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Loudoun County School Board, School Board FY26 Budget Work Session and Public Hearing, Thursday, January 23, 2025

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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1049876716?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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[00:00:24] Good evening. I call to order this January 23rd, 2025, Loudoun County FY 2026 operating budget school board work session. We will go ahead and start with our disclosures and I will start.

[00:00:43] 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.

[00:01:01] 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 excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:01:20] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Ms. Chandler. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the item on

tonight's agenda regarding the budget and or health insurance and related benefits and any other discussion that may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:01:46] Specifically, as a school board member, I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee. These benefits however affect thousands of employees well in excess of the statutory three employees whose interests may also be affected Of which I am included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public interest This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the clerk of the school board for five years Thank You miss Chandler Mrs. Griff Mrs. Griffiths. 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

[00:02:25] regarding the budget and/or health insurance and related benefits in 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 LCA 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's interest.

[00:02:54] This disclosure will be reflected in the public records of the Clerk of the School Board for five years. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Mr. Streffy. 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.

[00:03:18] 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 interest may also be affected, of which I am included. I can and will participate fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[00:03:35] This disclosure will be reflected in the public's records of the clerk of the school board for five years. Thank you, Mr. Streffi. Ms. LaBelle. 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 they may include or affect benefits for LCPS employees.

[00:04:07] 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.

[00:04:26] 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. Lavelle. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. As a member of the Lowen 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.

[00:04:53] 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.

[00:05:10] 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'll now move on to item three, the public hearing. My understanding is that there is no public comment for today. So we will move on to item four, FY26 Operating Budget Work Session 4.01, Investing in our students presented by Sharon Willoughby, Chief Financial Officer.

[00:05:40] Ms. Willoughby. Ms. Thank you.

[00:05:55] So for this presentation, I'm going to address some of the other funds that you will be adopting as part of the adoption process, just to kind of close up some of the loose ends. There are three funds that I'm going to talk about this afternoon.

[00:06:14] The three funds are our special revenue funds, and they begin on page 233 of the budget book. I will start with our grant fund that, as you can see on this slide, shows a slight decrease in overall funding.

[00:06:29] In breaking the grants down, there are three funding sources. Our largest group is our federal grants, which represent about three-quarters of the entire grant fund, and are primarily title funds, such as our Title 6B for special education support. Federal grants are projected to decrease as additional grant funding accrued during the pandemic has been fully spent.

[00:06:50] Two FTEs are also moving out to the operating fund due to grant awards ending. State grants are expected to increase, recognizing the \$250,000 grant for the recovery school with no changes in FTEs.

[00:07:08] And then local grants are primarily the \$1 million recurring Howard Hughes Foundation grant and a new award of about \$100,000 for the GMU Access Academy. Here we have a .5 FTE that is moving to the operating fund as the Go Virginia grant is ending for the Access Academy coordinator position.

[00:07:32] For our lease purchase fund, this, as you see, is the same amount, and it's always going to be the same amount because this is capped at \$10 million. That's the maximum amount that we can purchase under the lease.

[00:07:47] The \$10 million is broken out with 7.2 going to digital innovation to fund computer technology, replacement cycles, and the replacement of network electronics. And the balance of \$2.8 million is for support services to support replacement and new purchases of fleet vehicles.

[00:08:06] And again, this can be found on page 233. The next fund is our school nutrition fund, which shows a 9.4% increase. The school nutrition operation is managed in its own separate special revenue fund.

[00:08:23] This operation is referred to as the largest restaurant chain in the county that not only follows the health code with each kitchen inspected twice a year, but must also meet stringent USDA nutritional, operational, financial, and program guidelines, such as the free and reduced program and summer feeding. The school nutrition operation must also manage a fine line between revenues and expenses. Net profit is capped to no more than three months of expenditures, and if that should occur, permission from the state on usage of the excess funds must be obtained.

[00:08:57] On the other hand, this operation has been self-sufficient and does not require any local funds to subsidize its operations currently. All these highlight how sophisticated the school nutrition program is

and the expertise our staff have to run it. This financial snapshot of the school nutrition fund provides an overview of projected revenues as shown on the top half and expenditures on the bottom half, along with the resulting reduction to the fund balance at the bottom. Historically, this fund has been self-sufficient, generating its own revenues to

[00:09:35] support operations without requiring subsidies from local or operating funds. However, as you'll see, maintaining the self-sufficiency is becoming increasingly challenging, particularly when examining expenditures. Personnel costs, which make up the majority of expenditures, pose significant challenges for managing the fund's financial health.

