[00:50:06] The reductions across the categories still afford the Department of Student Services the ability to support staff with curriculum development, extended school year services, homebound instruction, and funding for compensatory educational services in special education.

[00:50:25] Now, we'll highlight some key takeaways from our Department of Student Services budget for FY25. Students at the center. By placing students at the center of our work, we prioritize their needs, aspirations, and growth.

[00:50:45] Student services staff focus, again, on the prevention and intervention approaches in the schools and are committed to the education of the whole child to ensure safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments. for all students through the acquisition and retention of highly qualified staff.

[00:51:07] Our focus going into FY25, again, is eligibility services, occupational therapists, school psychologists, school social workers, nurses, school counselors, school nursing assistants, speech-language pathologists, student assistance specialists, special education teachers, teacher assistants, and behavioral assistants.

[00:51:29] Our next key takeaway on our path to FY25 is staff compensation and benefits. We've identified the need for a stipend increase for those serving LCPS students, schools, and families in the current role of a special education dean.

[00:51:52] Next and lastly is our reallocation of funds, which is the cost savings realized in part-time fund spending across several supplemental areas without harm to services to students and schools.

[00:52:08] In total, an increase in FY25 to 3,275.6 dedicated staff members from the 3,102.4 staff members in FY24, with a total budget allocation in FY25 for the entire Department of Student Services of just over \$345 million, dollars with 97.7 percent of our budget being personnel to serve students schools and families

[00:52:42] again I thank you for your time and your intention madam chair I yield the floor thank you so much miss Richardson that's a lot to process um I do have one well I have several as you could imagine but one of them is um can you tell me a little bit more about that part-time reduction in the extended school year ESY program? So I need to be clear it is not in services for extended school

[00:53:16] year but we do incur supplemental costs for staff that are completing the special education process providing compensatory services outside of extended school year services but since it's happening during that time frame that is typically the cost fund that it is hitting and so in our review of that account

line looking at a three-year average we felt pretty comfortable we have seen a reduction over the years of schools having to schedule eligibility or IEP

[00:53:51] meetings or compensatory services needing to take place during the summer and so we felt comfortable that that account line could be reduced slightly and we would still be able to cover those needs across the division. So it's not direct ESY services. It's those supplemental services that also take place during the summer. Thank you. I also am wondering about an orientation and mobility specialist. I see that we contract that out. Is that something that we could look into?

[00:54:30] Yes. So we currently do have one teacher of the visually impaired who is dually licensed as an orientation, and mobility specialist. As you are aware with your background, it's a highly specialized area. And certainly as a division, we can look into supporting other staff members with gaining that certification, especially through the newly proposed tuition reimbursement that Mrs. Bolin recently presented. Could you also walk me through, I know that Loudon also has kind of somewhat of a different model than other districts about eligibility coordinators.

[00:55:10] Could you walk me through the difference between a special education dean and an eligibility coordinator? Did you find my talking points?

[00:55:26] I tried to be as best prepared for these questions as possible. All right. So essentially, our eligibility coordinators are coming from the Department of Student Services, the Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services.

[00:55:45] Their sole focus is to support the eligibility process. So they work in collaboration with special education deans and those designated to lead the special education process at the school level. So your eligibility coordinator is working with your school psychologist and any other related services folks and eligibility team members at the time of determination, either eligible or ineligible.

[00:56:15] Now, your special education dean is 100% school-based, especially for all of our high schools, and then they are split between elementaries and middle schools based on the ratio of students with disabilities that they are serving and the number of specialized programs that they support.

[00:56:34] So your special education dean is supporting your special ed teachers and related services staff, as well as your parents and all general education staff on a daily basis. Your eligibility coordinator is going in with a very specific focus to support that process, and then they back away from that team.

[00:56:55] And then they're going on to support the next team across multiple schools. I'm going to think of some other questions, but anybody else have any other questions? I'll start with Dr. Deans.

[00:57:18] The question, the alternative school, or the alternative, the creation of the alternative school, how would that impact service for the special education and or general education population?

[00:57:38] Thank you, Dr. Deans, for that question. So at this time, as I said, we've identified seven needs areas, but we've focused specifically on two of them. So one being disciplinary placements, so general education, students with disabilities can incur discipline if they violate the student code of conduct.

[00:57:58] And then the second focus would be our mental health placements, so really looking at that transition of any student from a residential or hospitalization setting to be able to make sure that we can implement the discharge treatment plan and then successfully prepare the student's base school and make

sure that the student has the necessary wraparound supports as they transition from that higher level of care to a more focused level of care back to their comprehensive schools.

[00:58:34] So the alternative educational programming at this time is proposed to serve all students, general education and those eligible under the IDEA as well as those eligible under Section 504. Ms. Chandler.

[00:58:56] Thank you. Thank you so much, Ms. Richardson, for such a thorough and thought-out presentation. I was hoping that you could reiterate for our perspective the number of students who have been identified as special education this year and how that's changed over the course of the last year, and speak to the increase in, I'm looking at slide on page four, With the increase of 56.3 FTEs, I'm sure that's tied to a staffing standard, but could you speak

[00:59:32] to that just a bit? And I'm wondering, honestly, if it's going to be enough. Certainly. So our initial projections for current year FY24 had LCPS serving in totality by June 2024, 9,665 students eligible for special education and related services. The number that I quoted for you today 10,063 is as of today around 2 30 p.m. Of course it's a process that

[01:00:10] doesn't really close out until close of business each day so I'm sure it could have ticked up a little bit or it could have gone down some today. So again we realized an increase over the course of last year of about 22.2 percent higher than the 21-22 school year, which looking at our trend data, we did not anticipate. And then this year, we are about 16.8 percent higher than the 1,964 students that we evaluated through the initial eligibility process. And so keep in mind, out of

[01:00:49] the 1964, 1473 were found eligible. So we're running about 16.8% higher with referrals. We have consistently for about the last 15 years been pretty steady with about a 75% hit rate. And when I say hit rate, referral to eligibility and students requiring needs for special education and and related services so our anticipated number for fy25 in meeting the needs of students

[01:01:25] with disabilities we've gone from an estimate projected enrollment of 9665 to 10 594 so we have accounted for the growth that we are seeing across special education dina if you would permit me to to ask a question that is related to that real quick where are you seeing the special education eligibility elementary middle or high is there is there an increase in any of those

[01:02:02] areas it's interesting that you asked that question so certainly we're holding pretty steady at elementary we've seen a slight spike in middle school but the interesting spike we've seen in high school is in section 504 referral eligibility and placement yes so an increase in section 504 So that's basically accommodations for not specialized for medical?

[01:02:36] Could be medical, yes. Sorry, Dina, go ahead, or Ms. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. Can you tell me more about how LCPS is the effort to teach the whole child? Certainly, well, we offer comprehensive services.

[01:02:56] So when you think back to my quite lengthy presentation, since the Department of Student Services does encompass five offices, you need to look at the collective body of that work. So the process in educating the whole child certainly starts with the Office of Student Services because that incorporates student, that starts with the registration process, right, getting you enrolled and in our schools and then that student health services, making sure that our students are healthy, our families are healthy, then that would really transition to diagnostic and prevention services.

[01:03:36] The moment that our schools or our families begin to recognize that there's a different level of need, that's where our multi-tiered system of support is, as well as our positive behavior interventions and supports and our response to intervention.

[01:03:54] The eligibility process also sits in the Office of Diagnostic and Prevention Services, as well as preschool child find. Then you sort of, I'm envisioning the fourth floor, and you kind of round the bend, and then if you are found eligible, then that brings you to the Office of Special Education, where you are, we focus on specially designed instruction.

[01:04:19] We focus on the why behind the brain-based challenges that our 10,063 students in LCPS are currently facing so that they can have equitable access, participation, and benefit to the instruction that we are providing on a daily basis.

[01:04:38] And then the two other offices, Student Mental Health Services and Procedural Support, they are the foundation to making sure that the other three offices are functioning. So Student Mental Health Services serves all students, General Ed, Special Ed, Section 504, everyone in LCPS.

[01:05:00] And then once found eligible for special education or 504, we really do rely on our office of procedural support to make sure that we're in compliance. I've always said there's nothing special about special education. We're just really complicated.

[01:05:17] And so there's a lot of nuts and bolts to remember when educating the whole child, especially the whole child that has been identified with having a brain-based challenge. And so we rely on that office to keep us compliant with policies, keep us up-to-date on regulations, and so that's a quick synopsis of how we educate the whole child.

[01:05:39] Can you hear me? I didn't know if it was on or not. Do you find that the students, along with the parents, are engaged in this process? Nothing can be done without students and children, right?

[01:05:58] And they come with parents, so the process is meant to be collaborative. we envision and and focus the process on parents really being the experts in their children and we're the experts in in in education and you put those two areas of expertise together and it's a collaborative process now as in with any relationship there's ups and downs and you're not always going to agree right but you stay focused on a free appropriate public education you stay

[01:06:33] focused on access you stay focused on participation you stay focused on it on the child's ability to demonstrate benefit from all of the services and educational experiences that we offer and it's a beautiful process so yes they are engaged I have one other I won't you know me I'm gonna be talking but one thing that I'm wondering about is the GMU cohort one of the issues that I know

[01:07:11] know about from my previous work as in decoding dyslexia is that there are many uh universities that do not follow the science of reading and don't teach all five pillars so my concern is if we have a cohort that we are providing this instruction to then we're going to have to retrain them when they get here is there any way to relook at our training and where we're training them or is this a contract issue well we have had a long-standing memorandum of understanding and

[01:07:49] agreement with george mason and but we do work very collaboratively with them as partners and we meet with them regularly i have always found them to be open to feedback now certainly we have not weighed in on their courses that they are delivering other than with the focus of being able to make

sure that the teachers that they provide to us that are current LCPS staff members that are working towards licensure and special education, that they meet the licensure requirements.

[01:08:23] As a school division, we have a quite robust professional learning program, specifically within the Department of Student Services Office of Special Education for all of our reading and math interventions. But certainly happy to meet with them, ask some questions, gain some more insight, and then provide some feedback.

[01:08:47] Thank you for that. Anybody else have any questions? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. I have quite a few, so I'm going to break it down for you. Some are pretty simple. And we can bounce away from me if someone else has something. Teachtown, can you tell me what that is and why we're moving it to the operating fund?

[01:09:07] You said it was from COVID funds, so just trying to understand what that is. have no context at all. All right. So in FY23, as a division, we made a significant investment in a comprehensive curriculum for our students that were accessing the alternate standards for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Students with disabilities that are not able to participate in the standards of learning are SOLs. Due to impact of disability, they participate in the Virginia Essentialized

[01:09:43] Standards of Learning, or the VSOLs. TeachTown is the research-based curriculum which we worked collaboratively with SEAC and other stakeholders across the division in vetting. It was selected to assist our special education teachers division-wide in serving students in specialized programs that access the alternate curriculum. The selection of TeachTown was a collaborative effort. The expansion in FY25 is to provide staff and student access to their library

[01:10:19] resources. So it touches on all aspects of the curriculum for students with disabilities and specialized programming. The most exciting part that we found from TeachTown, it has a transition component, which was super exciting for our teachers and our parents, as we know that we are working to enhance our transition outcomes.

[01:10:43] Thank you so much. You're welcome. My second question is about the special ed deans. You mentioned that at the elementary level, they're split between schools. Is that because of, are those numbers based off of eligibility numbers or those based in the cases that we're seeing or is it more number of students?

[01:11:04] So our current staff and ratio, it's not a staffing standard, okay? The ratio for SPED deans is every high school gets a special ed dean. And then for middle schools, it is based on, we look at, for middle schools and elementary schools, we think about the following factors.

[01:11:27] Total population, number of administrators, number of students with disabilities, number of specialized programs. And then that's how the deans are split. So between elementary and middle, we sometimes have deans that may have two elementary or two middle.

