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Loudoun County School Board, School Board FY26 Budget Work Session, Thursday, January 16, 2025

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[00:00:00] or afternoon, it's 4.30 afternoon, I call to order this January 16th, 2025, Loudoun County FY2026 operating budget school board work session. Can someone tell me if Vice Chair Donohue is on yet? She has not joined yet. Okay, so we'll move on to, we'll come back to that and start with item two, disclosures, and I'll start. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the

[00:00:39] 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'm 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. This disclosure will be reflected in the public

[00:01:16] 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.

[00:01:40] 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.

[00:01:56] I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk the school board for five years thank you miss chandler mrs griffiths thank you madam chair as a member of the loudon county school board 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 at a school as a school board member i am eligible to receive health insurance and

[00:02:31] 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. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years.

[00:02:53] Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the 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

[00:03:29] 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 this disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you miss LaBelle miss 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

[00:04:08] 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 while in the 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. This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. And we will continue when Vice Chair Donoghue and Mr. Streffi come back

[00:04:43] in. We will do their disclosures and everything else. But we'll go ahead and start with item three, investing in our school system, presented by Mr. Aaron Smith, our Chief of Technology Officer.

[00:05:15] Good evening, Chair Mansfield and board members. I'm pleased to share highlights of how DDI will be investing in our school system as part of the FY26C on. The Enterprise Resource Planning Upgrade or ERP is a significant project mostly funded by the county level out in CIP budget. We are here tonight to discuss the operational budget needs to support system implementation beginning in FY26.

[00:05:48] A simplistic view of an ERP system is that it manages people and money and LCPS has a considerable number of staff and significant funding to manage. On the staff side the new system will assist LCPS with managing human resources, employee benefits, applicant tracking, staff onboarding and offboarding, professional development, retirement, and calendars, to name a few. On the financial side, the system will manage accounting, budget, position control, payroll, procurement, and risk management.

[00:06:16] So why is LCPS implementing a new system? The County of Loudoun supports our existing Oracle system and notified us in 2023 that they would no longer be providing services as of June 2028, meaning LCPS would need to be completely off the existing system in three and a half years from today. As stated previously, the county has funded the system implementation in their CIP, including consulting services, system purchase, and implementation services. However, some operational costs are associated with managing a system of this magnitude. So what are the benefits to LCPS to manage our own system? The current system, as it is shared with the county

[00:06:53] of Loudoun, and that means we share the same core business rules of the system, and there are many gaps that create a lot of manual work outside the system, and the new system will provide an opportunity to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency. One example is the payroll, leave, stipends, benefits process for staff on different calendars. LCPS currently supports 29 different staff calendars, while the county has one, meaning our teams have to do a lot of manual work to ensure that 10-month, 11-month, and 12-month staff are managed accurately inside the system. That's not even including substitutes and all the other items that are K-12 specific to our

[00:07:30] business operations. Another challenge with sharing a system is finding an appropriate maintenance window. LCPS and the County of Loudoun have differing timelines for things like end of year, open enrollment, and peak hiring season, and getting a single maintenance period that works for both entities is extremely difficult. Internal teams from DDI, HRTD, Business and Finance Support Services, and our consultants, the Government Finance Officers Association, or GFOA, have participated in the project since the kickoff at the end of 2023, and the teams have been building requirements, mapping processes, identifying opportunities for improvement, and developing a

[00:08:08] comprehensive RFP that will be released in actually the next few weeks. The next steps for the team are to post the RFP, respond to vendor questions, review the bids once the window closes, host demo days for shortlisted solutions, select a vendor, and award the contract. Here's a snapshot of our current timeline. You can see in the mustard colored box that we are in the RFP process now and system implementation will begin in FY26. Full implementation will take approximately two and a half years to cover all aspects of the ERP. This is a complex system implementation and we

[00:08:44] plan to complete the project well before the June 2028 deadline. This brings us to the FY26 position request. As you can see from this slide, LCPS has a small but mighty ERP team currently in place. However, that team will need to grow to support the new system fully. Remember that the County of Loudoun IT Department, DIT, currently performs much of the technical work to support our existing shared system, and that work will need to transition to LCPS staff as we implement the new system. Also, please note that even with the seven additional positions, LCPS would have one of the region's smallest ERP technical and functional teams, about half the size

[00:09:23] of our neighboring jurisdictions. The seven positions are recommended as essential for successful ERP implementation by our consultant, GFOA, and the positions are as follows. One, coordinator for change management, who will serve as the change management lead for the coordination, and implementation of ERP and related systems.

[00:09:44] Think of them as kind of like the traffic cop for all the amount of chaos and complexity that goes on inside of a major system. This position will serve as a change management lead, developing, managing, coordinating, and communicating change management activities. Three ERP functional specialists, which will provide day-to-day support for operational tasks to support HRTD, business and finance, and other departments.

[00:10:02] That work is currently being performed by our partners in DIT. Two data engineers who will collaborate with stakeholders to map business processes, document integrations and gather functional technical requirements test and deliver business solutions and a user training specialist who will plan to design develop and enhance training resources and materials delivering synchronous and asynchronous training to staff in schools keep in mind it's not just the teams in hrdd and business and finance that use this all lcps staff will use the system everything from timesheets to reimbursement requests so training will be needed

[00:10:37] for all lcps staff not just those in these departments thank you for your time tonight and And I will now turn it over to Dr. Bergen to review the recommended investments regarding safety and security. Thank you, Aaron. Good evening, board members.

[00:10:53] Good to see all of you. And I'm really pleased to be able to share some additional information for you tonight relative to safety and security and advancement proposals to enhance our safety and security measures for our students, staff, and visitors.

[00:11:09] The total investment in this area is proposed at \$7.9 million. \$2.2 million of that investment would be in panic buttons, which would be distributed to our school-level staff for them to use to alert administrators in moments of concern or crisis.

[00:11:31] The investment of the \$2.2 million would include the hardware, the software, and the licensing of the system, as well as two technical support positions. Also inclusive of the \$7.9 million would be \$3 million to invest in camera analytics and some other software, as well as a technical support position.

[00:11:54] The camera analytics software would utilize artificial intelligence, or AI, along with our existing security staff to monitor our security cameras, and the AI would provide alerts to our security staff if there was a detection on our cameras of anything of concern, such as weapons or visitors out of place or a staff member, visitor, or student who was down on the ground, perhaps in a medical emergency.

[00:12:24] Other software purchases would assist with digital threat assessments, dispatch and report writing, data analysis, and the management of our crisis management plans.

[00:12:41] And finally, the remaining \$2.7 million of the \$7.9 million would be invested with eight additional regional school support officers and additional contracted services for security support at the elementary level, which were recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Safety Panel.

[00:13:04] Finally, also included are three technical security maintenance positions to support a halo restroom technology infrastructure, also known as vape detectors, which we have been piloting in our

secondary schools. As you're absorbing this information and may have questions, with us tonight is Mr. John Clark, our Director of Safety and Security, who can provide additional context to address any questions you may have about this part of our superintendent's estimate of needs for next year.

[00:13:36] And with that, our presentation is complete. So, thank you all very much. Thank you, Mr. Smith and Dr. Bergen. Board members, do you have any questions?

[00:13:54] Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for the presentation. I was wondering, in terms of the safety, if you could just let me know. In terms of some of this software, and I'm really glad to see these changes, by the way.

[00:14:10] I think they're really important, and I support that. Would that go through, like, an RFP to find a vendor? Like, what's the process once that money is procured through the operations budget? Absolutely. We have been looking at the software for the AI on, but we've not made a purchase.

[00:14:32] If this Sion, if this recommended purchase passes through in the budget, we would then go out for RFP. Okay. And what would the timeline be in terms of, you know, start to finish estimated to be able to get this up and running in our schools? Which aspect, on the AI and the security cameras?

[00:14:50] Yeah, any of it, actually. Well, that may be a different answer for each of these aspects. So, Mr. Clark, do you have a microphone with you? Yes, sir. Good evening, everyone. I can answer that question. So, yes, we hope to have all of these up and running by the start of the next school year.

[00:15:09] Okay, that's great. I appreciate that. Thank you. Yes, Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the presentation. I am also interested in this camera analytics piece, and I'm wondering if I understand we would have to go through the RFP process, but from a high level, could you tell us what capabilities you're hoping to identify using the artificial intelligence?

[00:15:38] Sure. I'm going to defer to Mr. Clark since he is leading this project. Yes. So basically, to reiterate, this is software that would sit on top of our existing camera system.

[00:15:54] And it uses artificial intelligence to detect things like firearms, fights in progress, trespassers, people that have fallen down. There's a lot of other features. Those are the big ones. And what it does is once it detects those, it sends alerts to key staff members.

[00:16:16] So the admin team, SSOs, SROs, our SOC, the 911 dispatch center, for example. Thank you. That's very helpful. Yes, Ms. LaBelle. I was wondering if you could give me a little clarification on what you mean by school support officers and contracted services to provide support at the elementary level.

[00:16:45] Would this be security officers at the door? Yes. So it's a combination of both. So we've requested eight regional school security officers. Those are LCPS employees, SSOs as we call them.

[00:17:04] And they would have about eight elementary schools each that they would be responsible for. And they would be checking in with those schools on a regular basis, performing all of the typical security functions, helping with threat assessment teams, drills, security training, administrative investigations, door checks.

[00:17:24] But most importantly, they would serve as trusted adults, role models, positive influences in kids' lives at the elementary level. And that's really what we focus on in terms of helping prevent violence in our schools. So those are the SSOs, those are the LCPS employees.