[00:09:55] As shown in this slide, providing a step increase, a cost of living adjustment, and accommodating other benefit changes alone adds \$2 million to the FY26 budget. On top of this, inflationary impacts on operating costs contribute an additional \$2.5 million, bringing the total expense increase to \$4.5 million. So how are we addressing these new expenditures and how are we going to pay for this? The primary source of funding comes from cafeteria sales, including additional revenue generated by a \$0.20 price meal increase. Most

[00:10:32] of the growth in cafeteria sales is attributed to the popularity of our a la carte items which have been boosted by the resolution of supply chain issues and the strong demand for these offerings. I'd also like to highlight that the total projected revenues for FY26 at 48.8 million compared to expenditures of 53.3 million. This results in a projected net loss continuing the trend this fund has experienced since the pandemic. As I mentioned last year and during the quarterly financial reviews. We are drawing down the fund balance to cover the revenue shortfall as we work

[00:11:08] towards stabilizing the fund, but it may be that the school nutrition operations in the future may require a local subsidy. Regardless, we remain committed to addressing this challenge from both angles, increasing revenues and reducing expenditures to achieve a balanced budget in the coming fiscal years. Starting with revenues, the FY26 budget includes another 20 cent meal price increase and this is not something we take lightly recognizing we increased the meals by 20 cents for this current year however it's important to remember that the last meal price adjustment

[00:11:46] before that was back in fiscal 18. in addition we must comply with federal regulation overseeing meal pricing to ensure paying students pay their fair share the 20 cent increase not only provides additional revenue but ensures our compliance with the federal regulation this adjustment still keeps us comparatively priced compared to our neighbors. For this year, FY25, our neighbors' elementary lunches range from \$2.60 to \$3.50, and secondary lunches range from \$2.75 to \$4.25.

[00:12:23] To increase student participation in the School Nutrition Services program, several strategic actions have been implemented to enhance meal offerings, improve access, and engage students effectively. First, we have introduced a diverse range of menu items and accommodated various dietary preferences, including halal, kosher, and expanding vegetarian options, complemented by monthly taste tests to foster inclusivity and encourage greater participation. Second, we have

[00:13:02] expanded free meal programs through the community eligibility provision and provision two through our universal free breakfast program, ensuring equitable access and boosting participation district-wide. Third, the school nutrition program has funded upgrades to kitchen equipment and revamped dining areas with a scramble service model, enhancing meal quality and overall dining

experience, which in turn motivates student participation. Fourth, school nutrition has engaged students by hosting a food show, conducting focus groups, and using point-of-sale data to

[00:13:41] personalized menus based on preferences, leading to higher satisfaction and increased participation. Finally, the appointment of an assistant director this year, along with the executive chef's focus on staff training, has ensured the consistent delivery of high-quality meals, further supporting ongoing program participation.

[00:13:59] And as you also see on this slide, this is from the strategic plan. And it shows that for this fiscal year, the goal is to achieve 47%. and as of November we were as of November our meal participation is at 45.9 and then you see that we ended last year at 44. So we are on the right trajectory and hopefully we'll be able to achieve that 47 percent this year. Since the excuse me since the pandemic air is federal funding to

[00:14:39] provide universal free meals LCPS along with other school divisions across the country have experienced increased meal debt. This slide also highlights the unfortunate trend that we are seeing. FY24 saw an increase in our year-over-year meal debt and then the last column shows that we're already nearing these same levels and we're only halfway through the school year. We make all efforts to collect payment and at the end of the school year any unpaid debt is transferred to the school operating fund since the school nutrition fund cannot carry or cover debt. I want to emphasize though that all students are provided lunch regardless of the ability to pay and that

[00:15:19] it's also the same meal as provided to a paying student. Further recognizing how important nutrition is for students, LCPS continues to support legislative action to ensure meals are provided free for all students. As I mentioned, we are working from both angles to financially manage the school nutrition fund. And so I just shared some revenue information. And so now I'd like to share some of the actions we are taking on the expenditure side. We have established KPIs or