[01:11:45] Most oftentimes have one elementary, one middle. Okay, thank you for that clarification. And then you, I think I heard you say they don't direct, they may not be directly involved with the eligibility process, but they're more involved with the students and the services that they're receiving in the classrooms?

[01:12:03] Correct. So the special ed deans, sort of think of them as your site-based administrator for all things special education, okay? So that position was created to free up the ability for special education teachers to focus on the delivery of specialized instruction.

[01:12:22] So the dean serves sort of as like that main case manager at the school level, working with the SPED team to coordinate the meetings, to send out the meeting notices, to communicate with families. They oftentimes are serving as the local education agency designee in our special education process meetings.

[01:12:43] Okay. Would it be appropriate to say then they're there for the already identified, but the eligibility coordinator would serve for the possibly eligible? Correct. Yay, I get something. You talked about FastBridge licenses.

[01:12:59] I know we already have many. How many licenses are we projecting? Is that based on new staff? Is that staff growth? Or what are those related to, I guess? So I don't have the number of licenses associated, but I have the cost as around \$58,000.

[01:13:17] Okay. And then this might be a question for Dr. Ellis and Dr. Slevin. I go through this, but thinking about FastBridge, I know we're implementing a new literacy program next year, and there will probably be assessments associated with that, so this is more just putting on the radar.

[01:13:34] Are we thinking about, could it be thought about where those two intersect, and what is the best use of those assessments as we think about it, not only fiscally, but about instructionally? I know we use it in support of MTSS, but I'm wondering if there will be some assessments built into our purchases through HMH that might also support, might better support that initiative.

[01:14:00] I am happy to work with Mr. Slevin in a response to that question. That would be great. Just putting it on the radar. Another question I had was about, if anybody else wants to break this up, I apologize. Diagnosticians, you and I have talked about this.

[01:14:17] You talked about the caseload with bringing on two more, going from 64 to 60. do we feel that that's manageable for what we have in terms of people staying within their schools? Sometimes I hear that, you know, I'm taking on three new cases and they're not even in my school, or can you help me understand?

[01:14:38] We're all on the same team, so sometimes we do have to pitch in and help out across maybe some schools that we had not been previously assigned to. So I think from my perspective, I don't view it as a caseload because in my mind, I think special education teachers have caseloads, right?

[01:14:53] Those are students and activities and actions that they're managing on a daily basis. So in reference to our educational diagnosticians, I think we're looking at their evaluation workload, right? So they're assigned cases, which then create their evaluation workload.

[01:15:12] Is a reduction from 64 to 60 reasonable? That's a lot of educational evaluations to complete within a year. Is it doable, and do they do a fantastic job? Absolutely. In an ideal situation, we would have an educational diagnostician for almost every school site, right? So you would have that educational expert there to be able to support teachers in real time with the recommendation findings from their evaluations. So I think

[01:15:47] we are moving in a direction of building that team to be able to provide more support at the school level thank you you're welcome I know they do fantastic work they do they're wonderful I just want to make sure too with the 16.8 percent increase that we're seeing that we're also that was taken into account when asking for the two more okay I think the last thing I want to know is just do we have an FTE cost for salary and benefit for eligibility coordinator or the

[01:16:22] support facilitator and can you speak about what the facilitator role would be certainly so I do I won't say that I have a cost associated, but I'm happy to work with my friends in business and financial services to give you a ballpark there. Sure.

[01:16:42] Now, of course, I can't find my notes. So eligibility coordinator, you wanted a cost. You understand that role. The procedural support facilitator. Just wanted to know what their role is, what they do. Certainly. So the focus of that role will be able to provide more support to our schools with professional learning in the processes that support compliance.

[01:17:04] for special education implementation of regulations and laws as well as section 504 really partnering with our with our office of special education i also see the addition of that one staff member being able to help the existing staff with the weekly analysis of eligibility data and how special ed staffing is impacted across our school sites perfect thank you so much and i did have one more i'm sorry no you're fine um i see so you talked about the sass and that was my question and i really appreciate it we are hearing from our high needs schools as

[01:17:41] well as others about just how valuable this role is and when you read the job description and you talk about the needs i mean this seems like the absolute perfect fit for some of the struggles that we are seeing across our schools especially in terms of our overdoses and just that connection piece. And I know, you know, Arben and I've had some discussions with staff that just that's the missing link, right? That's what they say. And I know that some of them are 0.5 and just being halftime and split and just the work that they do. But is it correct that there's going to be 10

[01:18:18] more added and where and how will that be decided? That is correct. So five are slated to be added in FY24. So we've worked with HRTD and the positions already posted. We have applicants and we're going to start the interview process. And then we'll add five more SAS positions for FY25. We've identified our 10 highest needs secondary schools based on the review of data from where we have had the highest level of substance use incidents. So our suspected overdoses has really been the driver behind the

[01:18:57] identification of those 10 highest need sites. Thank you so much. I think that that's going to go a really long way. Yes, Ms. LaBelle. Getting that, I'm so used to being loud.

[01:19:22] Okay, thank you. What I'm wondering, I really noticed that you emphasize free appropriate education and least restrictive environment. You talk about students getting services close to home, materials being presented in a manner that they understand.

[01:19:45] And I also understand that you went through some reorganization between last year and this year. I'm wondering where the Virginia Distant Learning Elementary services landed because they seem to be missing.

[01:20:02] Thank you for your question, Ms. LaBelle. So while the office, the Department of Student Services, primarily the Office of Special Education, provided staff, so special education teachers, cross-

categorical teachers, and specialized program teachers, as well as teaching assistants to virtual distance elementary, that programming does not sit within our office.

[01:20:26] So with that being said, we work very collaboratively with our partners in the Office of School Leadership. But I do want you to have comfort in knowing that as a department, as a division, we're still able to meet the needs of all of our students with disabilities.

[01:20:42] Because through the individualized educational planning process, we have a wealth of resources at our fingertips to be able to meet the needs of students. Even those that might require a virtual option, whether it's due to a medical situation or just based on the recommendation of a physician for a defined amount of time.

[01:21:08] Thank you very much. You're welcome. Yes. Vice Chair Straffi. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Thank you very much, Mrs. Richardson, for the presentation. I really appreciate, first and foremost, you explaining the changing student landscape and the changing needs of our students.

[01:21:31] And so I'm seeing this common thread across a lot of the presentations, right, with the increase of those identified for special education, but also English language learners and other types of students. And then you have the duly identified students. So this is really eye-opening for me, just seeing that common thread across the different presentations and really how deliberate you all are being in trying to figure out how do we serve those trends and really identify how that fits into our budget and our priorities.

[01:22:03] So I just wanted to put that out there. I also agree with Ms. Chernoff on the role of the SAS and what we've been hearing in the community. And I'm just really shocked about how expansive that role really is because they can deal with a plethora of student needs, right?

[01:22:21] and trying to support those students. So, one thing I was just thinking about in your presentation was, and I appreciate, is the increase in training for SASAs and other roles that support our students at that capacity. Just thinking about all of the different things that they can support students in.

[01:22:37] Specifically, referrals for substance use, right, as one of the examples. How, in addition to more resources for high-need schools, What flexibility do we have currently?

[01:22:52] Or how are we thinking about flexibility of that position? How have we dealt with increased needs of schools, regardless of how we staff them in a budget now? Can we surge them? Can we move SASSs around? Can we add resources?

[01:23:08] Is there some flexibility there? - Thank you, Vice Chair Streffi, for your questions and your acknowledgement. I appreciate it. So yes, the addition of the five student assistant specialist in this current year will free up the capacity of five current SAS, right, to be able to support some other schools differently, then the five additional next fall will really give us some more capacity to possibly serve more than 10 high-need sites or sites that we identify as having emerging needs. That team, that office, our student mental health

[01:23:48] Services Office, you know, they are truly servants, right? And so they come together, they deploy, they figure out where the supports are needed, and that's where they go to meet the need. So I often say to work on the fourth floor, right, in the Department of Student Services, you have to be flexible,

because we do have to go where the needs of students determine where we are needed. So with that said, again, that team meets at a regular cadence. They're looking at

[01:24:20] their data. They are also looking at the other factors that could lead up to substance use, and they focus on prevention. And so the focus on prevention, paired with the additional staff members that we've been able to advertise and recruit for, I think will allow us to serve more school locations with more of a targeted focus so maybe not too many having to split schools

[01:24:51] because as it is now they share one middle school and one high school site any other questions yes dr deans we talked about you talked about several um like the eligibility coordinator and the dean that have those individuals who have specific do you have anyone specifically assigned to transition services. I know this Saturday we're looking at a program about what happens when the bus stops

[01:25:28] coming and I'm just wondering the transition services do we have someone focused on that? Thank you for that question Dr. Deans. So we currently have a supervisor of special education who oversees transition services. That position also currently supports the Woodgrove cluster And then to support that person in their work, we have two transition specialists.

[01:25:59] With that being said, every secondary school or high school locations has a transition teacher. I know that we would love to move in the direction of being able to have one supervisor where the sole focus is transition services.

[01:26:16] So I'd be happy to help you advocate for that. But as it is now, it is a shared responsibility between all of the supervisors within the Office of Special Education, but we do have one person, Mrs. Jenna Arndt, is the supervisor that leads the charge there along with her two supervisors, her two specialists, and then she works with the rest of the OSC supervisors to make sure that the transition needs of students age 14 and up who are eligible as students with disabilities are met.

[01:26:49] across LCPS. You're welcome. I'm happy to advocate for that transition supervisor as well, just saying. Now that the STEP program is transitioning to full day program, will ECSE also become full day? That is a fantastic question. Certainly, you know that the licensure for teachers, special educators that choose to go the route of early childhood special education, and it's different than the licensure of teachers that teach cross-categorical or even specialized programs.

[01:27:28] So that is something that we'll have to assess. We have requested more ECSE programs in this year's budget within specialized programs. We'll have to look at our ability to extend those programs. Not every ECSE program is paired with a STEP program, so we'll have to think about the impact to transportation and food services and any other factors that we need to consider but that definitely has been an ongoing conversation anybody have any more questions mr. Richardson

[01:28:06] you are a gift thank you so much for your time and I appreciate you working with us and I know that even if we don't have questions now we can always come to you and talk with you thank you and with that if we could recess for dinner um move on to like 4.1 uh we could come back around

[01:28:31] 6 30 would that be okay all right the board is now in recess until 6 30.

[02:03:48] good evening the board is coming out of recess at this time and we will continue our work session with agenda item 5.1 Department of School Leadership with Ms. Rae Mitchell, our Chief of Schools presenting. Ms. Mitchell.

[02:04:20] Thank you. Good evening, Chair Mansfield, Vice Chair Struffy, School Board members, and Dr. Spence. Tonight, I will be providing you with an overview of the Department of School Leadership, how we support students and staff, and how we are looking to enhance our department and the work that we do. The 1LCPS Strategic Plan for Excellence serves as the foundation for the work of the Department of School Leadership.

[02:04:56] As we move through the budget process, you will see that the largest portion of our budget is going toward reallocations for the new and ongoing initiatives, which is connected to how we will better serve, better be able to serve the specific needs of some of our students, which directly connects to students at the center.

[02:05:13] The Department of School Leadership is the new department this year, and school-based staffing is part of our budget, which includes instructional staff. The small percentage of change, which is less than 1%, is likely due to changes in the base budget where actual employee salaries and benefit selections deviate from the averages that we budget.

[02:05:39] Each of the offices within the Department of School Leadership mainly consists of school-based and student-facing positions. The increase in 1.0 FTE in the Office of Athletics and Extracurricular Activities is to cover the expansion of intramural sports and activities at the middle school level.

[02:06:05] Currently, there is one coordinator that supports all athletic trainers and the current middle schools with the intramural sports program. The FY24 adopted budget included funds to support this program as a pilot at four of our middle schools.