[00:17:43] The contracted security folks would come from Allied Universal. It's a contracted security vendor that we use. Those folks would be in place strictly to run visitor management at the elementary schools. And would allied be at all the elementary schools?

[00:18:02] Yes, they would. Okay, thank you very much, Mr. Clark. Any other questions? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. The panic buttons, I'd like to have more detail on the panic buttons as far as how many you would put in each school and where, if you can answer that for me.

[00:18:29] And I assume this would alert the authorities if something is happening. I assume every classroom, I don't know. If you could just go through that with us, I'd appreciate it. Yeah, so these are actually body-worn panic buttons.

[00:18:45] So there's a couple different vendors out there. As Dr. Bergen described, we have not done the RFP for this yet. But generally speaking, what it entails is staff members wearing a badge with a button on the badge. and when they activate that button it sends a message again to key staff members saying there's a problem and depending on how many times they hit the button it could tell us there's a minor problem or a major problem and then they would get the appropriate response based on that. Mr.

[00:19:20] Clark could you explain a little bit more about the I think it was the last school shooting and the the actual panic button that was useful in that situation yes i believe you're referring to the georgia shooting last fall and they used a company called centegix and their staff members did have these body worn panic buttons and what happens again is once they activate the button it geolocates uh where the activation took place and it sends resources to that area now it doesn't say

[00:19:57] specifically what is happening. There's no two-way communication. It just tells everyone something serious is happening and they send resources accordingly. I think my recollection was that it increased, that it helped with the time that the people could get help. Is that correct? That was what I heard in the news. That is correct. That is what local law enforcement stated as well as the school system. And that is one of the reasons why we were looking into it?

[00:20:31] That's correct. It would be another layer of security here in LCPS. It would not be the be-all and end-all, but it would add another significant layer of security. Thank you. Any other? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths.

[00:20:47] I might be getting away a little bit from the IT piece, but it's been shared with me something called wrapping, Mr. Clark, where there are open windows and you can wrap the windows so you can't see on the inside.

[00:21:04] Is that something else we're considering? I know we have it, I think, in the front on some schools, but there are some areas that might need more of this wrapping. Are you familiar with that? I am. We do evaluate wrapping on a case-by-case basis.

[00:21:22] More importantly, we have strategically glazed different areas of glass throughout the county to make them resistant to shattering and make them bullet-resistant, breaking-resistant, and that is the key initiative that we're focused on.

[00:21:45] Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Is that something that might be in the budget regarding security, the cost for that? I think a lot of the schools have something in the front, but there are some windows and some schools that need it. Are we accounting for that? It's actually in future CIP budgets.

[00:22:05] Future? You mean not this coming year? So we do have some money for this year, but not enough to do everything we want to do. So there are out years in that budget proposal. Thank you. Dr. Rasheed.

[00:22:21] Thank you for the presentation. Mr. Clark, I just had a question about sensitivity of the button and students, I guess you could say maybe special needs students, any type of student that has repetitive behavior of just, I don't know, maybe perhaps touching this button, how accessible it is, how sensitive it is, and about false alarms.

[00:22:43] Yes, so that's a great question. The button does take some work to depress, so it's not too easily activated accidentally. You would have to purposely press the button, and you have to press it, generally speaking, a certain number of times to generate an alert.

[00:23:05] So just pressing it one time accidentally or even twice typically will not generate an alert. You would have to press it multiple times. So a follow-up question. So let's, I have a relative who has autism. So that repetitive behavior is a big deal. So you mentioned, you know, you've got to press it a couple of times. So if you press this button a couple of times, I don't know if there's been some context or thought about students that have that issue. Yes. And again, these are body worn. So these would be worn around or on the person, the staff member, just like our current

[00:23:43] LCPS badges so in theory they are better protected than something that is just built into a wall or a desk. Yes Ms. Chernoff. I'm pivoting a little bit away from the badges so I don't know if you wanted to is that closed out? I just wanted to make I wanted to circle back to the SSOs do we I guess I misunderstood Ms. LaBelle's question do we currently have SSOs at every elementary school or these eight positions will achieve that?

[00:24:17] I'm sorry, I need the clarification. So we do not have SSOs permanently stationed at any elementary schools. Every SSO has a subset of elementary schools they are responsible for. But these eight SSOs would go out there and be that regular presence in their eight elementary schools.

[00:24:38] Okay, and that's different than the allied security that are sitting at the front desk at all of our elementary schools. That is correct. Our SSOs are fully certified by the state of Virginia, and they perform all of those security functions that I described versus the Allied Contracted Guard, which just runs visitor management.

[00:24:58] Okay, thank you for that clarification. I had those confused. Additionally, I think in the blue ribbon panel, and this might be a better question for Dr. Spence, but it said SSOs or SROs. Is there a reason we decided to go with SSOs instead of SROs in elementary?

[00:25:15] floaters yes ma'am I think as I mentioned at that time when I excuse me when I brought the blue ribbon panel recommendations forward and said that we weren't recommending SROs at that time that we felt it would be important to investigate some of the other options that are within our control and also really try to understand from the board and our community whether or not SROs at every one of our elementary schools so an additional 54 SROs would be the best investment of their time in our in our our time thank you and then last

[00:25:51] question our SSOs that are employed by LCPS are they are not armed is that correct that is correct thank you any other questions board members yes Mrs.

[00:26:09] Griffiths as far as allied security goes I'm not quite sure if they're armed in some of the schools I can't remember you might have mentioned it before also how long is their contract for? Did we sign a contract with Ally recently? Do we have a recent contract?

[00:26:28] When is that up? We do a yearly contract with Ally, so it's up every spring, and the Ally guards that are based in the schools are unarmed. Are you through? Yeah. I'm just curious to know, do we have any armed security guards in any of the schools? I feel like we would need that if the Ally are not armed and SSOs are not armed. Can you shed some light on that? So we obviously have armed

[00:27:08] SROs in every high school and middle school, and we do not have an armed presence in elementary schools. I have a couple of questions about the SSOs. Could you say a little bit more? I'm hoping they are special education trained. Is that true? You're speaking about our SSOs, correct? Yes, sir.

[00:27:37] Yes, they do get briefings in special ed, yes. And then when you were talking about investigations in elementary schools, could you say a little bit more about that? I was referring to administrative investigations. So, for example, if a threat is made conducting that investigation, if a student is caught with contraband, helping administration conduct those investigations.

[00:28:00] Thank you. The other thing that I was wondering is for the panic buttons that geolocate, do we have the bandwidth to support that? So it's an infrastructure that typically the vendor comes in and builds out for us.

[00:28:18] So they would be supplying, quote, the new infrastructure to support those activations. Thank you. And then my last question, I know we had talked at some point about the potential for, and I don't know if this has already been implemented or not, but metal detectors at football games and things like that?

[00:28:38] That's correct. We are in the process of procuring metal detectors, and we do plan to spot check football games and other significant events starting next year. Thank you, Mr. Clark. Any other questions, school board members?

[00:28:59] Thank you. Oh, Ms. LaBelle, one more, and then we'll move to the next one. Mr. Clark, are the metal detectors the portable kind, the stands that you can move from place to place? yes thank you okay thank you so much for your presentation um and we will and for your time um we will move on to 3.02 staffing standards which will be presented by miss sharon willoughby

[00:29:33] our chief financial officer and mr casey jones director of budget and financial analytics oh you know what i'm sorry we need to invite ann to the uh to be able to participate in this conversation she might have had some questions and I didn't see her so but we have to vote her in I have been thank you for reminding me Dr. Deans I've been notified that Vice Chair Donahue would like to remotely participate in tonight's school board meeting Vice Chair Donahue please state your

[00:30:09] location and whether this is a medical or personal matter thank you very much Madam Chair this is a medical request and i am in my home um i will now enter uh is anyone present with you at this location my spouse and my minor children are around um but i'm in my room with my dog and headphones um i will now entertain a motion that vice chair donahue's request to

[00:30:46] participate remotely, and this is for medical exemption? - So moved. - I have a motion by Dr. Deans, do I have a second? - Second. - I have a second by Ms. Chandler. The motion to grant Vice Chair

Donahue's request to participate remotely for medical exemption has been properly moved and seconded.

[00:31:06] Is there any discussion? Seeing none, we will go ahead and vote. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote.

[00:31:23] Clerk, please close and display your vote. And that motion passes. I unanimous leave with Mr. Astreffi and, of course, Ms. Donahue, absent for the vote. Welcome to the meeting, Vice Chair Donahue. Did you have any questions?

[00:31:39] Because I don't know that I saw your hand raised or anything for this last presentation. Not at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair. Okay. And are you able to do your disclosure? Yes. Would you like me to do that now, Madam Chair?

[00:31:56] Yes, please. Yes, please. Yes, thank you. 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, budget, and or health insurance and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:32:18] Specifically, my spouse, my minor children, and I 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.

[00:32:37] These subjects include thousands of employees while in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected, of which my spouse, my minor children, my sister-in-law, and I am included. I can and will participate fairly objectively in the public interest.

[00:32:53] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the school board for five years. Thank you, Vice Chair Donohue. Okay, now we will move on to our presentation. Ms. Willoughby. And actually, our budget director, Mr. Jones, will be taking the lead on this presentation.

[00:33:14] Good evening. This portion of today's presentation will review the LCPS concept and philosophy of staffing standards as a budgeting tool and discuss staffing standard enhancements that invest in our empowered students. LCPS first introduced staffing standards a decade ago during a time when enrollment was consistently increasing by close to 4% every year.