[00:15:53] key performance indicators to evaluate performance, thus reducing program expenditures. Newly developed automated KPI reports build on last year's changes, enhancing our ability to monitor and manage performance effectively. We understand that performance measurement is an essential managerial function, and these newly developed KPI reports are designed to expose the gaps between current and desired performance while also providing evidence of progress in closing those gaps. Some examples of the reports utilized include meal count and participation reports,

[00:16:31] inventory turnover reports, and staff absenteeism. With these KPIs, we can make more informed decisions and continuously improve performance and efficiency across all key areas. Next is production-based school staffing. For this school year, we used this data alongside our staffing standards detailed on page 312 of the budget book to ensure equitable and fair staffing across our schools by aligning workloads evenly based on the meals produced specifically there are two staffing standards one for elementary and one for secondary with the staffing allocation at

[00:17:10] the secondary school slightly richer based on menu complexity including a broader variety of menu items, larger portions, and a la carte choices to meet the diverse taste and caloric needs of adolescents. School nutrition school-based staff positions in the staffing standard include our cafeteria manager one, two, and three, our leads, and our school nutrition workers. At a minimum, each school must have one serve safe certified manager due to food safety certification requirements. We received a budget inquiry regarding the number of schools with only one

[00:17:49] staff member assigned. Staffing assignments which are based on volume aim to ensure fairness and efficiency. Currently seven of our smaller schools have one full-time equivalent allocated. We also have an agreement with Hillsborough Charter for their school nutrition services that is also staffed and operated following our staffing standards as related with our small schools.

[00:18:13] These schools serve fewer than 200 meals per day on average with some serving as few as 50 meals daily. To support the uniqueness of our smaller school operations, though, we have implemented additional measures to enhance efficiency, with one example being we allow the ordering of select pre-cut fruits and vegetables at these schools. This purchase, while more costly, is still a more cost-effective solution compared to the expense of adding another FTE, which would cost a minimum

[00:18:44] of \$52,000. On a related note, the leveling of manager positions, detailed on page 266 of the budget book, differs from staffing allocation and accounts for varying levels of responsibility based on supervisory duties and menu complexity. Secondary school managers have larger staffs to manage and produce more diverse menus, featuring a broader range of entree selections and additional a la carte options as compared to elementary school managers who all prepare the same menu.

[00:19:17] However, some elementary managers operate independently with no supervisory responsibilities while others oversee at least one additional employee resulting in the different manager levels. Continuing on our expenditure reductions. Additionally, we have implemented an accountability matrix to maximize staff performance. We believe that providing employees with real data on their performance not only empowers them but also helps to reduce labor costs and boost morale by offering

[00:19:53] clear objective insights into performance staff are equipped to identify areas for improvement and take proactive steps to enhance efficiency with the introduction of internal financial audits last school year and an accountability matrix evaluation system this year school nutrition staff will have access to data on their performance and usda recognized competencies essential for effective program management.

[00:20:21] This approach not only supports cost reduction, but also gives employees greater control over their professional growth and success. We have also focused on sustainability and other initiatives to manage food costs, starting with our supplier contracts.

[00:20:38] We renegotiate supplier contracts annually to secure bulk discounts, better pricing, and more favorable delivery terms. Additionally, we regularly solicit bids from multiple vendors. However, it is very important to highlight and understand that LCPS operates in a region with a limited pool of available food and supply vendors.

[00:21:00] We are a very large, spread-out operation and receive limited bidders able to meet our needs when we do put out solicitations. Related to vendor contracts and in support of sustainability initiatives, one recent example for this school year is our bulk milk pilot program at Riverside High School.

[00:21:21] This program is aimed to increase milk consumption by high school students while also reducing program expenditures. This program provides reusable cups for students to self-serve milk at a dispensing unit versus the traditional carton of milk.

[00:21:38] This pilot has seen positive results so far with increased milk consumption and reduced expenses by lowering the per unit cost of milk and minimizing waste associated with the individual cartons. We also continue to focus on reducing food waste from monitoring the inventory turnover reports to ensure minimal spoilage to growing our food recovery program.

[00:22:01] The school nutrition team closely watches all aspects in this area. We are especially proud of our food recovery program by rescuing edible food and reallocating it to school inventories, pantries, and local food banks. This initiative has played a vital role in alleviating food insecurity both within schools and in the surrounding community.

[00:22:22] Finally, the school nutrition team is optimizing menu planning to simplify and standardize menus to reduce ingredient variety and minimize waste. By focusing on seasonal ingredients we can lower costs and enhance food preparation efficiency.