[02:06:23] This included one coordinator position and initial supplies and equipment. The program continues to be highly successful with positive feedback from students, school-based educators and families. The FY25 CEON requests additional funds to expand the program to all 18 middle schools during the school year 24-25.

[02:06:48] Additional costs include a coordinator for athletic training, the introduction of a new stipend for the middle school intramural coaches, part-time costs for officials and event supervisors, and funds to outfit each of the schools with the necessary sports equipment and AEDs.

[02:07:05] Because the staffing for school-based positions is a part of the level offices, the decreases that you see at the level offices are a result of staffing standard changes, which address the enrollment at our schools, therefore balancing the staffing needs with actual student enrollment.

[02:07:24] The request to have the Office of School Administration increase by 21 positions is to account for the staffing for the proposed Alternative Educational Program, which supports students who may need an in-person educational setting outside of their comprehensive school setting.

[02:07:43] Later in the presentation, I will provide information on what those 21 positions will cover. Now I would like to give you an overview of each of the teams within the Department of School Leadership.

[02:08:00] First, we have the Office of Athletics and Extracurricular Activities, which supports schools with all middle and high school sports, athletic directors and trainers, and student extracurricular activities at the middle and high school levels.

[02:08:17] This office has an assistant director, coordinator of athletic training and intramurals, supervisor of extracurricular activities, and a program analyst. This office is looking to expand the middle

school's intramural sports program to continue offering a wide range of activities and clubs for those students. We are also a part of the VHSL and student leadership conferences to enhance and showcase student leadership skills and provide engagement opportunities. The next office we have is the Office of Elementary Education and Charter Schools which

[02:08:54] consists of one director and four executive principals to support the 59 elementary schools and two charter schools. In this office they support principals while engaging in the school improvement process, support them and collaborate with the multi-tiered system of support team out of the Department of Student Services, and support principals in the analysis and use of survey data to create inclusive, safe, caring, and vigorous learning environments.

[02:09:24] Next, we have the Office of Middle School Education. This office has one director and one executive principal to support the 17 middle schools, Along with some of the things that are also done in the elementary school, the middle school office promotes college and career readiness by promoting access to accelerated courses and programs.

[02:09:46] They provide professional development for the implementation of effective collaborative learning team structures. And they work with the offices in the Department of Teaching and Learning to provide curriculum resources and support to the instructional staff.

[02:10:01] Next, we have the Office of High School Education. Like the Office of Middle School Education, this office has one director and one executive principal that supports the 17 high schools.

[02:10:18] In this office, our county-wide facilities are also a part of this program, which include the North Star, Robey, and the Academies of Loudoun. The high school office supports principals and growing leaders.

[02:10:35] They provide professional development to optimize collaborative practices. And they support and assist schools with working towards the LCPS Goals of Culturally Responsive Framework and Profile of a Graduate. The Office of School Administration supports all schools with discipline, hearings, placement, and consists of one director, one supervisor, and one hearing officer.

[02:11:04] The Office of School Administration collaborates with all schools on discipline matters. They also provide professional development to our student support advisors, and they assist school-based administrators with monitoring the operation of schools and reporting student behavior.

[02:11:21] In the Office of School Administration is where we currently have a program that supports students that may be placed on short-term suspension, which I will also get into later in this presentation. And it's part of this office where we have requested staffing to support the Alternative Education Program.

[02:11:43] In looking at students at the Center, we will take a look and review the enrollment changes that are projected for the fiscal year 25. Taken directly from the SEON, LCPS's enrollment projection is 23 students less than this year's budgeted projection.

[02:12:02] Compared to the actual enrollment student count for this year, the projection is 1.1% growth. Again, as mentioned on slide 3, while we have student growth, our staffing standards either meet or exceed the state's standards of quality and does not necessarily require additional education instructional staff. However, we are seeing a need for more focused and individualized and targeted services, which is one of the reasons why we are recommending that the school

[02:12:34] board adopt the alternative educational program. In looking at recruitment and retention, the Department of School Leadership is asking for an increase in the stipend for both elementary and middle school dean positions to align with the role and responsibilities of their leadership expectations. The work assigned to the deans is aligned with that of assistant principals with the exception of evaluating instructional staff. Deans are an integral part of the school administrative team where they build community and establish relationships with students and

[02:13:13] families, support students with discipline concerns, communicate with stakeholders, and evaluate classified staff and much more. Deans are now required to have their administrative endorsement, which is equivalent to that of an assistant principal and principal.

[02:13:31] And the stipend is requested to reflect the increased requirement and alignment of their work. Also, within reallocations, I'm sorry, for recruitment and retention, we're looking at the request for two Title I middle schools and one Title I high school to have an additional assistant principal, which is due to multiple factors, but not limited to allowing for more community outreach and engagement to support families with navigating school and instructional expectations, providing educational, social, and academic support to both

[02:14:08] students and teachers, having the ability to assign one assistant principal per grade level at the middle school level to support the deans and what we use as the house system at the middle school level. And as a side note, for one of the schools that we were able to staff this year with a third AP at our Title I middle school, we've been able to see tremendous growth in practices, expectations, support for students, and academic growth. At the high school level, we will be able to see the same gains with placing an additional assistant principal at our one Title I high school

[02:14:45] who will also be able to support students with graduation requirements, social-emotional support, and can partner with the student engagement and activities coordinators and student support advisors to provide a higher tier of support to students who may be experiencing disciplinary infractions, need additional outreach to support school attendance, and support them with graduation requirements.

[02:15:11] The last category is for ongoing or new expanded initiatives. The funding in this area for the Department of School Leadership is directly tied to how we can best support our staff and serve our students. Some of the new initiative highlights I've already provided for you, such as the Title I school additional assistant principal and the stipends for deans.

[02:15:38] We are also looking to separate the role of the coordinator from athletic trainers from that of intramural sports at the middle school level, especially with the expansion of middle school sports and activities. This is necessary to ensure that our athletic trainers receive the necessary training and support while also simultaneously building the middle school, after school, extracurricular activities and program.

[02:16:03] Next, I will also provide some additional information regarding the alternative educational program that puts our students at the center and supports their multiple needs. This slide you just saw this evening that was taken from Ms. Richardson when she presented the Department of Student Services.

[02:16:23] So to reiterate, for the 24-25 school year, we have identified seven different needs to better serve our student population through the Alternative Educational Program. In review of current data reflecting student discipline and overall needs, we will focus on disciplinary placements in and out of school and special education intensive programs.

[02:16:48] In a data presentation recently to the Student Behavior and Accountability Committee, LCPS has taken steps to reduce the suspension of students based upon behaviors that were classified as more subjective in nature. However, principals and other school personnel have expressed that there are more mental health related issues contributing to student behavioral incidents and they desire more options for alternative placement.

[02:17:15] With the approval of this program, we would be able to support students in an instructional setting versus remote setting and provide them with the necessary and proper support. In looking at the Alternative Educational Program, we are asking for additional middle and high school teachers, teacher assistants, and site-based administrators.

[02:17:41] The current Office of School Administration program that we have currently has two middle school and two high school teachers. The students assigned are mostly for short-term suspensions safety placements after which they serve their suspension, they return to their base school.

[02:17:59] Because the students remain co-enrolled, the teachers support students with assignments from the home school and work to ensure instructional continuity. The proposal for the Alternative School and the FY25SEON is to provide a highly structured and well-staffed program to meet the various needs of students as outlined in the previous slide.

[02:18:27] concludes the department of school leadership thank you for your time and attention to this presentation i will turn it back over to chair manspell thank you miss mitchell um in my previous life i was a music therapist working in an alternative school next year i know that this is for this year but next year if we could possibly look into music therapist creative arts therapist or something into as well social worker for the alternative programming i think

[02:19:03] that would nicely round it out i realize we have a dedicated amount of money at this point but something to look into and maybe even grant funding um anybody else have any questions yes miss griffiths thank you madam chair um i had the opportunity to visit uh hillsborough charter school um my understanding and maybe kevin can speak to this um you know through the cip program they're going to need a lot of work done on that school so if you can explain or maybe give

[02:19:42] me an idea if we can get them think I know they had their roof fixed but they need other things done can you explain if the money would come from the CIP program or they would have to pay for it themselves thank you miss Griffiths the the process of maintaining the HCA and the Middleburg charter school are both the responsibility of the charter schools we're in communication right now with both those charters about renewing their their documentation we we are aware that they have some requests in place and staff is going to be meeting with them over the next week or so to

[02:20:19] be to talk through that and then we'll be able to give the board a better summary and so right now that that is their responsibility and it's not the responsibility of the school board and then we'll we'll continue to update you as we go through that process and evaluate their application If you could keep me updated on their application, I'd really appreciate that.

[02:20:43] Absolutely. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you so much, Ms. Mitchell. I actually have a question for clarification. So your alternative educational programming is different and separate from what Ms. Richardson, or is the same?

[02:21:03] Thank you for that clarifying question. It is the same, but we included different types of staffing in our budget. so because we want it to be able to accommodate special education and general education students for a variety of needs so we put different parts of it in our budget but it is all collectively one setting okay i just wanted to clarify because i was like wait a minute um the other thing is i see that it's middle and high for parts is there any elementary component for the alternative or no at this time no when we looked at the needs of our students however um we are not opposed to

[02:21:41] looking to expand that. And we have had some conversations with some of our elementary principals who may want to have a school within a school setting and not house them in the same building with our secondary students. So we would look at a little different model for that. I appreciate that. Thank you. Yes, Dr. Deans. Concerning the athletic trainers and with the expansion of the middle school intramural, can you speak to coverage by athletic trainers?

[02:22:20] so when you say coverage you mean what they currently cover and how we currently have them staffed and how they will be staffed with the addition of the alternative school and the expansion of the middle school intramural program thank you for that question so currently right now we have one athletic trainer per school with a proposal of having additional regional athletic trainers. So when we're looking at the alternative school, again, if that is something where we're

[02:22:56] getting into, just like Chair Mansfield offered about the musical therapy and art therapy, and we're looking at expanding opportunities for those students as well, we would also have to provide them with the same opportunities. So one of the regional positions that is in the FY25C on could be used to support the alternative school setting but right now we just have one at each high school and we do not have any assigned right now to the middle schools for the intramural sports. Are there any other questions? Yes, Vice Chair Streffi. Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you so

[02:23:36] much for the presentation. As we look to kind of move the needle on student achievement and we look at all the different priorities that are being presented and as we think about some of our most vulnerable student populations.

[02:23:52] I just want to express more of a comment on how excited I am at this opportunity to increase an assistant principal at Title I schools. In addition to the mental health supports, the opportunity to tackle so many different buckets when it comes to our ability to influence student achievement, support the students, support staff who are dealing with the students.

[02:24:19] - From A to Z, student discipline, right? I agree with you in the potential to really impact student achievement by adding an additional assistant principal at our Title I schools. So I'm looking forward to future conversations about how we look at that impact and how we measure it and how we really assess what impact we're gonna have by adding this, so thank you.

[02:24:44] - Thank you and I appreciate that comment and we will be more than happy to provide you the informal and formal data that we've seen as a result of having one this year at one of our Title I middle schools and the growth that we've been able to see as a result of having that additional assistant principal there.

[02:25:01] - Thank you. - Board members, do you have any more questions? - Thank you, Ms. Mitchell. I'm very excited about the alternative school. - Thank you, we are too.