[00:33:37] These standards met several objectives during a time of rapid growth and have served the school division well as a key budgeting tool. Namely, when the school board adopts and approves the standards each year, they are providing a base level of equity across all schools, ensuring transparency in the budgeting process, and maintaining sufficient resources to meet and usually exceed state expectations and standards.

[00:33:58] Today, we have more than 200 staffing standards that account for roughly 12,200, or 86%, of the 14,137 FTE in this year's CN. And within the operating fund, 97% of those FTE are covered by a staffing standard, are school-based or school-facing.

[00:34:18] This extremely high concentration of school-based and school-facing staff demonstrates that the staffing standards are a collaborative budget tool focused on our schools. We have even adopted the slogan, Budget Calculates, Department Allocates, to drive home how this works.

[00:34:35] At the beginning of each budget development cycle, departments review their existing standards and, as necessary, advocate for enhancements that meet the needs of the school system. These enhancements can be driven by, among other things, emerging needs raised by our principals, analysis of how flexible staffing has been recently utilized, or changes in the state's standards of quality.

[00:34:55] The Budget and Financial Analytics Division calculates the FTE and cost impact of any proposed changes, and staff considers these revisions during the budget process. Ultimately, the final set of recommendations, both current standards and proposed enhancements, are included in the superintendent's estimate of needs, which the school board reviews, considers, and approves.

[00:35:17] Following budget adoption, staff from across the school system work collaboratively to prepare for the next school year. Departments closely monitor enrollment trends and school-based needs, assigning positions accordingly. The budget team tracks these position assignments within the ERP and maintains position control as required under School Board Policy 4120.

[00:35:39] The continuous needs assessment, position assignment, and position control occurs throughout the year. There are two types of standards that departments establish. The first is tier-based. Under this construct, a school qualifies for successive FTE when their enrollment reaches certain thresholds.

[00:35:58] In the example you see here, high schools gain an additional school counselor for every 250 students. Targeted average is the other grouping of staffing standards that LCPS uses with an example provided on this slide. Whereas one additional student can trigger additional FTE for a tiered staffing standard, the targeted average utilizes either a classroom average, school average, or district-wide average to allocate staffing.

[00:36:24] In this example, teachers are assigned to arrive at an average of 22 students per class. If a 23rd student arrived, another teacher would not be assigned. A cap has been placed so that if a class reaches 25 students, a teacher assistant is assigned with an overall ceiling of classes not to exceed 30 students.

[00:36:42] The district-wide average is reviewed during budget development to reach the target of an average of 22 students per class for all elementary schools. Some classes in schools will be higher and some lower. An example of how a school may be higher is due to space limitations where a school just may not have the capacity to add another classroom.

[00:37:01] Finally, I would like to quickly orient you to our staffing standards, particularly as we have added additional information new for FY26. Our standards consist of four key pieces of information. First is the LCPS staffing ratio.

[00:37:17] This shows the tiered or targeted average standard most recently approved by the school board. Second is the corresponding criteria established by the state commonly found in the Standards of Quality, or SOQ. This information is included to not only provide a side-by-side comparison to ensure compliance, but also highlight the degree to which the school system is committed to not just meeting the minimum, but truly focusing on delivering the quality education our community expects.

[00:37:46] Third is the justification of any enhancements to the staffing standards. This could include a change to an existing standard or the introduction of a new standard. It is this information that we'll be focusing on this evening. And finally, new this year, we introduced aspirational standards.

[00:38:03] These are forward-looking assessments of where we believe the division needs to be, even if it wasn't feasible in this year's budget. Generally, these aspirational standards are expected to be achievable within five years and signal where future SEANs may make additional investments.

[00:38:18] Of course, not having an aspirational standard today does not preclude enhancements in the future as our schools and students continue to evolve in their needs. To see how these staffing standards play out in the budget, as Dr. Spence highlighted on Tuesday, one of the first steps in building the budgets, calculating changes in staffing per the currently adopted staffing standards based on overall division-wide enrollment and the Hold Harmless provision.

[00:38:49] The Hold Harmless provision creates stability to tier-based staffing standards by looking at the next three years enrollment projections to see if enrollment would increase to maintain the position. Additionally, and new for FY26, the provision is also applied to standards that are based on division-wide ratios to recognize operational needs that may not be reflected solely on division-wide enrollment.

[00:39:10] With a projected reduction in enrollment of 1,409 students from this year's budget, plus six positions held harmless, we see the resulting reduction of 79.FTE. From a staffing standards perspective, we also consider separate enrollment patterns for students who require additional resources.

[00:39:27] Additional staffing per the standards for SPED and EL add an additional 282.6 FTE. Based on staffing standards alone, this is a net increase to the budget of 202.8 FTE. So even with an overall enrollment decline, the school board approved staffing standards recognize student need and provide resources accordingly.

[00:39:48] Other presentations during the budget process will focus on non-staffing standard investments that include the remainder of the 173.6 FTE shown on this slide. One of the sets of staffing standards that we are most excited to share with you is flexible staffing, which was first introduced for the FY25 budget and has several enhancements this year.

[00:40:11] This category of additional staffing includes three school-based supports. The first is flexible staffing. This category truly is flexible and is focused on school-based supports at the discretion of the chief academic officer and the chief of schools. Here we have two enhancements.

[00:40:28] The first is collapsing our contingency staffing, a numbers-based approach, into the overall flexible staffing pot. After seeing how successful flexible staffing was last year and recognizing that LCPS enrollment has stabilized, it just made sense to open up the numbers-based model meet more targeted student and school need.

[00:40:48] The second enhancement is an introduction of 32 FTE specifically to support the delivery of special education services. These FTE are at the discretion of the Department of Student Services and the Office of Special Education. The second category is differentiated staffing.

[00:41:04] This standard was first introduced in FY17 and has gone through small revisions over the years. New for FY26, we overhauled the standard to recognize that we have students affected by economic disadvantages at all of our schools and to ensure that more schools could receive support in addressing those unique needs.

[00:41:22] This overhaul allowed for the creation of an additional 25-point FTE to be used at principal's discretion. Moving to the next category, we have also expanded the allowed usage of position swaps. These

were new in FY25, primarily to allow principals to swap vacant teacher and teacher assistant positions to address capacity issues related to teacher shortages.

[00:41:45] We have monitored that program this year and believe that there are additional needs that can be met by freeing up resources, otherwise tied to vacant positions. This would only be for school-based positions. Overall, these programs combine to provide 223.6 FTE of discretionary support directly to our schools.

[00:42:07] Related to needs-based support, we also standardized the metric when considering and providing supports based on economically disadvantaged status within the staffing standards. Over the years, LCPS has used different indicators, including economically disadvantaged percentage from school profiles, Title I status, and community eligibility provision status, just to name a few.

[00:42:29] This fragmented approach created challenges to consistency, clarity, and timeliness. Instead, we are proposing to simplify all of this with a single indicator called economically disadvantaged percentage, which uses the economic disadvantaged data from school profiles and then weights it heavier using a multiple of 1.6 times, which is similar to the school division's approach when evaluating for Title I eligibility.

[00:42:54] Staffing standards affected by this change include reading teachers, family liaisons, and discretionary staffing. There were no FTE decreases caused by this change for reading teachers or family liaisons at either the school or division-wide levels. And for discretionary staffing, this resulted in a net increase of 25.8 FTE, as covered on the last slide.

[00:43:18] At the elementary school level, We have six staffing standards that are being revised, which we will cover on this slide and the next. The first two are for the teacher assistant and teacher at the kindergarten level, where the targeted average is proposed to move to one teacher and one TA per school per 22 students, with a maximum class size of 25 students.

[00:43:39] This increase would bring the targeted average class size in line with that of grades one through three, and afford additional FTE to avoid staffing at the class size limit. The next standard is the EL Kindergarten Teacher Standard, where we are proposing to add an additional four FTE that can be placed across the school division at the discretion of the Division of English Learners.

[00:44:00] These four FTE would be an incremental investment towards the first example of an aspirational staffing standard. As shown, the ultimate goal is to align the kindergarten and grade one through five standards at one FTE per school per 25 students at WIDA English proficiency levels one and two, and one FTE per school per 30 students at WIDA proficiency levels three through five.

[00:44:22] Finally, on this slide is the elementary school dean position where we are proposing to add six FTEs to be assigned at the discretion of the Division of Elementary and Charter Schools. These six truly are discretionary and will be used to address school-based needs in the 25 through 26 school year.

[00:44:37] Here we have a proposed enhancement for the reading teacher position, which is tied to the updated economically disadvantaged percentage metric discussed a few slides ago. While the standard may look like we increased the threshold, recall that we standardized around a single indicator that more heavily weights economically disadvantaged status using that 1.6 multiple.

[00:45:01] Because of this heavier weighting, it is an effective decrease to the threshold. We are also proposing an increase to the gifted education teacher standard at the elementary level to add an additional three discretionary FTE for assignment across the school system.

[00:45:17] This board has provided clear guidance that the elementary gifted education program is a priority, and these additional resources will enable additional flexibility and capacity as staff works with the school board to continue shaping this program for the future.

[00:45:33] At the middle school level, the reading teacher staffing standard would be similarly affected by the adoption of a standard metric for economically disadvantaged percentage, just as we discussed at the elementary level. We have three proposed enhancements for staffing standards aligned to our high schools.

[00:45:51] The first is to add an additional executive principal or director. While the staffing standard is discretionary, it is staff's intent to use this position as a school-facing executive principal that directly supports alternative programs including W.O. Robey, the North Star School, the Academies of Loudoun, and the Alternative Education Program.