[00:22:39] So those are some of the examples where efforts are focused to help reduce expenditures with the overall financial objective to balance expenditures with available resources. And that concludes my presentation on those other remaining funds and I'd be happy to take any questions.

[00:22:57] Thank you, Ms. Willoughby. Board members, do you have any other questions? Yes. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. you, Ms. Willoughby, and particularly answering the question about the reduced staff for our smaller schools. I have had the pleasure of visiting, I think, most of our smaller elementary schools, and this is something that comes up every time I'm there, from administration to teachers to the actual nutrition staff, the managers that work there. My question, really,

[00:23:36] wondering is when we reduce staff for these kinds of things based on how many meals I understand that on paper that sounds really great like it's efficient we're being more equitable like those words sound good on paper but when I see these workers in the school and I talk to them it seems like it's not so much about how many meals but it's about how many jobs they have to do in terms of not only just getting the food out and I do appreciate the the thoughts around pre-cut food and things like that that have helped build that efficiency but there's still a cleanup process there's still timing that has to happen in terms of when the kids come through and when they can address those things and without

[00:24:16] a second hand there those things cannot be happening simultaneously and many of these workers have reached out and talked to me about extra hours that they're putting in and just the stress and wanting to leave the job or leave a a smaller school to find a school that is more supported and so while I appreciate especially I'm the one who's talked about you know make finding savings so this is ironic but I do think that you know we have to think about where we're finding those savings and I would like to know what we could do to support could it be an assistant could it be someone hourly if that is the case

[00:24:54] is that something that's hard to fill I'm just wondering what the challenges are because right now as it sits i don't feel like they're being supported when only one person is there regardless of the size of their school i appreciate your observations um we continue to work with our small schools to identify other ways that we can help alleviate some of the burdens of what you described with the the variety of the tasks um and which is why i try to pull the the pre-cut vegetables i thought that could be something that you know could be helpful to kind

[00:25:30] to help identify, you know, having an efficiency and then obviously, you know, paying a little bit more for this versus a whole other FTE. The burden that we have, as I shared earlier, is that, you know, right now we're running, we're running on our fund balance to, you know, maintain the fiscal stability of the fund without having to continue to increase, you know, the meal prices. You know, So trying to be respectful of all the impacts.

[00:26:01] We have talked about possibly adding maybe part-time support, but the challenge is that we're concerned that it would be such a minimal hour because it's such a small window of when the support would be needed that the challenge of trying to hire someone perhaps for two hours a day.

[00:26:22] And so we have really tried this year to focus on our other efficiencies, our other models. We've also looked at some of the smaller schools because, you know, while I group them as smaller schools and there's seven and eight, if you include Hillsborough, we're hearing and seeing different performance with the schools.

[00:26:45] So we're trying to see, well, what's working over at this school? Maybe this is something we can duplicate at another school before we try to assign additional staff. And if we were, we would want to start with, you know, part-time and then to see if that would be, if we're able to pull anyone.

[00:27:03] But as you hit on, any addition of expenses just puts that additional burden on the fund and that without some dramatic, you know, changes, you know, in the forefront, at some point it's probably going to be likely that we would be seeking a transfer from the general fund, meaning also seeking additional funds from the county.

[00:27:26] and then our fund is no longer self-sufficient, it will require a local subsidy. Thank you. Yes, Ms. LaBelle. It seems that Mrs. Chernoff and I are thinking along the same lines right here.

[00:27:42] I know, having talked to and worked with some of our smaller schools, the cafeteria manager, the one person that actually works in the kitchen, has to come in at O-Dark 30, prep everything, set everything up, make the food, get it into individual dishes.

[00:28:02] Then she has to get it on the shelves and have backup prepared somewhere in the kitchen that's safe, food safe counts. Then she has to run the register, and if something spills or something runs out on the table, she has to stop what she's doing and go back. So yes, an extra pair of hands are essential.

[00:28:20] Now last year I talked with Dr. Richardson about some of our CAST students who are looking for job experience. And I believe that we got some of the small schools some help through the CAST program.

[00:28:38] Some of the students were already on the LCPS employee docket, and they're already being paid. They're already to go. Could we put more of our CAST students on there? They are students that are more than willing to work for the two hours and then go back to their CAST program.