[02:25:28] - With that, we will now move on to agenda item 5.2, department of support services with mr kevin lewis our chief operations officer presenting

[02:25:41] mr lewis thank you chair mansfield vice chair streffi members of the board dr spence we are

[02:26:23] thrilled to be here tonight to talk to you about the budget for fy25 for support services i would like to also stop and thank you all for the effort you put into everything so far we know you're drinking from a fire hose and i'm getting ready to add a whole bunch of more information so we know you've had a lot of data and information and you've done a lot of homework and we appreciate that. I also want to thank you for the opportunity to take you on a field trip to see some of our facilities during the orientation. I think that was helpful for us to get to know and meet you all and hopefully it was helpful to you to see some of our operations and what it takes to run such a large organization. I will tell you Mr. Lewis that was one of the highlights of our

[02:27:02] training. Excellent. Appreciate that. So this slot is an overall org chart and just shares the structure of the leadership and structure and my team is here tonight with us and they're the ones that do all the work and put all this together and I'll just share that we have a structure where I have four separate divisions that report directly to me plus facilities and within facilities there's three more divisions that manage the facilities, the construction, the environmental, the Transportation sustainability, which is new for us.

[02:27:35] We're going to talk a good bit about that tonight and what our vision is. Management and coordination and planning and GIS. And we'll touch on each of those as we go through tonight. There are 2,000 or so members of the support services family. And so there's a lot of things that we want to be able to cover so you have the awareness of that.

[02:27:56] And I wanted to start by taking us on a little journey, similar to what we did around in the buses during the orientation. Take a couple of minutes to go through what it takes to provide and maintain and operate the individual learning spaces, the classroom.

[02:28:13] So I know we have a lot of conversations about what's in the classroom. So I want to be able tonight to try to help illustrate how support services is directly relinked and every day in the operating of the classrooms. So I want to start and talk a little bit about the process.

[02:28:31] Everything that's worth doing has to have a plan and so we spend a lot of time planning On all the projects, we have many, many hundreds of projects in our organization that we work on every day. And for the most part, we break just about everything we do down into projects. Schools are no different. Renovations, additions, big projects, little projects, all those things roll into the need for a plan.

[02:28:53] They start with, as you can see, enrollment projections with Ms. Tate in the planning department. We have facility studies, land use approvals. Anytime we add on to or build a new building, we spend about two years getting permission to do so on the process.

[02:29:10] We're right now already well engaged in the process to get high school number 14 approved, and it will not start construction for another year or so. So the process from beginning to end is about six to seven years to get a process through the CIP planned and get all the approvals put together.

[02:29:29] A point to also the building design, one of the things that's important to remember is it takes a long time to build a building and we try our best to keep up with all the new modern standards and codes

but I want to point out Ms. Richardson did a wonderful job earlier about telling you how the the student population is changing over time and so the her staff has to change Ms. Mitchell the same their staff changed and what that also does is it all has to be reflected in our buildings so we have to keep up with those as well because every new program needs space and so we have to renovate and you'll see more examples as we go through of how we do our best to try to keep up with that and provide space so

[02:30:08] they can provide those so very important services to our students also goes with transportation logistics and you know one of our challenges is is trying to make sure everyone's safe on the campus every morning and marrying the the bus traffic with the parent traffic and the staff traffic and so those are things that my folks are all part of I also want to talk tonight we'll talk more about building an environment the you know we all know that you may not be aware that buildings across the country provide about 50 percent of the co2 emissions across the country and so we're a huge part of

[02:30:44] that we have 102 104 something like that buildings across the county and so we're big we're a huge provider of space but also then that has a pretty big impact environmentally and so this year we are really digging deep into looking at our environmental footprint and like I said we'll talk more about that tomorrow but there's there's some long-term planning and some short-term planning involved in each of those so we started with the plan and now we have the build and you can see now this building this classroom starting to come out of the ground we're we're in through the construction process we're weaving in all of our sustainability programs the types of materials

[02:31:21] using, the types of systems we're using, building information, infrastructure, and technology. And then about this time, we also start the process that I'm sure you're thrilled about is the attendance zone process that we know can be a very important process for our families and also a lot of work for your team.

[02:31:43] So we plan, then we build, and now we have the guts of the building. And I point that out is the systems inside these buildings today are so very complicated. Everything is computer operated. The temperature in the room, the humidity in the space, the CO2 levels in the space are all managed and monitored.

[02:32:01] It takes a great deal of skill to design and then construct those systems to work correctly. And then we have a fabulous facilities operations team that keep them going over the years. And so it's really important to recognize just how complicated and technical these systems are.

[02:32:17] technical security is also in there when we talk about camera systems and intrusion alarms but the main thing i wanted to call your attention to this slide if you can take a minute and look at that is something i don't want to be overlooked and i do this specifically to point out the the reflection on the floor of the windows it should never be understated how important it is for that classroom to be clean and our custodial teams are fantastic and they provide that floor they provide that entire building and every day the parents deliver their children to us to take care of them and they

[02:32:53] know that they walk into a clean and safe environment and we know the staff is loving and takes care of them but the building does the same thing and it's over my tenure here I've learned just how much that means to people when they can walk in and make sure their children are going into a clean environment so shout out and kudos to the custodial team who continues year after year to perform a terrific service to our students right inside that classroom. So we talk about the plan, the build, the guts. So what's the reason we do all this? The reason is right here.

[02:33:25] So we do this. We are located right in every classroom in the county, six, seven thousand classrooms. Those folks that are there, the room is now lit, warm, inviting to space. We deliver those children in the Department of Transportation. We provide the books and the paper. You see the technology somewhere in there. There used to be a picture of the recycling container that we provide those services. And so this is really why we do that. And you see, we also, I remember being a project manager way too long ago when Heritage High School opened. I looked out across the way on Evergreen Mill Road and the retractor trailers lined up for a half mile. It's amazing

[02:34:03] how much stuff comes into a school when you open it up. So the process of coordinating all that move in is pretty astronomical at the same time. Our team takes care of that. We bring in the furniture, the recycling. We run our own recycling and refuse system in the county. We also pick up all the county's recycling and refuse through all their facilities. Again talking about the environmental quality of the space we have a whole team led by Christina Windover who is our supervisor of that group who are skilled trades folks that are trained in indoor air quality, mold

[02:34:39] recognition any type of indoor air quality you think you have a teacher or student has a concern those folks show up and make sure that that place is safe and then we'll touch again more on the environmental education with our sustainability programs and how our team now is partnering with teaching and learning and getting into the classroom with our students and talking about the environmental literacy so the reason is the students and we are right there with them every day in these classrooms so we talk about all those different things and now we're going to talk about the boring numbers the rest of us exciting

[02:35:16] now we go to the numbers you'll see here we have a modest 4.9% increase I will call your attention to the capital outlay line it appears to be pretty big that's that's a really a change of a small number but it's a large percentage and it's mostly related to reporting accounting reporting that's has changed from last year to this year so the a lot of those things were in the the line above an operation maintenance so even though that's a fairly high percentage it's a pretty small number in terms of dollars so I know I'll also call your attention to we're going to talk about it in a few minutes about the operations

[02:35:54] and maintenance that is the line where we buy all the materials and supplies and contracts that take care of all of our facilities across the county and it's a fairly big number but I'll go into more detail on how to explain where that goes in a few minutes moving to the personnel summary you'll see that on the bottom line there we we are asking for 22 new staff members in facilities five in management and coordination and eight in transportation i know it's a common question so we've identified there there's 16 of the 22 that are school-based under facilities and transportation there's six of those and

[02:36:34] as we go through a lot of the things that happen to our budget or that are caused by our budget are the fact we're open in two schools so we have a few hundred thousand square feet of new space and a couple hundred acres of land to take care of and so those are things that are triggered by the staffing standards so out of these 35 new space new positions all but three of them are staffing standard based so that we from an initiative perspective we're only asking for three new staff members i mentioned a few minutes ago that we have a pretty significant operation and

[02:37:13] maintenance budget and from all of our divisions is it's impossible to go through them all but I wanted to put a list here just a tasting if you will of the things certain things we do and I want to call attention to a couple of those that I think illustrates some of the the impact to our for our from our

operation on the budget our total operation and maintenance budget for the entire support service is 71 million dollars but if you look at that top left you'll see utilities and fuel 30 million of that is associated with electricity gas

[02:37:48] natural gas fuel water and sewer services so most almost half of that goes to just keeping our buildings warm and fueled up for all the different systems 3.3 more of that is done in service contracts for inspections you can imagine every elevator has to be inspected every kitchen hood have to be inspected fire extinguishers all those are done under service contracts in that category as well you know we have about 12 million square feet to manage and so it goes 71 million dollars is quite a bit but it goes pretty quick just trying to go through all that

[02:38:24] also call your attention to the line there it says building modifications i'll refer again to miss richardson's presentation on the new spaces this building modifications is where we would take a small storage room and turn it into a classroom or an office to help keep up with the different functions in there.

[02:38:42] And so we spend quite a bit of money each year, projects that are requested by the principals that say we have new staff members coming on board and we need a place for them to either teach or have their office space. So that all comes out of that. So most of our construction is done in the capital budget, but we do have a significant amount in our operating budget that we address those individual projects at different schools.

[02:39:06] Our environmental testing... Again, it's extremely important when our folks are in our buildings that we have a plan in place to make sure that we're either monitoring or managing anything that related to lead or asbestos, lead and drinking water, radon, mold, all those things that people would call on a regular basis and say, hey, I think we have a problem here.

[02:39:33] This team goes out. This is where their budget is to manage those types of calls. We also have a hazardous waste disposal process, so you can imagine any leftover art supplies, paint, lacquers, oils, wood stains, those types of things that cannot go to the landfill.

[02:39:50] This team comes and collects those and takes those and disposes of them properly. So some of that behind-the-scenes thing you may not think about that is taken care of every day in our organization. Next, we move to the capital outlay part of the operating budget.

[02:40:06] This is where we purchase capital equipment such as mowers and snow plows. I'll take a minute again to remind everyone that we do plow all of our snow, so all the weather events are taken care of by our own staff. Our technicians come in and strap a plow on the front of their truck and go and take care of all that.

[02:40:25] And so we believe that's a very reliable, it's a great team that has come in and over the years made sure that in some cases we're able to do a two-hour delay instead of close all day because they come in at 4 o'clock in the morning and do that. So the equipment that they use is purchased through this area, as well as leases for office space. And then this is also where I mentioned earlier where we had an increase in capital budget from a percentage perspective. One example is we spend about \$250,000 a year on software to manage all of our construction projects. And so those are all the licenses

[02:41:02] that we have to do that. And so that has been moved this year from operations and maintenance to capital outlay and that's one of the areas that has caused that to bump up same cost from last year it's just bumped to a different category so you've seen these slides before and and this is um our

itemization of where some of these dollars are going to and how they're being spent and we start with students at the center um you know the the total that we're we're talking about here for new initiatives and those types of things that are coming new for this year is only 2.4

[02:41:37] million dollars there there is about eight million dollars more a total of eleven million dollars change over the year some of this is the cost of inflation those types of things for parts and different things that it costs have gone up but the things that we're asking for differently are pretty minimal and are summarized here we go and specifically look at the students in the center and I mentioned earlier that we're opening two new schools so we have a number of folks that are coming on board for to manage the new schools we have folks in transportation school bus attendance lead bus driver those are all

[02:42:15] earned by the staffing standards so those come along with the addition of the building itself or with the square footage calculation same with the distribution center we have distribution center assistance and a crew chief coming on we've we've added some square footage of warehouse space to manage all All the things that come in, you can imagine we provide and we purchase and then distribute all the paper that goes to all the schools, all the copiers, all the custodial supplies, toilet paper, all those types of things are happening through our warehouse system.

[02:42:48] And so we've increased that over time and then these folks are associated with that. There's also maintenance workers and custodians that have come along with the square footage of the two new schools as they calculate through the staffing standards. Recruitment intention is a pretty small number.

[02:43:10] It's only \$40,000, and it's just a result of changing one of our GIS specialists. It's a part-time worker. You remember when we did our orientation, I pulled up on the screen all the map gallery that we have that you can click on the maps and see where you live and how many students are coming from there and all the different things.