[00:46:11] These important programs deserve focus, leadership, attention, and coordination as they provide unique and necessary learning environments for students that are not found elsewhere in the division. Next, we have the addition of five athletic trainers is an incremental investment towards achieving our aspirational standard of two athletic trainers per high school. This is a priority for the school board, the school system, and our students and their families, and we look forward to continued expansion. Finally, the reading teacher staffing standard would be similarly affected by the adoption of a standard metric for economically disadvantaged percentage as discussed at the elementary and middle school levels. For the academies of Loudoun, we are

[00:46:51] proposing a slight enhancement to the EL teacher standard to codify it as a 1.6 FTE. For several years, the existing standard at the academies has earned 1.5 FTE. However, high schools generally staff in 0.2 increments, and this has made the academy's EL position either difficult to fill or require the transfer of 0.1 FTE from elsewhere in the school division to fully utilize it.

[00:47:12] This proposed enhancement right-sizes this position. Staff is proposing an EL teacher enhancement at the North Star School that is similar to the academies, but to recognize a slightly different need. The current EL teacher standard for the North Star School follows the EL teacher standard for the 17 traditional high schools.

[00:47:32] After monitoring operations for several years, however, we have recognized that the lower program capacity at the North Star School just does not generate sufficient FTE to meet the needs of those students when using a standard that was created for the much larger high schools. The proposed enhancement to 1.6 FTE would ensure that sufficient support exists. Within the Department of teaching and learning, we are also proposing the addition of five discretionary division instructional coaches as an incremental investment based on a careful review of multiple years worth of staffing data. The demonstrated instructional facilitators and coaches are some of the most

[00:48:12] sought out positions when schools are using their discretionary staffing. This is also an investment in the school board's flexible staffing priority as it frees up existing discretionary FTE to be used for other needs. There are several proposed changes within the Department of Student Services.

[00:48:33] each addressing the delivery of special education services. First, we have an increase to four FTE per child find program for special education teachers and an increase to five FTE per child find program for speech language pathologists. These enhancements are necessary to address a planned increase in students who are served by the full-day STEP program in order to meet federally mandated timelines and remain in compliance with the law.

[00:48:58] These are two examples of the targeted division-wide average staffing standards we discussed on slide four. The SEAN proposes a change to the special education cross-categorical teacher and special education cross-categorical teacher assistant ratios, moving the targeted division-wide averages to one per 12 students for the teacher position and one per 15 students for teacher assistant positions. These are division-wide averages, recognizing that some schools may have higher ratios and some may have lower, based on individual student need and required IEP services at each school.

[00:49:38] These ratios are still significantly more generous than state requirements. Overall, this estimate of needs includes the addition of 65 new special education teachers, 179 special education teacher assistants, and 35 new flexible staffing FTE dedicated to special education.

[00:49:56] That's 279 new full-time positions that do not exist today. As discussed earlier this evening, safety and security is a key investment priority in the FY26C on.

[00:50:12] and the proposed change to the School Security Officer Standard codifies the need to have a dedicated SSO assigned to the Alternative Education Program. Looking forward to future budget years, the aspirational standard is to move towards four SSOs per high schools and two per middle school. The Department of Support Services is proposing two changes to their staffing standards.

[00:50:35] The first is the addition of an Administrative Assistant 2 to the list of allowable positions under the Distribution Center Staffing Standard. This standard works on a targeted division-wide average of one FTE per 2,200 gross square feet of warehouse space and allows the Department flexibility to allocate those FTE across a number of approved positions.

[00:50:55] This is a no-cost, no-FTE enhancement. Although, additionally, the Department is enhancing the maintenance worker staffing standard to 15.8 FTE per 1 million square feet. This change is part of the safety and security enhancements you heard earlier this evening and would generate the necessary FTE for the technical security technicians to support the body-worn panic button systems, Halo Project, and camera analytics.

[00:51:23] Finally, the Department of Business and Financial Services is proposing to remove its current staffing standard of one FTE per 1,200 students. This change does not affect the number of proposed positions in FY26, and indeed, the department proposes to remain flat compared to FY25.

[00:51:41] The change recognizes that the department's staffing requirements in the future will likely be tied to factors other than enrollment such as the number of employees or the size and complexity of the school system's procurement programs and that any additional FTE will need to be brought forward as investments to the school board in future budget years.

[00:51:59] In closing, the school board's adopted staffing standards are an important budget tool that provide a collaborative framework to provide necessary school-based and school-facing supports across the school system. The proposed enhancements this year reflect careful consideration of current needs with an eye towards our aspirational standards.

[00:52:17] We look forward to your consideration, and this concludes our overview of the staffing standards for the FY26 Superintendent's Estimate of Needs. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Jones.

[00:52:34] Board members, do you have any questions? Dr. Deans. I was trying to, as I was reading, differentiate between the flexible staffing and the discretionary.

[00:52:53] Could you share some clarity? Yes, ma'am. So the flexible staffing are held at the division-wide level as flexible need that rises up from our principals and level directors, and those are assigned out to schools under the discretion of our chief academic officer and the chief of schools.

[00:53:15] The differentiated staffing are calculated on a per-school level basis based on economically disadvantaged percentage of students, and that flexibility is assigned directly to the principal and those, uh, those FTE are assigned to that school for that year. Okay. And you said that you, when you were talking about discretionary, you were saying elementary and charter schools.

[00:53:39] Oh, uh, um, did you mean that some of the staff would be shared with the charter schools? Uh, no, ma'am. That's the name of the office, the, uh, elementary education office. Oh, okay. That's okay but not apologize schools no man okay okay um the FY 26 budget in looking at you gave like five years it's the lowest of the five years is there a

[00:54:15] conversation or explanation to why that projection is lowest could you provide us maybe an example of what you're describing on page 65 you gave in the budget book I'm sorry page 65 page 65 65 you talked about the percentages of

[00:54:51] totals and you have FY 22 through 26 and 26 is the lowest is it because we sort of rights right at the ship last year that the projections for next year or not as great.

[00:55:10] I apologize. Are you saying 6-5 or 1-6-5? Page 6-5. 6-5. So those percentages on page 65 are related to the revenues.

[00:55:33] And so it's showing the distribution of our funding by funding source. So each year's budget is represented or broken out by these different funding sources.

[00:55:49] and it's showing the shift of the movement between those funding sources for each fiscal year. Okay. And on page 71, we talked about, you know, the different funding sources.

[00:56:09] Where is the funding that comes from the data centers represented on page 71? That would be part of the county transfer. Okay. And is that more than before?

[00:56:27] Yes. So we are... Previous years? Yes, we are asking the county in this Sion for \$123.4 and the budget guidance from the county based on their revenue projections from all their different tax streams was our 60% would be \$100.4.

[00:56:48] And so we're just asking for \$23 million on top of that. Okay, thank you. We have about three more minutes. Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you.

[00:57:04] That was a lot of information, so I'm going to need some time to process some of it. But I was just wondering if you could go back to slide 7 and sort of walk us through that a little bit more slowly. And really, I want to approach this with the lens. I saw in the budget book in the appendix, starting on page 319, I saw a lot of removal of positions that were related to the staffing standard.

[00:57:30] And I'm guessing that's that 79.8 that I'm getting that answer here. But my question really revolves sort of around how this is going to operationalize. I see that we have the flexible staffing and the increase of other staffing positions.

[00:57:45] But in terms of licensures and different things that people have, I guess I'm kind of concerned about what the de-staffing would look like if we're losing positions. Are we going to make up every single one of those specific licensed positions in the flexible staffing?

[00:58:02] So if you could just elaborate on that. just make it make sense for me no absolutely each year as part of the budget process anytime we encounter a situation where we are reducing positions we very closely work with human resources and talent development to look at the attrition rates and and just to make sure that we are would not be in a de-staff position so that 79.8 net reduction is across a variety of positions and based on our analysis and work, again, with HRTD, we are confident that we will not have a de-staff situation,

[00:58:38] that the normal attrition will be more than sufficient to account for the reduction. Okay, because that's a lot of positions. So the additional positions then are meant to be more needs-based than numbers-based, and that's where the discretionary piece comes in.

[00:58:58] So that leads to my next question about deans. so there's six um discretionary dean positions is that that's only at the elementary level correct okay and do we know how many schools currently have deans i'm putting you on the spot i didn't ask ahead i'll add it to the packet um and just thinking about if that's going to right size us how close are we i mean we have a lot of elementary schools so i don't think it'll probably get us there but curious about those numbers as well and how that will be decided thank you we

[00:59:32] have 30 30 and we have 61 in elementary schools correct so we're working our way up right and we'll address the other aspects of your question in the packet that'd be great thank you so much i have one question i saw that you guys had for high schools um let's see let me see if i can see the remember the slide here um it was for principals or assistant principals um anyway

[01:00:10] how do we make up that kind of thing for middle schools that are like Willard that are just as big as a high school are we even thinking about assist more assistant principals or anything for someone that's something that's so large yes we have had multiple discussions regarding the size of schools as it relates to the responsibilities and I think what would be best is recognizing some of the complexities that will take this down as a written question

[01:00:43] and that i'll ask my friends in school leadership to help us respond to that question because i know it's just getting bigger so okay thank you anybody else yes mrs griffiths thank you madam chair um i have a couple questions but um first one what exactly is an instructional coach can you explain that good evening mrs griffiths i can take that oh i'm a little loud sorry um an

[01:01:21] instructional coach really comes out of the mentoring and coaching program. They help support first-year teachers and struggling teachers that may go on mid-year support. Thank you.