[00:28:58] The only thing that they would need would be transportation. to these schools and we have job coaches that will go with them to teach them and help them learn the job i think the problem is again getting funding for them to work the two hours they'd be very happy to do so but i think we need to look at that as a possible solution perhaps you could talk with dr richardson and see what we can arrange thank you thank you miss labelle board

[00:29:29] members, any other questions? Yes, Ms. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. I must say, Ms. LaBelle, I like that idea of the CAS students helping out. That would be fantastic. I did notice, and maybe you touched on this a little bit, Ms. Willoughby, you're increasing the personnel budget for the cafeteria by \$3 million, but I think the number of cafeteria workers stays the same at 419 um can you speak to that um are we going to be hiring new people so why is the budget

[00:30:06] going up again i think you touched on a little bit but please give the detail again thank you the number of staff remains the same there are i believe 419 ftes in the school nutrition fund so there are no additional staff the cost is to provide those 419 employees a step increase plus the four percent cost of living adjustment so the so the average six and a half pay increase on 419 employees and then also the um the 12 increase for the health benefits for those

[00:30:42] employees as well as then once you apply that cost increase or the pay increase then there's taxes the other benefits all of the compensation related to that that is what is driving the increase in the personnel line um is this also to hire subs and overtime as well they have a dedicated um sub pool that's already included in the budget and i don't believe we made any changes to that in terms of the overtime i would take that down as a question i believe we have an

[00:31:19] overtime budget actually i can probably look really quick see if there's any changes so we did make an it we did make an adjustment and this is included in the budget book so what i'm pulling is available on page 240 where we are seeing an increase in the budget for non-FTE salary so for

[00:31:59] for overtime and you know part-time support as well as substitutes that we increase the budget to bring it in line with our FY24 actuals so our actuals in looking at page 239 in FY24 we had spent just under \$1.1 million on those type of activities. The budget for FY25 was though only \$600,000, and so the FY26 budget was increased to \$1.1 to bring it more in line with what we had

[00:32:33] been spending. Last question for you. It looks like it might average around \$7,200 per person. Is that right? Well, again, this is also, I would, let me break that down for you. I'll take that down as a written question so that can provide you a more accurate of what that all come is composed of and I'll also send that to you an email thank you thank you any other questions

[00:32:57] no seeing no more questions I guess we will be moving on to the 4.02 which is the actual process again presented by Ms. Willoughby so the presentation I just gave is the last formal presentation on the budget itself that staff has as part of this process. And so we usually wrap

[00:33:32] up with the short presentation of just what the next steps are to bring us through the adoption process. So we are scheduled on February 4th to have the school board adopt the budget. The most important date on here is to, you know, please submit, send any of your budget amendments to me by noon, or no later than noon, on Monday, February 3rd, for costing in motion structure.

[00:34:03] Monday, February 3rd is the day before the budget adoption meeting, which also leaves little time for extensive costing. So this really is, you know, again, I've got to emphasize, please, we have, I think, about like a week and a half between now and then.

[00:34:18] We want to support each of you through the adoption process, and having motions in advance of the meeting helps you to have an efficient and successful budget adoption. In terms of budget motions, there are three ways that we see budget motions being crafted.

[00:34:37] Staff's recommendation is the first bullet, which is to maintain a balanced budget. Any changes to increase the budget should have a corresponding change to decrease the budget and vice versa. Another option could be a motion to solely increase the budget that would result in an increase in the county transfer request unless another funding source is identified.

[00:35:06] And then the third option would be a motion which would solely decrease the budget which would result in a decrease in the county transfer request. Would also emphasize why this is really important to have these motions in advance is that on the night of February 4th, it's very difficult for the budget team to try to perform costing on the spot.

[00:35:33] So having this information in advance is helpful with that. And also it allows us to provide a list of all the possible budget motions to share with the school board chair to help facilitate the meeting. I'll also mention this is where the school board should begin to transition from budget questions to forming their budget amendment motions.

[00:35:56] Any questions at this point should really be to help inform crafting their budget amendments. There is a question packet today, which was the second packet, I think was handed out to you here a few minutes ago.