[02:43:27] Those are built right in-house, so those are not something we're linking to. Bev Tate and her team in planning are actually building those maps, And we have a part-time person that comes in when times are really heavy, when we do boundary changes, there's map after map after map for all the different plans.

[02:43:42] And so that person comes in, that's a part-time person, and it's just simply changing the banding rate for that. So that's all we have as far as recruitment and retention. And there's a screenshot of the map gallery I was talking about. When it comes to reallocations for initiatives, we are really pleased that that has, let me go back there one time.

[02:44:07] So we have a number of things that we're looking at, a reduction in postal cost, a reduction in fuel. So we've offset some of those. We've offset by reducing \$760-some-thousand worth of things that we feel like we can do without next year.

[02:44:23] One of those is fuel costs, and I'll give you this chart here as an example of the volatility of the fuel cost. And our assessment this year is that we will spend less on fuel than we did last year, and I'm not sure I've ever said that before. And so it is a pretty significant thing.

[02:44:39] As you look at this chart, all the way back in January of 2020, we could see an upward trend all the way going through July of 23, or January of 23, where there was a couple of spikes in there. I also share that we work collaboratively with the county of Loudoun.

[02:44:56] We purchased fuel that went by the fuel bay over by the transportation area. So we have huge tanks over there. We buy fuel, diesel, and gasoline in strips of 40,000 gallons. And we do that strategically to try to get a better price for that.

[02:45:13] You buy in bulk, you get a lower price. The trick to that is watching this graph and seeing when it's going to be at its lowest. And you see there the commitment we made in FY24. We did hit the bottom there. We had a little spike, but now, well, the prices are dropping right now. But they will go back up.

[02:45:30] But we were pretty pleased that we were able to save a good bit of money with not buying in one of those spikes over in the early part of January because we were concerned that if we didn't lock in, it may still continue to go up and that we'd be paying more. So just one of those things that we do with the county of Loudoun because they purchase a lot of fuel as well.

[02:45:49] I'll also talk a little bit more about our initiatives to try to itemize those for you. We have the sustainability and under sustainability and energy resiliency. We have a number of programs, and I'm going to talk more about that in the sustainability process.

[02:46:07] But we also are asking for an energy management supervisor. And I can easily, comfortably tell you that that position will pay for itself. You'll see in a couple minutes how much money we've saved over the past several years, the last 30 years in energy savings. And this position will help us manage those processes, work with facilities, actually work in facilities with and through our sustainability team to look for ways to continue to save energy and so this is a we believe an important position we have right now two energy managers on staff and a lot of the day is focused on scheduling the buildings making sure the the heating cooling are

[02:46:46] turned on and off when they're supposed to be and saving the actual act of saving the dollars but now this person will actually be looking for programs and working with our sustainability director on programs to continue to to expand our i guess reduce our footprint on the economy or the environment. We're also looking for a field trip scheduler and a dispatcher in the transportation department. I would say that field trips this year have gone up 53 percent over what they had in the past and so and for those of you not familiar we we use the slang of field trips but

[02:47:21] that includes you know fifth graders going to the White House but also the the the athletic teams the debate teams and the bands and all those things we have a small group of folks in the transportation department that manage those hundreds and hundreds of trips and so we are looking for one person to help with that and also with a dispatcher we have a continuing growth of needs in the transportation area we have a number of folks that are out of county with special needs trips and those things were folks were taken out McKinney Vento people students that were picking up at different locations and this dispatcher will be an integral part of making sure

[02:48:00] that we can manage those those trips. Sorry about that. And if you just think about right now we have six the area the the county's broken up in six areas for transportation we have a dispatcher for each one of those and those dispatchers know the roads like the back of their hand in each of those areas but as soon as we have an incident or an accident or something that takes one dispatcher out we need to have someone to be able to step in and help the all the rest of them and so that person is solely and singly focused on an incident and it leaves us vulnerable to be able

[02:48:34] to help the other folks. So this is a critical position for us in the dispatch office. So my favorite topic I've been hinting all along that we're going to talk about sustainability. We're really excited about being able to move forward and make some some real progress not only in what we're doing with our buildings but also with our environmental literacy. Clark Sipe our new director of sustainability has been working with teaching and learning to get into the classroom and actually spend time in the classroom with the students.

[02:49:05] They've already had some meetings with that. And I would say we have a fairly small budget request for that, \$250,000, and 94% of that is going to be focused on and dedicated to the classroom. We're going to buy kits and programs for the students to be able to get in and be a part of that.

[02:49:23] So we're really excited about that, working with those teams, and that's where this energy manager I talked about a few minutes ago We'll be working on a sustainability plan, an energy management plan, and Mr. Traynor in our executive director of facilities also serves on the environmental commission with the county of Loudoun, so there's a lot of work there with their energy plan, and so we're very excited about the things that we can do moving forward.

[02:49:49] One of the first things we're going to do is get a better awareness of our recycling program. We know that it's a great program, but not enough people know about it, so we're working on the awareness of that as well. So here's the proof.

[02:50:11] this is our just a summation in the last 30 years we've had a documented cost avoidance of almost 122 million dollars in our energy programs and this is how we you know if you want to know how that's done there's there's a standard that says here's your building standard you run an energy model to that then you run an energy model of the actual buildings we build we don't build the cheapest building but we build the best buildings and they save us energy every single day and then we have the programs built on top of that or we have and that's the other thing that we'll be doing in the classroom is you know learning from the students first because we know they know more about than we do and get that

[02:50:48] environmental gene going and having programs and turn the lights off and making sure that we have every effort we can to save money so over that time we've saved 121.8 million dollars and last year alone we we saved 7.9 million so our ratio is going up it's getting better and that's directly related to the solar programs we put in the energy programs you saw probably as you were right before you came on board our capital budget where we have the different energy projects we've got solar systems now on 15 buildings and we just got some some absolutely fabulous news today that's not in here

[02:51:28] that the phase three which had six of our schools we have solar programs lighting retrofits that we actually saved \$650,000 this year on six buildings. And so that's pretty phenomenal. We have a guaranteed savings plan with that contractor. And we exceeded what they promised us by 171%.

[02:51:46] So this number will even continue to go up over time. And we believe, and we have a clever little thing there with all the light bulbs where you see the last three represent the 30% we changed. You know, in the next 30 years, we want to turn off three, four, or five more of those and continue continue to be able to save that energy and that money goes right back into the classroom for the students.

[02:52:07] So we're not spending it on energy, we're not spending it on the buildings, we're able to put that right back in the classroom. And so you take that and equate that to cars, it's 101,000 cars off the road, 12.5 million trees when you start doing those carbon calculations.

[02:52:23] So we're extremely proud of the effort we've made and the successes we've had on helping our environment and continue to do that and it equates to real dollars. We're really pleased that that's happening and we'll continue to do that. As far as takeaways, just a reminder, we're putting up two new schools and that increases our budget.

[02:52:43] And from staffing and supplies perspective, we want to make sure that we are able to continue to work every day with our students. We're excited about those programs. And, you know, we identified almost three quarters of a million dollars of things that we could cut out of our budget to try to help pay for the initiatives we've asked for.

[02:53:05] And so with that, I think I'm finished, and I'm happy to take any questions you may have. Thank you, Mr. Lewis. I'm looking forward to learning more on the FNO committee about all of this. Board members, do you have any questions?

[02:53:23] Yes, Dr. Rasheed. Thank you, Chair Mansfield, and thank you, Mr. Lewis, for this awesome presentation. As always, it's always well organized and always well said. In the numbers that you mentioned earlier in a few sides ago, I was just curious to know, Because I remember on the field trip we went on during orientation, you had showed us the electronic bus or a bus that didn't take gasoline.

[02:53:48] I was wondering if that was incorporated at all in the numbers that you presented. So it's reflected in the fuel because we're going to not have to buy gas and diesel for those vehicles. But the purchase of those buses is done in another budget.

[02:54:04] And so we buy those out of the CIP, the capital budget. I will also take an opportunity to say that we are not spending more money for the electric buses. They do cost more than the diesel fuel buses, but every bus that we have right now is a part of our pilot program.

[02:54:21] And as a result of the grant we have received, one way or another, to pay the difference between the gas and the electric. So our pilot program is to, you may have seen, I think we did that just before you came on board as well, where we've asked for a grant for more to expand that a little bit more, which is going to allow us to have an electric bus from each of the manufacturers that provide electric buses so we can look and see how they're doing both out west where we have longer runs and in the east where we have the shorter runs.

[02:54:50] We've asked our drivers to pay very close attention to how we did charging when we had a really cold period last time, last few weeks. So we know that you probably heard that across the country where that was an issue. We did not see where it interrupted our operations. We want to make sure that before we come to the board and recommend that it's time to go all electric, we want to have all that data for you.

[02:55:11] We also expanded into a propane fuel, so this grant we've asked for some propane buses too, which are probably more ecologically friendly than a diesel engine is, but maybe not as much as the electric, but we want to make sure we're trying them all. Okay, all right, thank you.

[02:55:26] And I have some more questions. I remember during orientation, you had showed us a really great, I guess, video or pictures of the new concept of, like, the bathrooms. And I was just wondering, in the new schools or in any other future schools that are anticipated to be built, will they be incorporated in that?

[02:55:49] And if they already started, like, for example, in the middle school, is that incorporated in the numbers that you presented? So we have – so in the middle school – let me start back up. We are in the middle of doing a pilot for those restrooms as well, and we have those under construction.

[02:56:05] They're going to be rolled out, opened up for use by the 1st of March. And so between March and June, we're going to get feedback not only from the students but the staff and anyone else that is in our facilities using them to see how well they're received and see how well they're working. So with the middle school that's under construction right now, we greatly increased the number of individual restrooms, but we also provided the normal group toilets that we have in our other schools.

[02:56:32] The Parkview High School and HS14 that are on the design right now, we have the area that's occupied by the group toilets that we can plug and play. And so we've got that design so we can move them in and out. And so we'll be prepared to be able to do that. And we're hoping to get some really good feedback from the pilots to see how well they're working.

[02:56:50] And it may be that that's exactly what we do. And we may do something entirely different. We may do a slight alteration. But it's really important that we listen to the students and the faculty and how well they're working. And so we know exactly how to answer your question. But right now we're doing our best to prepare to be able to do it either way.

[02:57:07] Also, you know, I know a lot of the residents out there, especially out west near Middleburg and the western part of Aldi, there were some concerns with data centers. So I was wondering, and this is not really pertaining to the numbers, but when you consider, I'm assuming you guys work really well or work very closely with developers?

[02:57:31] And if so, there was some concern about schools being built near data centers because of possible radiation or any other reason like that. Do you consider the location of data centers or do you know where the whereabouts of the future data centers will be as it relates to the schools that will be built or are being built currently?

[02:57:53] So certainly we do know where things are going that are in the planning process right now. Ms. Tate and her team in planning department is a referral agency for the county. So anytime a developer of any type puts in an application to build, whether it's a bunch of houses or a data center or a hotel or anything, whenever those happen and it impacts the schools, those plans are sent to us and Ms. Tate and her team evaluates those and says, okay, that's going to result in an X number of new children or whatever, and however a percentage of a school.

[02:58:23] So we know where those things are. I would have to say that we're not aware of any environmental or health effects of that, but that's something we'll certainly look into. I've not heard that expressed as a concern before, but certainly, and generally speaking, we're trying to get our schools within the areas where their residence is close to the schools we can walk to school, and so we generally wouldn't be right in the middle of an industrial area like that, although it's not unheard of, but we'll take a look at that.

[02:58:52] Okay, and if they may again. And also, piggybacking off that last question, you know, in light of Henrietta Lacks and the difficulty of the travel of some residents or some communities for such a great distance, are they considered for the newer schools in order to prevent, like, any type of long-distance travel?