[01:01:40] And also I had a question. So I think 94.2% of school-based facing employees versus 5.8% non-school-based employees why are technical security technicians included in the school-based when they don't work directly with the students what is the total number of school-based versus non-school-based rather than try to rattle some numbers off the dice i would feel more comfortable we'll take that down as a

written question so we can make sure we get you the accurate information did you want me to email it to you that'd be great i'll take that as well all right thank you

[01:02:19] And that's a good reminder. Any questions that we aren't able to do tonight, we'll please email Ms. Willoughby and then she will direct with Dr. Bergen-Ciseed, please. Would that be good? Okay.

[01:02:36] Thank you so much for your presentation. It is a lot, and I'm sure that you're going to get some emails soon. So thank you very much for your thoughtful presentation. and um at this point i think we will recess for dinner and um reconvene around i guess six so

[01:02:56] five ish okay the board is now in recess okay the board is back from recess and we will now

[01:34:26] move on to investing in our exemplary staff presented by miss lisa boland our chief human Resources Office. Oh, forgot. I just remembered. Mr. Streffi, would you please read your disclosure?

[01:34:42] 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.

[01:35:02] 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 and 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.

[01:35:20] Thank you, Mr. Straffi. Now we will move on to item 5.01, investing in our exemplary staff, presented by Ms. Lisa Boland, our chief human resources officer, and Ms. Sharon Willoughby, our chief financial officer. Thank you.

[01:35:39] During Dr. Spence's FY26CON presentation, he shared information about the various investment categories, and this evening, Ms. Boland and I will share information about investing in our most valuable asset, our exemplary staff.

[01:35:59] The FY26CON continues its long track record of investing in salaries to offer a competitive salary package to help attract and retain the best employees. I'm sure you're very familiar with our famous little dollar bill that represents the breakdown of the budget into the three spending categories of personnel operations and maintenance and capital outlay. For FY26, personnel costs encompass 90% of the school operating fund budget, so any changes to salary or benefits will very easily impact the overall budget, and you will see that occur for

[01:36:35] FY26. Remember that the entire FY26 Seon budget increase is 7.2 percent and that salary and benefit changes represent 75 percent of that increase. Recognizing how compensation can truly drive budget preparation, we asked the school board for direction in building the FY26 budget early in the budget process. Specifically, we asked how you wanted us to invest funding, to invest it evenly between compensation and other investments or to skew funding more towards one or the other.

[01:37:13] The consensus of the school board was to invest slightly more towards compensation, and the FY26-CION achieves this by investing 60% of available funding towards compensation items. Earlier, I mentioned the 7.2% budget increase and how salaries and benefits represented 75% of that increase.

[01:37:39] So let's break some of that down and focus on the salaries and pay items. First, the FY26 SEON includes an annual step increase for all eligible employees averaging 2.5%. Also included are one-time payments to eligible employees on the top step of their salary scale that represents 1% of the FY26 annual salary.

[01:38:03] This item alone cost \$26 million, and if we did nothing else to the budget, would increase the FY25 base budget by 1.4%. Also included is a \$55.4 million investment to provide a 4% COLA to salary scales B and C, and also a 4% average strategic scale adjustment for scale A.

[01:38:27] So I also want to clarify what we mean by 4% COLA for scales B and C, which are universal and auxiliary scale. When we say a 4% COLA, that means we apply 4% evenly to every salary listed on every lane and step of those two scales.

[01:38:45] When we talk about a 4% average strategic scale adjustment for the teacher scale, A, what we mean there is not an even distribution of a pay increase, rather it's a targeted increase to address aspects of the scale where we are less competitive with the market average.

[01:39:10] The FY26 also invests in new stipends, hourly banded rate changes, and some strategic position changes that we will go into more detail later in this presentation. These important investments increase the FY25 base budget by 5.4%.

[01:39:26] So again, if we did nothing else and just did the items on this slide, that would increase the budget 5.4. This chart compares historical teacher compensation against inflation going back to fiscal '17.

[01:39:44] The individual bars along the bottom represent each year's teacher average salary increase in orange, and then that year's CPI inflation index in blue. While inflation superseded pay increases during the pandemic era, it's important to note that LCPS and the school board was committed to employee compensation and continued to provide for step increases at a minimum when many of our neighbors did not.

[01:40:07] The line chart shows this information compounded with the gray line representing the compounded inflation, and the yellow line representing the compounded teacher salary increases. As you can see, the investment in teacher pay has surpassed inflation during this time period and illustrates the importance of employee pay over the years.

[01:40:29] A common question that comes up is about the average increases and the difference in pay increases. This slide shows the minimum, average, and maximum pay increase percentage and annual increase amount for each salary scale.

[01:40:45] The percentage and pay change listed for minimum, average, and maximum are not attributable to the same position. So, for example, on scale A, the minimum pay increase percentage for an employee moving from their current step on the current FY25 scale to the next step on the improved FY26 scale is 4.83% and is for an employee currently on the doctor lane in step 5.

[01:41:13] Whereas the \$3,509 amount that is listed below this percentage is for an employee currently on the bachelor and technical license lane in step two. So just really want to highlight that these don't necessarily represent the same position, but do highlight the minimum average and maximum percentages and pay differences.

[01:41:34] It's also important to remember that pay is also relative. So the same percentage increase can result in different pay amounts, of course. Further, the structure of the scales results in various percentages for step increases. The goal of the scales continues to be to have more consistent step increases and is part of what the consultant is reviewing.

[01:41:54] Finally, as shared earlier, the strategic scale adjustment for scale A is focused on the mid-career steps. That's where we are targeting those investments and adjustments, which would naturally bring down the maximum pay increase provided.

[01:42:09] This slide depicts the master lane of scale A, the teacher scale for LCPS and the market. LCPS's FY25 lane is shown in blue. And when compared to the green dotted line that represents the market average, you can see how LCPS falls below the market average.

[01:42:31] In red, you see the FY26 Cian master lane and the improvement made with the targeted adjustment. This highlights the smaller percentage adjustment at the beginning and end, and then the larger adjustments in the middle.

[01:42:46] Now, of course, our neighbors will likely make adjustments to their own salary scale, so the market average may increase, but hopefully not too dramatically. Here's another comparison to our neighbors as depicted in the market average.

[01:43:07] Per the Wavy Guide, three data points are reported for teacher salaries. Bachelor's Step 1, where in this current year we rank second, which is the first box. Previously, we had led the region for multiple years, but we had slipped behind, and we're only behind though by four dollars just to show how tight and competitive and how closely our neighbors and ourselves look at pay scales from year to year to try to achieve that number one rank. The middle box is the master step one where we are currently fourth and then finally the last box represents the master middle step where we are currently ranked third and have been

[01:43:44] for the last couple of years. I'll now turn it over to Ms. Bolin to share information about other important compensation items. Thank you, Ms. Willoughby. This slide provides an update on the ongoing comprehensive compensation study reaffirming LCPS's commitment to ensuring our compensation structure remains competitive, equitable, and aligned with market standards. An important component of this study is the development of a compensation philosophy for LCPS, which remains

[01:44:19] in progress. This foundational work will help guide decisions about pay structures and market competitiveness moving forward. LCPS is continuing its partnership with Segal, a trusted third-party consulting firm to conduct this multi-phase study.

[01:44:35] Their independent and expert analysis is critical to achieving our goals. Significant progress has been made. Phase 1, focusing on Salary Scale A, formerly the Teacher Salary Scale, Segal has completed the review and developed recommendations.

[01:44:51] Currently staff is working with Segal to review these recommendations to ensure a thorough understanding, and these recommendations will be shared with the school board in the spring for consideration and potential inclusion in the fiscal year 27 budget. Additionally, phase two work is currently underway and focusing on non-teaching positions within salary scales B and C. Recommendations will be developed and shared with the school board in the fall to allow for potential inclusion in the fiscal year 27 budget. Phase three will focus on reviewing

[01:45:27] salary scales B and C as a whole rather than individual positions and recommendations from this phase will be shared with the School Board in the spring of 2026 for potential inclusion in the fiscal year 28 budget. LCPS remains dedicated to leveraging this study to support our employees and ensure our division continues to attract and retain top talent. Updates on this work will inform our budget development process and help us achieve the goals of the one LCPS strategic plan.

[01:46:03] In addition to salaries, I wanted to highlight two additional areas where recommended changes to compensation often occur. The first area is stipends. And this slide highlights seven new stipends for fiscal year '26. These stipends support additional roles in the Department of Student Services and the Department of Teaching and Learning.

[01:46:24] And I'm going to turn it over for just a second to Ms. Richardson and Mr. Slevin to provide more details about their specific stipends. - Thank you, Mrs. Bolin. I'll start first with the lead special education teacher at the elementary school.

[01:46:43] These leads are responsible for overseeing the implementation of individualized education plans, coordinating with teachers and parents, and ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations. Their leadership responsibilities extend beyond their contractual duties as they provide guidance and support to special education teachers at their assigned buildings.

[01:47:08] They facilitate professional development on a monthly basis, and they collaborate with their administration to improve special education services at both the division level and school level. Currently, in LCPS, our middle and high school leads for special education have been receiving stipends, so we are extremely excited to be able to support our lead elementary teachers with this stipend.

[01:47:32] So your kind consideration is greatly appreciated. The next item is out of the Department of Student Services as well. The school-based MANT trainers play a crucial role in maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment.

[01:47:49] They are responsible for training staff at the building level in the MANT system, which focuses on preventing and managing challenging behaviors through positive behavior support and de-escalation techniques. These trainers' leadership responsibilities include conducting regular training sessions with their school-based staff, providing ongoing support to staff, and ensuring that the MANT principles are consistently applied across the school setting.