[00:36:12] It's posted online on board docs. There are about 20 open questions that we are still working on. If we have the work session on January 30th we'll have a packet then if not we would have the final Q&A packet on February 4th. Want to also emphasize that February 4th is the one and only time for the school board to adopt the budget so motions provided in advance again allows us to best support you through that process. I am also available to meet and discuss any ideas you

[00:36:51] may have to help craft your motions discuss costing as well as any potential unintended consequences. The night of February 4th we will also have our second and final public hearing on the budget and then we begin the budget adoption process which would involve these steps. The school board member would make the initial motion to adopt the FY26 seon to begin the process. After that school board members may then begin making their budget amendment motions again just reiterate reiterating that to maintain a balanced budget, any changes to increase should have a corresponding

[00:37:29] change to decrease and vice versa, and that we would utilize our tote board to track our progress. An example of the tote board is here. This slide shows an example of the tote board that you may remember from last year. It will track key elements such as expenses, FTEs, the county's local transfer, and total revenues. As illustrated, we will begin with the FY26C on, which includes the budget of \$1.9 billion, the \$13,463.5 FTEs, and our county transfer of \$1.3

[00:38:06] billion, and the total revenue equaling the total expenses in the final column. You'll notice the green boxes indicating that the budget is currently balanced, meaning expenses match revenues. By the end of this process our goal is to maintain these green balanced boxes. The slide also includes an example of a budget amendment. Row one shows a motion to increase the budget by a hundred thousand while row two reflects a related motion to decrease the budget by the same amount. This ensures the budget remains balanced. As previously mentioned school board members can propose increases to the

[00:38:44] budget which would solely raise the budget and the county transfer request or vice versa. On February 4th we will begin with a motion titled technical changes similar to last year. In an earlier presentation you may recall we discussed the accelerated reclassification of two student assistant specialist coordinators during the current fiscal year as a result this request will be removed from the FY26 seon and included in the technical changes starting motion finally

[00:39:23] new for FY26, we are including a budget resolution. So many times I am referencing that a certain activity is approved via the budget process, but it wasn't explicitly clear or, you know, spelled out or

written out anywhere. This budget resolution aims to provide transparency and accountability in managing LCPS's resources. And there's a draft of the resolution in board docs. This resolution, you will see, clearly identifies each fund's budgeted revenues and expenses additionally we are clearly specifying other approval actions the school board takes such

[00:40:01] as the authorized staffing levels pay increases health plan benefit changes and setting meal prices the draft budget resolution is included in board docs for your review and will be included as part of the budget adoption action on february 4th that is our process and the next direction is um that we would want is whether or not we have the work session on january 30th which i believe is thursday of next week i would just highlight again staff would not have any

[00:40:36] presentations to make but would be available to answer any questions that you may have but also this work session could facilitate discussion amongst yourselves regarding the budget as well as perhaps discussion of any amendments you may be considering for february 4th and with that i will take any additional questions on the process thank you miss Willoughby would you like to give should we give a thumbs up at this point to figure out if we're going to go ahead and do January 30th board members would you like to meet on January 30th to go ahead and do as miss

[00:41:12] Willoughby said it's a time to ask further questions if we want and everything else yes okay it's unanimous over here so we'll go ahead and do that on the 30th well the rest of us can still yeah because I think that's an important opportunity for us to be able to talk with each other as well as with you guys okay and we'll go on to 4.03

[00:41:49] school board budget discussion again have miss Willoughby we have a discussion here at 4.03 basically I think this is just if you guys have any further questions that weren't in this packet that you guys want to talk about about or ask staff about at this point. Okay, Ms. Chernoff. I have one question based off of some feedback I got after we talked about Lexia the other day, so maybe Mr. Slevin can chime in. Some of the school-based reading specialists that

[00:42:26] I spoke with said that some of the reasons that the in-person portion of the Lexia software usage for intervention is difficult is because the decodables that went with that program were not purchased alongside the digital platform is that true or were some purchased can we get some clarification on that sorry to put you on the spot I can also just add it to the packet and you can answer later it could be in the packet and I can answer later but I do know that there were there was a large purchase of decodables early

[00:43:03] in the process of preparing for the the VLA so it's possible that choices were made in terms of what the full package was made, but I would need to confirm that with the elementary reading office, but I could do that pretty quickly. Okay, that'd be great, because if that's a stumbling block to using the platform as intended, I think that's something we should consider before we approve the renewal. Thank you. I would have to agree with Ms. Chernoff. I mean, if we're not, we need to keep with the program, how it is written, and not have to go and pick decodables from other

[00:43:37] programs. Any other questions? No? Okay. There we go. Seeing as there's no more business, the January 23rd, 2025 Loudoun County School Board and FY26 operating budget is now adjourned.

[00:43:55] Please drive safely home.



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