[02:59:14] I'm assuming they are, but I just wanted to verify that with you for future new schools. Yeah, for future new schools. So when we plan future new schools, we try our best to put them where the need is and to have as little disruption as possible from the folks that are going through the existing schools.

[02:59:31] The challenge in Loudoun County is we're trying to buy properties from the same, you know, we're competing with all the other developers to buy properties, and that's not always the easiest thing to do. We're very fortunate to have the Heartland property where MS-14 or Watson Mountain Middle School is being constructed, where HS-14 will go.

[02:59:49] We have an elementary school site there as well. So at some point in time, you know, we may be having that conversation this fall about where the next elementary school might be to provide that relief. And then we'll have those conversations with the board to see, we would come and say, we're going to recommend we put the next school here and then we'll have that conversation with the board.

[03:00:08] And all those conversations, we can provide the numbers with all those great maps I showed you earlier of where all the kids are coming from and try to give you all as much information as possible and then do our best job that we can to plan so that as few people are impacted as we can. And just one last, I promise, One last question.

[03:00:27] Do developers tell new communities, again, this is a little off on this, do they tell the new communities, all right, look, this is going to be your new possible school or anything like that? How is the communication liaison between the developers and the new residents as it pertains to LCPS?

[03:00:45] That's an excellent question, and I will say that Mrs. Tate and her team pays very close attention to that. So as soon as ground is broken, she runs out to the trailer where the folks are and say this is the school that you're zoned for please don't tell them you're going to a different school because sometimes they don't know they look across the hill and they see a school and they think that's where it is and they tell and so it is not unheard of that we have parents come in and say but my builder said and so we we do our best to make sure that they that the builders know exactly where it is also knowing that it could change when the boundary process comes up thank you so much mr. Lewis thank you this is a great answers thank you so much board members do you have any other questions yes

[03:01:24] sure enough thank you madam chair and thank you mr. Lewis for all you do and the wide scope that you cover I think that we I can speak for all of us like madam chair did about our orientation and I've worked for this county for seven years as a district level employee and a school-based employee and I thought I had a pretty good rap on how big this county was but I had very little idea and

[03:01:49] And that field trip to the transportation center and seeing all of that just really opened my eyes to just how much goes on to get kids to school each day and what a true miracle it is that all of that happens and the enormous team that you have behind you.

[03:02:05] So thank you. Thank you for showing us that. Thank you for opening us up to those kinds of things. Very excited to hear about the sustainability programs for kids in classrooms. I love that. Can't wait to see how that unfolds in teaching and learning and the partnership there.

[03:02:21] I think that that's, you know, a big part of our world. I was a little bit surprised to see not a lot of ask in the recruitment and retention area. I understand we still have a bus driver shortage that is impacting start times and staggered start times, particularly in the Leesburg district.

[03:02:41] So I just didn't know if there was an ask or if some of those initiatives to try and recruit bus drivers and things like that are not monetary, maybe. But if you could just speak to a little bit of that context and how we're addressing that. Yes, thank you.

[03:02:56] So we are 12 drivers short based on the number of routes we have developed and the number of drivers we have. But in addition to that, we have still a number of, and I don't know the number off the top of my head, of vacant positions. So we have more bus driver positions than we need to fill all the spots.

[03:03:12] So right now we don't need to ask for more bus driver positions. We do believe we are, I think Mr. Davies and I met with principals today, and so right now our rate of pay for drivers is at the highest it is in the region. HRTD has helped us a great deal with recruiting and retention with one-stop shops and be able to do that.

[03:03:32] Over the last several years, we've done incremental changes to the benefits for drivers. We used to have a tiered benefits program, so if you only work four hours, you've got a reduced benefit. Those have all gone up. So we believe we have as good a package as there is. I think the main issue is there's just not enough people that want to be drivers.

[03:03:52] We have about a 40% dropout rate in the classes, and what that tells you is it's not an easy job. So as folks come in, they want to be bus drivers, and they get in, and they see how difficult it is, and they do the training, and it's a big machine. It's a lot of responsibility, and some people, it's just not their thing.

[03:04:12] And so it is a struggle. We don't think right now that it's something that we need to throw more money at. We just need to do our very best to get folks in and get them trained as quick as possible. I really appreciate the context and all that you've done to get us this far. Thank you. Thank you. Yes, Ms. Donahue.

[03:04:30] Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Lewis, thank you for everything that you do for our students and our division and for your extremely comprehensive and thorough presentation. I have several questions, so please bear with me.

[03:04:45] But before that, I just wanted to say, I wanted to echo the earlier comments that your field trips were probably my favorite part of our orientation. And I don't know if everyone else in Loudoun knew some of the things that I learned on our field trips with you about the fact that Loudoun owns our own entire bus fleet.

[03:05:09] LCPS owns our own entire bus fleet. We own our entire own garbage and trash, trash and recycling trucks, like our own fleet. We have the machine shop that services everything. I find that completely amazing. And also the information that you shared with us about when we open schools and sometimes your department is paying to build roads and install utility lines and things like that.

[03:05:38] So it's amazing what we do. what you do, what your department does. I did have a couple of questions, some of them following up on some questions that my colleagues have raised. About the solar panels, I think you said it was six schools that have them? 14. Oh, 14, excuse me. Okay. How is it decided which schools would receive them? Are there currently plans to add more? Absolutely, plans to add more. We're adding

[03:06:14] them to every school that we build now and so one of the first thing we did is go through the county and we had our consultant go and look at which schools were able to be added to and right now we're focusing on putting them on the roof where we have space to do that we haven't put any ground

mounted systems on at this point one of the challenges we have with some of our older buildings is there's a lot more hvac equipment on the roof and so it's less likely to be able to do that. In some cases, we have older buildings that the weight is just too much for the design. So some of our schools are not eligible, but any of them that are, we plan to do that. We have the

[03:06:54] process, and we'll talk about this this fall with the capital budget. We go through that selection process, and we can share all that. But we'll put a summary together. We have to put a summary together of what that plan is. Right now, we have, I think it's an 11-phase project, 11-phase project and we're in phase seven of putting those systems in place right now so we can share the ones that are already planned and then we do have one year next FY26 that we have a budget shortfall that we don't have any projects in there but we're always hopeful that we'll be able to fix that this fall when we meet with the county and get funding together for that but we'll put together a whole

[03:07:33] synopsis of what the future plan is. Thank you and you mentioned the money savings from the current solar panels, which I was going to ask about. Do we use all of the energy that is currently generated by the solar panels? So as long as the building is within the Dominion energy area, we have some in Novec as well, we can share that. So if a site generates more than it uses, then we can share that savings to another campus. So we do, at this point, are using, I think, probably most of it. But either way, we get credit for having put it back onto the grid

[03:08:12] and any access we do, we can still take credit for that. Fantastic. Okay. Also, Ms. Chernoff asked some questions about bus drivers. How many bus drivers do we currently have?

[03:08:28] You said I believe there are 12 vacancies. Yeah, I don't know the numbers exactly, but it's about 560 to 570 drivers that are actively on our rolls, and we have 12 more routes that we need to fill than we have drivers, And so that's how we figure out the shortage.

[03:08:47] But then we also have some vacant positions so that we that, you know, that are in addition to the ones that we need right now. So we we would hire 12 more to completely fill that roster and we would stop at that point. You know, we have to continue that because there's always attrition going on.

[03:09:04] But sure. How does that compare to the number of drivers that the division had circa 2019 before the pandemic? I think it's about the same. We have fewer drivers today than we did back then.

[03:09:21] Do we know any ballpark of how many, like 10 fewer, 100 fewer? Well, I remember when we did the tiered change, we went from the three-tiered routes to the five-tiered routes. We reduced by 44 drivers at that point because we were able to be more efficient with the drivers we had and increase our reliability and be able to do that.

[03:09:41] So there was at least 44, 45 change in that one-year period. Okay, and does your department determine the assignment of bus attendants, how many bus attendants there are and which routes they're assigned to?

[03:09:59] Yes, bus attendants are assigned to all the special needs routes, and so anytime we have that, and that's why we have five more attendants in this year's budget, because our estimate for the number of routes we're going to need next year for special needs routes is going to increase, so that's why we're asking for five more attendants.

[03:10:15] Okay, and school custodians, I assume your department also assigns how they're assigned to schools, determines how they're assigned to schools, so how is that decided, and how many custodians are assigned to different schools?

[03:10:37] So in the back of your budget book, there's a staffing standard, and I believe it is 15 per 20,000 square feet, is that right? One per 25,000 square feet. So we take the building size, divide it by 20,000 square feet, and that's how many custodians are assigned to each building.

[03:10:57] So an elementary school would have fewer, middle, more, and then a high school more. And then those are broken up between the day shift and the evening shift. So there's usually fewer custodians on campus during the day, and then all the cleaning gets done at night when the students go home. So it's based on the size of the school building, not necessarily the overall size of the campus or the student population?

[03:11:21] That's correct. At the high school level, we have what we call an athletic custodian that helps with the grounds and the athletic complexes. I think that's all I had. Thank you very much for your information. Any other questions?

[03:11:37] Yes, Ms. Grievous. Thank you, Madam Chair. Unfortunately, I missed one of your field trips with the electric buses, so I do have a question on the electric buses. how far do they go on a charge, and can they go out of the area on field trips?

[03:11:58] So we will get you that exact information, but I believe about 100 miles. And so that's all part of our pilot. We're testing those with our different runs, our longer runs in the west.

[03:12:13] We'll also, as the infrastructure gets built out, we'll allow us to be able to go out of county and those types of things. So as more counties put those in place and we get more chargers in place, and then that will be a part of that. The other thing we do as we get our grants, we are putting chargers in place.

[03:12:29] Right now we have some at Parkview High School that are going to be relocated for the construction project and then be replaced when we build the school. We have some at Cardinal Ridge Elementary and also at Emmerich Elementary. And those were specifically chosen so we could test the south and then test the west as well and see how they work with the different size and length runs.

[03:12:52] So it's 100 miles without a charge? Yes. Any other questions? In addition to that grant that you were talking about that I think I signed, there was also a propane.

[03:13:13] Can you talk a little bit about the difference between the propane bus and the electric bus? And are we looking at the differences between the two and what might be more appropriate in one area than another? Yes. So the propane bus is a little bit closer to the cost of a diesel bus.

[03:13:30] It's just a few thousand more. It's also a combustion engine, so it's just a different fuel. But it is more, it's cleaner fuel than diesel fuel is. And so we wanted to try that because, you know, at the end of the pilot for the electric buses, we may decide that's not right for us. And, you know, but we may very well go forward with that.

[03:13:48] So we wanted to make sure that we expanded and looked at anything that was available in the market to see what we could improve our services with, lower our costs, and lower our emissions. So it is a part of that process. And we've ordered 15 of those so we can try those out. They will be deployed in the west because in Percival there is a propane fueling station.

[03:14:08] So we know we'll put them close to that and so we have that. But as time goes on, I know the county's talking about doing some fueling stations as well. And as those fueling stations get deployed and more electric chargers get deployed, that'll help inform us that we can come back to the board and make a recommendation what we do long-term.

[03:14:27] Thank you so much for that information. Certainly. Anybody else? No. Mr. Lewis, thank you for your presentation. and it's it's a lot i mean what you guys do is incredible and much we appreciate the opportunity to talk about it so board members we have a little i was looking at the agenda and i'm wondering if it makes more sense to do the cion recap and adoption steps first before we have the like

[03:15:04] the last budget questions is that okay with you guys if we switch it around a little bit yes yes okay perfect well then we will move on to um mrs willoughby to talk about the um the fyc on recap and adoption steps miss willoughby thank you so i have the pleasure of providing the last presentation before the school board adopts its budget for fy25 now that all the department

[03:15:43] presentations have been completed i want to take the opportunity to provide a recap of the fy25 superintendents estimate of needs that I will refer to as the Sion throughout the presentation. In this presentation you are going to see a lot of data and various views of the budget. These different views are in response to some of the school board questions we have received along with questions and concerns we are hearing in the community. I would like to start the recap though with a reminder that the Virginia code sets the duty of the superintendent to prepare a needs-based budget that can be irrespective of funding constraints. Dr. Spence though has

[03:16:21] presented a budget that balances the needs of the division against the expected available funding. I want to highlight that LCPS will receive additional funding from the state and county. The FY25 SION is the prioritization of the needs of the division based on Dr. Spence's guidance that is also based on available funding. Conversely, if the SION was solely based on needs irrespective of any available funding, you may see additional items such as what is listed on this slide. For example, There could be an initiative to reduce all class sizes by one student.