[01:48:20] At the division level, they collaborate with the Department of Student Services to develop and implement behavior management strategies, making their role essential for promoting a positive school climate. and now I'll hand it over to Mr. Slevin. Thank you Ms. Richardson. The Department of Teaching and Learning has a number of stipends on this table. I'll start with the addition of an elementary fine arts stipend. This stipend is a result of discussions in our curriculum instruction committee about potential supports for fine arts in our elementary schools. This stipend would recognize

[01:48:59] that we while we do have robust fine arts programs in our elementary schools we do want to take some steps to ensure sure that principals have the ability to stand up some form of a fine arts after-school program whether it be in an after-school theater program and after school choral program or some kind of visual visual arts program so the stipend is meant to be a flexible fine arts stipend for principals to either compensate print teachers that may be volunteering right now or to recruit a staff member to offer this opportunity for their students in their school the last three stipends are related to our IB

[01:49:36] programs. There are only two of each of these stipends, one each at Heritage and Latin Valley High School. As you know, we were authorized to fully offer IB courses this school year, and with that comes a number of responsibilities at the school level above and beyond that of the teacher, such as coordinating the activities related to the creativity or service or activity requirement of an IB diploma. The extended essay takes additional coaching for students in terms of making sure that they meet the requirements of that essay and the theory of knowledge coordinator

[01:50:12] supporting our teachers. So there's a staff member at each of those schools that are receiving additional compensation for the work that comes with the IB program at Latin Valley High School and Heritage High School. Thank you both for that additional clarification. And before I move on, I'd like to proactively address a question that was raised previously about how stipends are calculated. So LCPS has a wide range of stipends, most of which have been in place for many years.

[01:50:45] Here's how stipend amounts and processes have evolved. We've conducted market reviews. In fiscal year 19, a market review was conducted for co-curricular stipends and in fiscal year 20 for athletic stipends. That was the first time that those stipends had been reviewed against the market. Adjustments were made to align with findings from these reviews. Since then, some stipend increases have occurred as fixed adjustments as part of the annual budget process.

[01:51:15] In addition, new stipends have also been added. When new stipends are requested, HRTD conducts an internal equity review to align them with existing stipends. Those requests come at the department level. Future plans for the structure are to create more consistency.

[01:51:37] We are currently developing a system with objective criteria to evaluate both eligibility for stipends and the stipend amounts. This will include publishing job descriptions or summaries for stipend-supported roles. Given the number of stipends and their budgetary impact, this may need to be implemented in phases. As a side note, in 2021, our team did complete a tiered stipend review in response to a previous board member's request. This approach sought to establish consistency by creating criteria for tiering stipends in co-curricular and athletic

[01:52:16] programs within one system. In November of 2021, proposed factors for tiering were identified and presented at the CNI committee. However, the cost of implementing a tiered system proved to be outside the realm of budget possibilities at that time.

[01:52:33] In February of 2022, a detailed presentation on the history and status of the stipend review process was shared at an HRTD committee and both of those presentations are available if anyone is interested in them as well. From 2022 to the present, factors have been refined each year and based on department input. And we are currently using these insights to develop a draft framework for fiscal year 27.

[01:53:00] This work reflects LCPS's ongoing commitment to ensuring equity, transparency, and consistency in how stipends are structured and awarded. Okay, each year, a market review of hourly part-time bandit rates is conducted to ensure internal equity and external competitiveness.

[01:53:27] For fiscal year 26, several changes were included in the SEAN, as listed in the first box. Additionally, we have identified several new roles to be placed on the hourly bandit rates chart. To clarify, new roles captured in this chart do not necessarily indicate positions that are entirely new to LCPS.

[01:53:47] Instead, this may reflect roles that previously existed but were not explicitly listed on the bandit rates chart. Including these roles now ensures consistency, transparency, and overall awareness.

All other job titles and pay bands are recommended to remain at their current rates.

[01:54:06] For additional details, including the rates and representative job titles, please refer to pages 287 of the budget book. As part of the budget process, HRTD works with the budget team to review position changes requested by departments.

[01:54:26] The position changes listed on the slide are included in the fiscal year 2016 and I'll provide a high-level description of each of these changes with more detail to be shared in the upcoming investment in students presentation. The first item is part-time pay for new teachers attending the beginning teacher institute. While this may appear as a new investment under HRTD, it is not an entirely new budget request. Historically, the funding for this initiative has been spread across multiple departments. However, since HRTD is now responsible for the

[01:55:01] organization and execution of BTI, the Beginning Teachers Institute, it is both logical and efficient to consolidate the funding under one department for streamlined oversight and accountability. This change will ensure more effective budget management and simplify tracking of funds while continuing to support the critical onboarding of new educators. The next four position changes are related to the length of contract adjustments. The first one is extending the contracts of three MATA teachers, HVAC, welding, and farm tech. This will allow sufficient

[01:55:39] time for these educators to set up and prepare their specialized classes. The next one is changing the financial technician and registrar roles to 12-month positions, which aligns them with similar positions at the high school level, reflecting the year-round work these roles require. The contract change for gifted resource teachers similarly aligns with the structure and work of other existing positions. Lastly are position reclassifications. The first investment converts

[01:56:14] 50 bus driver positions level 8 to new ranger positions level 9. The ranger position assumes additional responsibilities from what is expected of a regular route driver. In addition to driving assigned routes they will assist and support lead drivers in managing route assignments to include serving as substitute drivers for absences they also serve as mentors for less experienced drivers essential personnel when responding to inclement weather events and provide assistance in responding

[01:56:48] to parent complaints in a recent reorganization in the department of teaching and learning This position was moved from, we're now at three instructional facilitators to specialists.

[01:57:05] Sorry, I apologize. And in a recent organization in the Department of Teaching and Learning, this position was moved from an instructional facilitator, professional learning, to instructional facilitator, professional learning, and school support.

[01:57:21] The job responsibilities have increased as a result of the reorganization and are now more aligned with the work of a specialist than an instructional facilitator. The reclassification of an assistant division counsel position to the deputy division counsel position is a strategic approach that will bolster LCPS's in-house legal support framework.

[01:57:47] This reclassification will ensure that there is a primary backup and designee to the division Council to provide continuity of leadership and decision-making in the absent of Division Council. This reclassification will enhance the operational efficiency within the Division Council's office by allowing for a more coordinated and efficient distribution and management of legal tasks.

[01:58:12] The Athletics Program Assistant position is changing to an Administrative Assistant 3 position to align with the roles and responsibilities of the position. This position has evolved to meet the increasing demands of additional programming to include the middle school intramural programs, VHSL waiver inquiries, and provide support for 27 direct reports.

[01:58:36] Reclassifying this position will ensure that the role is adequately recognized and supported as it supports a multi-million dollar budget. Reclassification from distance learning specialist to assistant principal will support the expectations for staff and learning outcomes for students.

[01:58:56] The learning and associated local and state assessments aligned with the courses support home, elementary, middle, and high school accreditation data. The last bullet for student assistance specialist to coordinator reclassification has been Strzok, as you can see, as funding was identified this fiscal year and moved forward to change these positions this year.

[01:59:19] Due to timing, the change is still in the budget and will be the first technical change to remove this request and will free up \$61,065 for possible reallocation when the school board adopts the budget on February 4th.

[01:59:35] And I will turn it back over to Ms. Willoughby to start our benefits side of the presentation. So starting with our health self-insurance fund, this fund should maintain at least a two-month claims expense reserve per policy and best practice.

[02:00:01] This line chart shows the actual number of months reserve we had in fund balance going back to fiscal 18 and the projected fund balance reserve going forward. In fiscal 18 and 19, we had significant reserves in the fund balance, but you can see the reserves being drawn down based on declining revenues, which is from employee and employer paid premiums.

[02:00:23] During this time, we hired less new employees and also began to experience more vacancies, which all impact the participation in the plan and incoming revenue. At the same time, we also began to see an uptick in claims costs, especially in the pharmacy area.

[02:00:42] At the end of last fiscal year, we transferred \$13.1 million from the school operating fund's FY24 fund balance into the health self-insurance fund to help shore up the fund. This action achieved a fund balance reserve representing 1.1 months of claims expenses you see on the chart.

[02:01:05] For this fiscal year, 2025, we expect another year-end funds transfer, but also increases in revenues from premiums combined with some cost mitigation strategies to improve our projected year-end fund balance so that we return to having a minimum two-month reserve.

[02:01:21] This chart outlines the historical premium increases resulting from increased claims costs and to maintain the financial stability of the self-insurance fund. For FY26, the FY26 SEON includes a 12% premium increase for the employee and the employer's share of the premium.

[02:01:46] Based on our analysis, our future year projections also signal the expectation that we will continue increasing premiums. I'll now turn it back over to Ms. Boland to share information about the administration of the health plan and steps being taken to help reduce expenses. This chart provides an overview of the three health plans LCPS offers, illustrating how employees select a plan based on their health and financial needs, as well as their comfort and risk and cost sharing.

[02:02:22] The OAP high plan, formerly known as the point of service plan, this option has higher premiums, but shifts a greater share of cost to the employer. The high deductible plan has the lowest premiums, but shifts more costs to the employee and includes benefits like a health savings account, which helps offset costs and can also be leveraged as a retirement planning tool.

[02:02:51] The Open Access Plan, or OAP, is positioned between the other two options, and this plan shares costs between the employer and employee and remains the most popular choice, with over half of our employees selecting it.

[02:03:07] The teal line represents the OAP high plan, and its downward trend reflects decreasing participation, which is a favorable outcome for plan management. The yellow line represents the high deductible plan, showing moderate increases in participation, which aligns with employees taking advantage of its cost-saving benefits.