[03:16:58] That would have a price tag of a little over \$23 million. The current Cian includes \$50.4 million for a 4% COLA and scale adjustment. Maybe that would be bumped up to 5% for an additional \$15.2 million. You've heard from Ms. Boland the initiative and seed money to start a tuition reimbursement program.

[03:17:21] there could be additional dollars associated there. Similarly, with the sign-on bonus and some of the questions we were hearing from school board members about if there were more money allocated, would that be more impactful? Just the two items that have the dollar amounts alone are almost \$40 million, and there are several, several needs not included in the SION.

[03:17:47] But again, this is a SION that is based on the available funding. On the other end of the spectrum, though, is a flat budget. We have heard questions why the budget isn't flat to match the flat budgeted enrollment growth that LCPS has projected for next year.

[03:18:03] And I would like to provide additional information in context to this. School divisions to include LCPS for FY25 may experience low enrollment growth, no enrollment growth, or even a loss of enrollment, yet expenses will still increase.

[03:18:21] This slide provides a few examples that we are experiencing in the FY25C on. LCPS historically provides an annual step increase, and that is included at a cost of \$25.7 million. This item alone would increase the budget 1.5%.

[03:18:38] No COLA or scale adjustment is on this list, just the step increase. The school board could elect to award no step increase if the desire was to have a flat budget, which would of course affect morale, but also start a compression of the scale as new hires are brought on board and are at the same level as someone who's been here longer.

[03:19:00] Health premium increases are in the Sion with an 8% increase. Again, the school board could elect to keep premiums flat, but that would likely lead to the health self-insurance fund fund balance becoming negative or going in the red, resulting in a violation of our policy and regulation and having to either ask the county for more funding make the fund solvent or do a larger increase for premiums later next on the list is opening two new schools which of course we will or we would have brand new buildings sitting empty the school board could elect to not have adopted staffing standards which could lead to inequities in school

[03:19:38] staffing and finally there are several school board approved initiatives that have continuing additional costs or expansion in fy25 and again the school board could elect to freeze or halt these programs. These are just a few items specific to the FY25C on that hopefully outlines the complexity of budgeting, the importance of decoupling enrollment growth with budget growth, and why the FY25C on does not have a 0% budget increase, but rather a 9.4% budget increase. The top question that has been asked by school board members and others that drives

[03:20:14] this summary presentation is where is the 9.4% increase going? Based on the superintendent's priorities, 76% of the 9.4% increase is invested in recruitment and retention efforts such as the step increase, COLA increases, bonuses, etc. The priority of students at the center is 16% and captures the resources needed to open two new schools and support our growing English learner special education and economically disadvantaged student populations. The smallest category represents 8% of the total increase in funds ongoing in new initiatives. I will drill down

[03:20:53] further in this presentation, but let's look at the increase another way. Same question, but now how is the 9.4% distributed against three categories of compensation, school-based initiatives, and non-school-based initiatives? Based on this, 76% of the increase is, again, focused on compensation.

[03:21:14] 21% of the increase funds a little over 247 positions that are school-based along with other school-based expenses. A very small 3% funds 26 non-school-based positions and operating expenses.

[03:21:31] As we move through the presentation, you will see each superintendent priority separated into a school-based category and a non-school-based category. The first superintendent priority is the recruitment and retention. And again, 76% is invested to retain the best teachers, best drivers, and countless other positions that are in the division.

[03:21:57] When we break this superintendent priority into its school-based and non-school-based components, you can see the school-based distribution on the left encompassing \$105.7 million of the total \$118.2 million cost, or 89%.

[03:22:15] On the right, you see the non-school-based is only 12.5 million and represents 11%. You may recall from the superintendent's presentation, the LCPS will have about 92% of all employees assigned to

schools, and this distribution reflects similarly.

[03:22:33] The next category is students at the center, and again, this category is representing 16% of the 9.4% increase in the SEON. Overlaying the school-based and non-school-based categories shows that 98% of resources are school-based.

[03:22:53] Only a very small 2% is non-school-based. Drilling down a little further, additional detail of what comprises school-based and non-school-based are presented here. Again, this is summarizing what was presented throughout the superintendent's presentation and the department presentations.

[03:23:13] For school-based, we have FTEs and associated costs to support opening two new schools and the realignment of staffing for the school board adoptive staffing standards these two are grouped together for general education positions because when a new school opens the students are redistributed teachers in practice follow the enrollment or the students but it's not an even movement you may recall during the superintendent presentation how information was provided highlighting how despite the overall enrollment remaining flat from one budget year to the next we continue to see growth in our english learner special education and economically disadvantaged

[03:23:50] student populations. These students require additional resources and supports, and the FY25 budget has a little over 114 positions to meet this need. Finally, there are other operational school increases and school-related position increases, such as the increase in the TJ tuition, the increase in AP testing fees, dual enrollments to student tuition, and various increases in cost for materials and services that directly support students. The 3.2 positions are from the Staffing standard enhancement to provide additional APs for the Title I schools and a small net elementary

[03:24:28] special staffing change per the staffing standard. The non-school-based positions are staffing standard driven. The last grouping is for reallocations for ongoing and new initiatives, which again encompasses 8% of the total budget increase. This category continues the trend of investment in school-based initiatives being the predominant factor. Almost 70 school-based positions are funded, representing 64%, with 36% of the resources going towards non-school-based

[03:25:04] supports. Drilling down into more detail shows the school-based detail on the left. Here, the school-based detail is separated into an ongoing initiatives and new initiatives grouping. Ongoing initiatives are those initiatives that have already been initiated in previous budget years, and these are the continuing additional costs to support further rollout or expansion.

[03:25:27] You see \$3.2 million is allocated to support HAMSci, dual language immersion, middle school sports, and competitive substitute rates. New initiatives total \$5 million with 65 positions and include the transition of step to full day.

[03:25:44] You may recall we were able to obtain your feedback on this item during the November budget work session. Also included is the new alternative school you heard about this evening and flexible staffing to support schools. The non-school-based grouping contains five positions that are from the school board adopted staffing standards and 17 positions to support important district needs, such as digital security, positions to support expected increased Title IX cases, and position supports for CTE, to name a few.

[03:26:15] A specific school board question asks, what would be left over once you back the compensation and new school costs, and if that could be shown by department in percentage of the 9.4% increase? The

table here shows by department, the percentage breakdown, and then some examples of what those items would be.

[03:26:39] The majority are staffing standard, driven position changes, and continuing initiatives. but again you can see the specifics by department of again just another way of dissecting and looking at this budget embedded throughout the superintendent priorities and the school-based and non-school-based groupings are the savings and reallocations identified during the budget development process a thorough analysis of historical trends pricing and needs was conducted and resulted in the four million dollars of savings and reallocations shown here by department Some of you may wonder what the difference between a reallocation and a savings is.

[03:27:19] A reallocation is for specific items reallocated to fund another item. For example, reducing part-time support and teaching and learning to reallocate that funding to support a program assistant position. The expectation is that if the program assistant position was not approved, that the part-time funding would need to be restored back in the budget.

[03:27:41] Savings are more general and are loosely tied to new initiatives in a department. Of the total new FTEs for FY25, 26 are categorized as non-school-based. Of these 26 non-school-based positions, 7 are categorized as central office administrative support, which you may recall is being defined as non-school-based supervisors and above positions.

[03:28:08] The chart on this slide is from the superintendent's presentation showing how of the total positions in the school operating fund for FY25, only a very small 1.46% are these central office administrative support positions.

[03:28:26] Further, the FY25 CION only increases this amount by five one-hundredths of 1% from FY24. To summarize, a final recap of the entire FY25 CION is presented in two categories, school-based and non-school-based.

[03:28:46] This bar chart consolidates information presented on previous slides with the school-based item by each superintendent priority shown in the first stacked bar. 89%, the vast majority of the items in the FY25 Seon are school-based.

[03:29:03] A small 11% is categorized as non-school-based. Another question has been, how does the FY25 Seon align with the 1LCPS strategic plan? The \$156.4 million increase is spread across the four strategic goals in the strategic plan.

[03:29:24] \$120 million is to support the goal of exemplary staff and the actions and strategies associated with this goal. \$33 million is to support the goal of empowered students. \$3 million supports enriched division. And \$360,000 supports engaged community.

[03:29:41] In your Q&A packet this evening, a report has been produced that is in the back of that packet listing all the budget items by department and by strategic plan goal. We historically have not delved deeper than assignment by the four goals and to the actions or the strategies.

[03:29:58] This would be a manual process to track the hundreds of items, recognizing that these items can support multiple goals, multiple strategic actions, and multiple strategies. Now that we've looked at the budget increase from a variety of different perspectives, I would like to circle back to the first couple of

slides that highlighted how the C-ON was developed to balance the needs of the division with what is expected from state and local funding.

[03:30:24] Again, I would like to reiterate that LCPS will receive additional funding from the state and county. This slide outlines how the expected revenues align with the needs in the FY25CON. The first column lists the superintendent priorities and then the related expenses next to that.

[03:30:44] The state funding column shows the expected state funding LCPS will receive based on the BDOE funding templates that are provided to school divisions to use for this purpose. The templates used for the FY25CON are based on the governor's proposed FY25 budget.

[03:31:00] Specifically, the governor's proposed budget included \$3 million of funding to support the one-time 1% bonuses for full-time eligible staff. The remaining state funds are to support state standards of quality requirements, such as staffing ratios, which is why they are aligned with the students at the center.

[03:31:17] You can see how the state's \$25.4 million does not go very far to support LCPS, and this is why there are several bills with the General Assembly focused on the JLARC study recommendations to provide more public education funding. The last column shows the county funding and the ask of \$131 million.

[03:31:38] I will provide more information on the next slide regarding how this lines up with county guidance received from the county administrator and board of supervisors. The important takeaway is how the county funding fills the gaps of the needs of LCPS, specifically with recruitment and retention.

[03:31:54] A step increase in top-of-scale payment for FY25 is just under \$26 million. The state funding would essentially only cover that. If it wasn't for the county's support, the additional pay increases for staff would not occur, the additional supports for our special education students would occur, and many more important needs of the division would be unmet.

[03:32:17] Each year, as part of the budget process, county staff presents its revenue projections based on the tax rates and assessed values to the Board of Supervisors and seeks budget guidance from them. The county has consistently increased revenues year over year, and there has been a sharing of the net new local tax revenues between the county and LCPS.

[03:32:39] For the current FY24 budget, the split was 60% to LCPS and 40% to the county. This year, the Board of Supervisors' budget guidance was based on two scenarios with the resulting funding to LCPS as shown on this transmittal letter from the county.

[03:32:55] The boxes on the letter highlight the following two funding scenarios. The first scenario is based on the current tax rate that would yield \$121 million to LCPS. Based on the FY25-C on ask of \$131 million, there is a \$10 million funding gap.

[03:33:14] The second option is based on the equalized tax rate and would yield \$98 million to LCPS with a \$33 million funding gap. There are a couple of factors to consider for why the FY25-C on is above the county budget guidance. One is that historically the county's revenue projections improve as they progress through their budget process.