[02:03:30] Overall, the trends displayed demonstrate a healthy and balanced distribution of employees across the available plans, supporting the financial management and sustainability of the self-insurance fund.

[02:03:46] This slide highlights the proposed plan changes for health insurance for active employees and retirees, reflecting our commitment to balancing the financial sustainability of our health plans and the need to provide competitive high-quality coverage for LCPS employees.

[02:04:03] For active employees, the proposed changes include a 12% increase in health insurance premiums, which would be effective January 1, 2025. Adjustments to the deductible and out-of-pocket maximums with a \$150 increase in deductibles across all plans and a \$500 increase in out-of-pocket maximums. An increase in LCPS contributions to health savings accounts by \$100 for employee-only

[02:04:37] coverage and \$200 for plans covering employees and dependents. For pre-65-year-old retirees, changes will align with those for active employees, ensuring consistency in coverage and plan structure. For post-65 retirees, there will be a shift to offering a retiree health reimbursement account plan exclusively for those turning 65 after July 1, 2026. Current retirees can choose

[02:05:11] to remain on the Medicare Advantage plan or transition to the retiree health reimbursement account option. Additionally, a pharmacy RFP is currently out for solicitation as we actively explore the market for a more competitive plan. This step reflects our commitment to managing costs while maintaining or enhancing the value of our benefits. These proposed changes aim to ensure the long-term financial health of our self-insurance fund while continuing to provide

[02:05:44] comprehensive health benefits to our employees and retirees. Now, I know we all took a deep breath when we saw the 12%, so let me provide some clarification. While the incline in premium costs appears steep, it's important to put this into perspective by highlighting the actual dollar amounts associated with the increase. The proposed 12% rate increase effective January 2025 translates to relatively modest increases for employees per paycheck. These range from as

[02:06:22] little as one penny to a maximum of \$40.67 per paycheck for the OAP high family plan. It's also worth noting that LCPS is not alone in facing rising health care costs. This is a challenge being experienced across Northern Virginia school divisions. Despite these pressures, LCPS continues to offer a highly competitive and robust health plan. We remain committed to working diligently to ensure our health benefits remain both attractive and sustainable for our employees.

[02:06:58] And I will turn it over to Ms. Willoughby one more time to help me further explain. So each year, as part of the budget process, we perform this analysis to check if the health premium increases are surpassing the pay increases.

[02:07:15] For FY26, the lowest annual pay increase is 7.1% for an employee moving from the universal scale level one, step one, to step two of the COLA-improved FY26 scale. This annual amount of the pay increase is \$2,500.

[02:07:33] If that employee also was on our costliest OAP high family plan, the 12% annual premium increase would be \$1,106. So the employee still sees a net positive change to their paycheck.

[02:07:51] So basically we're looking for the lowest pay increase, pairing it with the highest premium to ensure that all our employees are not negatively impacted. This may not always hold true in future budgets, but it is something that we strive for every year, and I'm pleased to present that we are able to achieve that this year.

[02:08:11] A common complaint, though, that we hear that is untrue is related to the percentages. The thought is that since 12% is larger than 7%, that the employee is going to lose money.

[02:08:27] So just this analysis and slide is to explain and help debunk that misconception. The quick math lesson is that the 12% is calculated on a smaller number, and the 7.1% is calculated based on a larger number, and that leads to the scenario that we have on this slide.

[02:08:46] To close out, there are three additional self-insurance funds. So as presented in the budget book, they're consolidated as self-insurance fund. So we have the health self-insurance fund, as well as the three others that I will provide quick updates on that also are related to benefits that we provide employees. All three being self-insurance funds are 100% funded by operating fund transfers. Claims across all three are also

[02:09:22] affected by rising medical costs and compensation. Workers comp claims have settled down and we expect modest growth. We are reviewing the administrative program to see if any plan or third-party contract changes can be made to help reduce fees, and as part of that endeavor, we expect an RFP for third-party services to be released later this month. Our short-term disability programs are split into two funds depending on the type of VRS plan the employee is on. The general short-term disability program is for VRS Plan 1 and Plan 2 members, and claims

[02:09:58] are steadily rising. These are our tenured employees as all new employees are entered into the VRS hybrid plan. The VRS hybrid plan short term disability program is through the Virginia local disability program and we also have seen claims increase the most in this area as a result of the growing population. Finally, the next set of slides that I will just kind of quickly click through are from the budget book appendix and represent the FY26 salary

[02:10:34] scales, we just have included them here as well as another reference. The first one is the FY26 Proposed Scale A, which is a teacher scale, and it has the 4% strategic scale adjustment applied, followed by our Proposed Scale B, and then it continues through Scale C. And that concludes our presentation, and Ms. Bolin and I are -- well, I won't speak from Ms. Bolton, but I'm sure she's happy to answer questions with me as well.

[02:11:10] Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm wondering, did we do a market review for the IB stipends? Was that part of it? So I hesitate to speak for the team without knowing 100%, but typically what's done is for new stipends and internal, they do an internal equity review, and they may, if there's

[02:11:41] no like positions that they could fit with internally, they take a look at our four regional market competitors. Because I just see special education get \$1,000 and then IB gets \$2,500, and so that's why I'm wondering about that.

[02:12:04] And so largely that is probably based on our current internal, the current internal way that stipends are paid out. but there's no internal 4IB? That's correct, but if it's a like-type program or position.

[02:12:23] What is it like, then? Why don't I get you that information? Thanks. And then I'm wondering, I don't see, I'm wondering if one thing that we were talking about that has been a problem is educational diagnosticians and there's a possible increase that we might have to have.

[02:12:46] Is there anything in here about increased? so there isn't anything specific to educational diagnosticians that would be a recommendation that would come out of the study yes ma'am and that's and that will be another year or so essentially that would be at least guiding the fiscal year 27 budget yes okay okay board members you have any other questions yes mrs griffiths thank you madam chair um i will send this to you

[02:13:22] in an email um but hopefully we can get it on uh the digest so all everybody could see on the school board I'll be asking for transparency on the break basically the breakdown of the budget history by object of expenditure specifically full-time salaries non-FTE salaries benefits contractual services materials supplies equipment that sort of thing but I'll be sending that to you an email so everybody can see it thank you if I can also respond the budget book does provide

[02:13:57] that information so for each department you will find i think the categories that you just mentioned of salaries non-fte salaries the benefits and the different operations and maintenance categories what page was that it will be i you know i didn't bring the budget book up with me it would be in the department section so for each department you're going to find the fy26 request the 25 budget and then I believe it's three years of actuals. An example is on page

[02:14:29] 89. 89 is the first one. Any other questions? Yes, Mr. Struffy. Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you very much for the presentation. One of the sections around one section around position changes specifically increasing the number of contract days is something that over the last year I've heard from school

[02:15:06] principles and others and that and the importance of the continuity maybe you could speak to the importance of the impact of these changes because it's a I think it was four one two it was four different types of positions and then maybe at a later point any other positions that were considered where the positions don't make up the 12 months that might have been left out of being those contract days being increased is something I'm curious about but I just like to know the potential impact of this at the school level I'm also happy to see the bus driver to ranger positions I know we talked in committee

[02:15:43] about the need for you know to be able to show folks that they have they can grow from the bus driver position and then the last question is around reclassification of hourly rate bands what was the what's really the process internally and how we decide that these hourly rate bands need to be reclassified

and maybe some of the thinking around why those are reclassified. Thank you for those questions, and we will take them all down for our next packet.

[02:16:12] Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. I was distracted. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you. I really appreciate the information, and I want to especially thank Ms. Boland and Dr. Spence for both sitting down with me and kind of walking me through the stipend process. That was my question. I still have a lot of swirling sort of concerns in terms of how that's developed internally, and maybe might be something we want to have a bigger discussion about, especially as it relates to sort of weighing one stipend versus another. And unfortunately, a fallout of that has been that constituents have

[02:16:51] come to me and said, well, so-and-so gets this stipend, and I get this, but I do more than them. And, you know, those are cultural things, I think, that we could maybe get ahead of and could address as long as those things are being evaluated appropriately. And so I'm happy to hear that we're going to begin to evaluate those processes. So I wanted to thank you for your time on that, I really didn't have an understanding and also the commitment to putting the job descriptions with those different positions so that we can understand what is required of each one and evaluate them and I sent this in an email today but I'm also looking sort of for how many of each one we currently have so like how many equity stipends how many department chairs how many band

[02:17:31] directors or whatever we might have if we could get that just so we can see the lump sum not just the individual value that would be helpful and then I had a question about and this I don't know if this is a silly question but with scales B and C getting the COLA increase of 4% you mentioned that the teacher pay scale a are getting a strategic scale adjustment of 4% what is the is it difference in name only why are they why both are 4% so can you differentiate

[02:18:04] those two different things and what that actually means yeah we're very particular in our wording because there is a difference and so i appreciate the opportunity to try to clarify it um the cola is a flat percentage so every so if you think of um on the slides that i was just sharing at the very end there was all those salary scales so all the numbers that are on scale b and c had been increased by four percent so we took the fy25 numbers and we increased them by

[02:18:42] four percent and that's what you see presented in the appendix for the scale a teacher scale and this was one of the questions we also asked during one of the school board work sessions while you know one of the questions we asked about how to weight the funding between compensation but we also asked about do you want us to do a flat percentage like a cola do you want us to target or you know any other suggestions of how to address the teacher scale recognizing you know the uniqueness of that salary scale and the direction that we received was to continue with

[02:19:18] the targeted adjustment to try to address where we fall behind compared to the market so the targeted is we end up an average 4% adjustment to the scale. But in order to try to increase what we had been calling the mid-career SAG, we applied more of an increase to those steps and less to the beginning.