[03:33:35] And another is that the county was implementing a new revenue stabilization fund deduction to the funding formula that took \$24 million off the top from LCPS. The FY25 SEON aligned the needs of the division close to the county funding guidance.

[03:33:52] The funding component is important to understand as it can be impacted depending on the school board motions made during the budget adoption. This table shows how the budget is balanced with revenues equaling expenses. The final school board adopted budget must also be balanced.

[03:34:11] The school board and its authority can increase, decrease, or modify the FY25 Seon based on its priorities. If, for example, the school board solely reduced the budget by more than the \$10 million overage the current Seon is at, then the school board can increase the budget. the county transfer request would be reduced.

[03:34:28] If the school board solely increased the budget without identifying a funding source, the county transfer request would be increased. For both actions, the Board of Supervisors would then determine their next steps as they adopted the county's budget and corresponding tax rates.

[03:34:44] There is no guarantee that if the school board reduced its budget that it would result in a reduction to the county tax rate. The Board of Supervisors could very well maintain the tax rate and instead of applying a 60/40 split, simply adjust the split so that the county receives more funding that LCPS did not want.

[03:35:02] Also, if the request is lower, it makes it more difficult in subsequent years to then ask for more, as evidenced by a very clear history of stable sharing of the revenue with the county. So the budget adoption process.

[03:35:19] This is the slide from Tuesday. I just added a couple additional bullet points clarifying what I described regarding motions that slowly increase or decrease the budget. But again, I would just take this opportunity to emphasize that to please send your budget amendments to me by noon on Monday for costing, as well as so that we can put it in the proper motion structure.

[03:35:44] I'd like to reiterate that we cannot perform costing on the night of budget adoption. As you can imagine, it's usually a little bit of a stressful evening, and to try to provide costing on the fly just sets us up for the opportunity for making an error. And that, again, I would consolidate all the possible budget motions to the school board chair to facilitate the meeting.

[03:36:07] Specifically, on the evening of February 6th, the first step that is taken is that a school board member would make a motion to adopt the FY25C on to begin the process. After that motion is made, then school board members may then begin making budget amendments via their motions.

[03:36:27] To maintain a balanced budget, again, any changes to increase the budget should have a corresponding change to decrease and vice versa. We will also utilize what we call our TOTE Board to track the budget amendments, and this will be displayed during the meeting.

[03:36:44] The TOTE Board looks like this. Along the top, we have the FY25 Superintendent's Estimate of Needs budget, so you see the expenses, the total expense, the FTE, the county/local transfer, and then the total revenue.

[03:37:03] The next row has the total school board revisions that right now are showing all zeros, but as motions are made, this will pick up the changes that are made below that are listed as one, two, three on the bottom of this slide.

[03:37:18] And then the third row is the school board adopted budget. So once all the amendments are approved, then this shows how we go from the FY25C on what the school board approved motions are, and

then we land on what the school board adopted budget would be. The green boxes that show balanced are really important. They're helpful cues for the budget team to ensure that we are maintaining a balanced budget, again, because we need to have revenues equal expenses. An example is provided regarding in row one, that here is a motion to make an amendment to increase for something, you know, fill in the

[03:37:57] blank and the cost of a hundred thousand and then again a motion to decrease for a hundred thousand just as an example so again this is what will be displayed during the meeting so we can watch as we go through the adoption process so with the dates we are at the asap box so again please send your budget amendments on tuesday we will conduct the public hearing as well as the school board will adopt. This gives us, by scheduling this on February 6th, we tried to squeeze as much time as

[03:38:36] we could into the calendar, but this gave us basically two days before the required due date to the county for their tax add deadline, which was February 8th. Again, we did squeeze as much time as we could into the timeline that we have to work with and share the concerns expressed by school board members regarding the tight budget timeline that also impacts the budget team's work to prepare a C on as well as the school board's role in reviewing and adopting. On February 2nd, the joint meeting occurs. In late March or early April, the Board of Supervisors would also invite the school board to attend another work session, and this is typically right before they adopt

[03:39:14] their budget. It's important to note that since the state budget process is ongoing concurrently during this time, any budget amendments at the state level that would impact LCPS would be shared with the school board and the county staff throughout this time.

[03:39:31] Also as the Board of Supervisors deliberates, we will have a Q&A process for the Board of Supervisors members similar to the school board Q&A process, just for your awareness. Then in late April, the Board of Supervisors will adopt its FY25 county budget, set the tax rate, and appropriate funds to LCPS.

[03:39:51] If LCPS is not fully funded and a gap exists, then the school board will meet again to reconcile the budget so that the budget is balanced with expenditures matching revenues. So that was a quick recap of the FY25C on.

[03:40:08] And if there are any questions for myself or any of my colleagues, I'm sure we'll be happy to answer them. Thank you, Ms. Willoughby. Board members, do you have any questions? Yes. Vice Chair Straffi. Vice Chair Straffi: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Ms. Willoughby.

[03:40:24] I just want to express my thanks for this presentation. In addition to Dr. Spence's presentation on the Sion originally, this presentation I think was a huge clarification or an expounding of our high-level statement of priorities for our division.

[03:40:46] It's a statement of our priorities when it comes to school-based positions, to our commitment or at least our concerted effort given the budget constraints with pushing 75% of our increase towards recruitment and retention, and it is based on the slide that you put up about abstracting everything except for the department-level positions. It shows very clearly some of those priorities, 5.9% focused on special education, economically disadvantaged, and

[03:41:23] alternative school supports as well as you know some of the new additions to teaching and learning and so that's really what I was driving towards in my some a few of my questions is really just how do we understand where are we driving the division towards and I think the executive it was all in really the executive summary but I think we needed this or I needed this presentation to be able to then look at

you know how I see things from my perspective or how other board members see things from their perspectives obviously you know we're we're not we don't have a final budget yet and so we will have differences we'll

[03:41:58] have questions to come but I think this was a really powerful presentation and it also helped us to really put back into concept context some of your presentation on the adoption process and and how we should see you know see that process so beyond that I think my question now is how should we be thinking about the amendments right all of us have have our ideas now and thoughts and we're still asking questions and talking to folks but as time is ticking how should we be thinking about amendments knowing that

[03:42:32] like we're actually going to be proposing FTE changes or how should we be looking at dollar amounts because there's different salary bands so my brain is now having a panic attack could you give me a little bit more context as to how we should do this intelligently so first don't panic so I so we are supported by a very strong budget team and this is why how I had shared even if you're thinking of something to just reach out even if you want to give me a call to talk through something if it's hard to like try to articulate in an email I'm always available for that the budget

[03:43:10] team will take care of the costing unless you have like a specific item but especially as it relates to positions so if you wanted to add another educational diagnostician you don't have to worry about the costing you just let us know and then budget would take care of that and we would put it in the format of a motion that is delivered back to you so so then you can look at it to also say okay yeah that this is what I was looking for and then you're ready to go on the the evening of the 6th so absolutely we are here to support the school board through this process

[03:43:45] um and why I keep encouraging to you know just shoot me an email give me a call regarding any proposals because i will share i'm just a little nervous because monday is you know right around the corner um and i want to make sure that we can fully support you because the example i gave of about an educational diagnostician that's easy what's hard is if you've got a more grander idea that involves multiple departments if if we would be able to pull that information together

[03:44:16] um in time thank you very much board members you have any more questions yes mrs deney mr griffis Thank you, Madam Chair. In case I missed it, can you give examples of the non-school-based costs? Thank you.

[03:44:44] So it's on slide, so based on the different categories, the first grouping would be on slide 11. It mentions that 12.5 of recruitment retention costs is associated with non-school-based.

[03:44:59] For students at the center on slide 15, I'm sorry, is that 15? I think it should be 12. Slide 12, \$400,000 is attributed to non-school-based for the new and ongoing initiatives on slide 15, I believe, \$4.7, and then I have it all nicely, oh, I just have the percentage, but

[03:45:30] on slide 19, it's 11%, but the total for those three is \$17.6 million, and that is \$17.6 million, um, of the increase. Any more questions? Yes. Ms. Chernoff. Um, thank you for putting this together. Especially appreciate in the packet, the, uh, alignment to the goals for the, um, strategic plan. I think that that's a really great way for us to be able to see exactly where things

[03:46:07] fall, um, and where the budget is. I really want to be clear that, you know, we're, I don't want to keep saying we're new, but also we're, we're coming with some different perspectives, I think. And I think

that can be a really positive thing. One of the things that I think I can speak for all of us, that none of us are planning to freeze staffing for new schools or cut teacher pay or, you know, not include those things.

[03:46:32] I mean, we're looking at this with a lot of that in mind. And a lot of this stuff is really great. And I think we can all agree that there's a lot of great things in this budget that we're really excited to see. My concern overall um really is driven by the slide you put up about the shortfall with the board of supervisors you know i've been talking to some of them as well and you know it sort of feels like responsibly there's going to be a 10 million dollar shortfall minimum maybe we'll get away with a little bit less but that puts us in a reconciliation process which i know is part of the process but my philosophy more is you know to be responsible with funds and to give some

[03:47:11] give something that's a little bit closer to what that number might a less discrepancy I guess and so and also it's not so much this year of the school-based and non-school-based it's it's the increases I think year after year after year that sometimes the perception or the feeling from our school-based staff and the community maybe is that you know over time that feels like it's growing more and more and more at a non-school-based level and a lot of times when there's a lot of non-school-based staff or more departments or more coordinators or directors that can feel like more

[03:47:49] is going to be generated in terms of initiatives and plans that may fall on teachers plates and that's just me coming from my teacher school-based experience and again we can work together I'm sure over this cycle and even more so I'm looking forward to next year's cycle when And we're much more equipped with what we need to make really informed decisions.

[03:48:12] I know it's kind of a tug of war. You know, it's like we've got the questions, you've got the answers, and back and forth. But I just wanted to clarify that, you know, not all of this is just like all school-based is, you know, good and all non-school-based is bad. That's not what we think.

[03:48:28] That's not what I think. But I do think that we have to look at where the dollars are going. And if we could be smarter with, you know, some reallocations or some streamlining, I said that on whatever day I've lost track of what planet I'm on and what time it is.

[03:48:44] But I guess that drives to my question. So if we do have amendments and we want to, you know, ask for more for something that wasn't in the seon, should we ask for, and we want the budget to balance, like we don't want to ask the Board of Supervisors for more money.

[03:49:03] We want to actually make a balance. Would you suggest that we ask you for those cuts? Because it's very difficult in this format to see the expenditure breakdowns. And I feel like if I keep asking for more things, it's like a backlog.

[03:49:21] So I don't know what the best practice is in that situation. So let me just weigh in a little bit here. So in the budget questions document that you have that's also on board docs, If you go to attachment one, you've got that here.

[03:49:38] It's on page 21 in the packet that you got during the break. You got this during the break, right? I know. That's why I'm taking you to it right now. You're going to find this very helpful, I promise. So the cost breakdowns are here, and they're here by goal, as was requested by a couple board members related to the strategic plan.

[03:50:00] And so the answer is no. I mean, we put forward an estimate of needs based on what we believe the division needs. We did that based on what we believe the available revenues are going to be, either from the state and or the locality. So I'm not really in a position to say to you, okay, well, this would be what you might want to cut, right, because it went the other way.

[03:50:21] So I'd ask you to look through these are your costs, and I'd ask you to look through those and make any recommendations that you have. And if you just want to talk on the phone about it and you're saying I'm thinking about and I'd be happy to then have a conversation with you and talk you through the kind of downstream consequences of what you're recommending.

[03:50:43] I appreciate that. Thank you. Do you have a question? Any other questions from board members? We kind of moved on to or backed up to 5.3 for budget questions.

[03:51:03] Do you guys have any questions at all? No. - Okay, seeing no more questions, the Loudoun County School Board, February 1, 2024, FY25 operating budget work session is now adjourned.

[03:51:18] Thank you.



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