[02:19:46] So just let's say round numbers, maybe on some of the beginning steps we only did a 2% adjustment, and maybe in the middle we did a 6%, and maybe towards the end we did a 5%. And when you look at all the numbers together, it resulted in a 4% average.

[02:20:02] But it does mean that some of our teachers will see more of a variation, which is where I believe slide 8 becomes useful to help highlight the minimum, average, and maximum dollar amounts and

percentages of that resulting action.

[02:20:26] Thank you for that clarification. I do remember that specific conversation, and now that makes more sense to me. So I appreciate you outlining the difference in terms of the salary scales. That's all I have for now. Oh, one more clarification about the facilitators turning into specialists.

[02:20:43] It sounds like I'm waving a magic wand. Can you just clarify what that was again? So three instructional facilitators are being added, or they're being transitioned into a specialist role? I'm going to kick it to Neil Slevin. Mr. Slevin.

[02:20:59] Thank you, Ms. Bowen. So we have three instructional facilitator positions in the Division of Professional Learning and School Support that are on a 12-month calendar. Okay. And they have been on a 12-month calendar. And we have very limited license positions that are on a 12-month calendar, and they function essentially as a specialist.

[02:21:17] So this is a move to acknowledge that, but also to remove a 12-month position from a license scale. Okay. So these are not what we would previously call DIFs? They're not. Okay. They were, they are more of a central support.

[02:21:33] They're definitely out in schools, supporting schools move towards our instructional vision, but they are not, they're not diffs. Okay. Thank you. Any other questions? Nope.

[02:21:50] I think we're done. Thank you so much. Okay. We're going to move to, looks like 5.02, which is school board discussion. I think last year what we did was we provided time for school board members to ask questions.

[02:22:06] Is that the same that's going on at this point? Yes. So this is the time to review and discuss the submitted Sion and questions overall or specific to tonight.

[02:22:24] Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Dr. Spence, did you want to? Okay. I just have a few comments that I wanted to sort of lay the groundwork in terms of reflecting on last year's process and you know knowing that every year we have this really important responsibility of evaluating our proposed budget and it is without a doubt probably the most impactful tool that we have to shape our division and I think it's a responsibility that we all take pretty seriously and was a steep learning curve last year and over the past year I've had the privilege of you know being in our

[02:23:01] schools and in our division to really see the impacts of budget. Able to visit the alternative school this year was a highlight. To actually see those dollars in action. Visiting step preschool full day and seeing the napping cots. Like there's just so many things and it's just two little examples of what we do. And those experiences have really helped kind of shape my thinking in terms of investments made across the division that impact the success of our students and our educators. So I just wanted you to know as my colleagues that as we enter this budget season, I'm really kind of leading with those priorities when I analyze each spend. And I want to make

[02:23:40] sure that we are first and foremost ensuring the safety and well-being of every student and staff member. And we heard a lot about that tonight. Supporting and advancing student academic achievement. Providing our educators with competitive salaries that allow them to live and work in Loudoun, maintaining resources that support daily operations of our schools and that positively impact our families. And that can be even things like the updated system through DDI that organizes and keeps all of the

information that is so important to running our schools. And I really want this year to commit to evaluating the effectiveness of every dollar,

[02:24:17] Every dollar that we have in the base budget and that we have added on. And I agree with Dr. Spence that it is an absolute blessing that we have the Board of Supervisors that is generous in their support and belief in public education.

[02:24:34] And I want us to be good stewards of that investment so that we ensure that it aligns with our priorities, particularly in the strategic plan and the post-entry plan. And I also want us to think about the long-term financial health of our division.

[02:24:49] I felt like last year with the rush process, I didn't fully get to digest that long-term impact. And I am grateful that we are in a situation of having, being able to ask for more, having a budget surplus. But it's an important opportunity, I think, for us to analyze our current budget and to ensure that we have stability and effectiveness for the future, especially if things were to ever shift in a different direction.

[02:25:16] So I'm hoping that proactively we can kind of do that work together. And just last thing I wanted to kind of ask everyone is, you know, in my household when we approach budgeting, we have a core principle that if more funds are needed for something, we first look at how we can optimize the funds we already have.

[02:25:34] And this is the approach I want to start with with this budget. And so I know sometimes we say, oh, we're just asking for \$23 million more than the \$100 million we think we're being asked. But I would really like to know if there are other board members who would like to join me in working to maximize the funds we have and get closer to a \$1 million figure.

[02:25:56] That may not be your belief, and we may not be able to find all of those funds. But I would like to work to getting closer to what we know the Board of Supervisors is willing to give us. And when I look at the data and I see the needs of our growing student population that are expanding and that achievement gap still exists and there's challenges such as driver shortages that impact start times and teacher and substitute shortages that affect our classroom environments, I really want to think about how all of that can be strengthened and what we're doing with current funds to strengthen those things.

[02:26:32] So that's kind of where my head is at. And I'm looking forward to more dialogue this year and space for dialogue. I'm excited to collaborate and thoughtfully analyze and prioritize the things that we think are important in this budget. And I'm grateful that we've had a year to kind of get to this point.

[02:26:50] Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Anybody else? Yes, Ms. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. Forgive me. I wanted to go back to the recovery school. We put that through on Tuesday. I had some more questions. Tedra, if you don't mind.

[02:27:07] um i'm sort of getting away from everything you just said but um you know because it's it's i guess august now um for part of uh 2025 what funding was allocated for 2025 i i see fy 26 for the recovery school what exactly how much was allocated for that if you can give me that number

[02:27:31] Absolutely, Dina. Thank you so much for that question. In the current year, FY25, no funds from LCPS were allocated. We are only in receipt of the grant award of \$500,000, which was supported by the General Assembly.

[02:27:49] It was advocated for by Senator Russett Perry and Delegate Conan Srinivasan. So we as a division have not allocated any funds towards the recovery school as of yet. The Department of Academics will be providing more information on the recovery school because we do have budgetary requests in FY26 on Tuesday, January 21st.

[02:28:18] I had another question. So, basically, no costs for FY25, and that grant will be used for the principal and teacher at the recovery school? I mean, that grant covers it. Currently, we have slated the \$500,000 awarded this year to cover the cost of the principal and the clinical coordinator.

[02:28:41] And then, will there be any additional funding requests in FY26 for the recovery school, such as, and I can send this to you. this is now getting into materials equipment electronic supplies and you may have mentioned it the other night but I maybe I can lay it out for you and you can in an email and you can give me the answers to that if that's okay I'd be more than happy to okay all right thank you yes Dr.

[02:29:10] Deans I would just like to say concerning the budget last year we had been in sort of in flux for a few years. And we got the requested budget. And I think Loudoun County Public Schools sort of right-sided the shift such that this year the request is a lower amount. And I think that we should look at the fact that the senior staff, the superintendent and the senior staff have been very

[02:29:44] strategic in what they have asked for for 26. And so it pleases me to know that it's not an exorbitant amount. Thank you, Dr. Deans. Any other questions? Okay. With that, we will move on to our closed meeting. Vice Chair Donahue, do you have a motion? Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that the Loudoun County School Board recess this public meeting and enter into a closed

[02:30:22] meeting pursuant to 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia for the following. Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body as authorized by Virginia code section 2.2-3711 sub a sub 29 vice chair donahue has made a motion do i have a second second i have a second by miss shernoff it's been properly moved and seconded that the Loudoun County School Board go into a closed session is there any

[02:31:02] discussion seeing no discussion clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote vice chair donahue would you please state your vote yes and that motion passes unanimously the

[02:31:34] the board is now in closed session vice chair donahue do you have a motion yes thank you madam

[02:46:19] chair i move that the closed meeting be adjourned that the Loudoun County School Board reconvene its public meeting and that the minutes of the public meeting reflect that no formal action was taken in the closed meeting. Vice Chair Donahue has made a motion to adjourn the closed meeting. Do I have a second? I have a second by, I think I heard Ms. Chandler. It's been properly moved and seconded that the Law and Crown School Board adjourn the closed meeting. Is there any discussion?

[02:46:51] Seeing no discussion, we will go ahead and vote. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please. She's not going to be, oh, oh, where did our clerk go? The world does not.

[02:47:13] Continue without Ms. Byrne. I don't think she did expect us to be the Sherry. We don't know what to do without you, Sherry.

[02:47:42] Ms. Byrne, thank you. Would you please open the vote? Board members, please record your vote.

[02:48:03] Ms. Donahue, would you please state your vote? Yes. All right. Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion passes unanimously. ms donahue vice chair donahue do you have another motion yes thank you madam chair i move that the following resolution certifying the closed meeting be adopted and reflected in the minutes of this public meeting resolution number 19-24-25 whereas the loudon county school board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance

[02:48:40] with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and whereas section 2.2-3712 sub d of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law. Now therefore be it resolved that the Loudoun County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully accepted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies and only such public

[02:49:16] business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard discussed or considered by the loudon county school board vice chair donahue has made a motion to certify the closed session do i have a second miss chandler you seconded okay i have a second by miss chandler um is there any discussion seeing none we'll go ahead and take the vote clerk please open the vote board members please board your vote vice chair Donahue would you please state

[02:49:50] your vote yes clerk would you please close and display the vote and that motion passes unanimously we will now move on to item seven adjournment seeing there's no more business the January 16th 2025 Loudoun County School Board for the FY 26 operating budget which included a closed session is now adjourned please drive safely home



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