



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Loudoun County School Board, Special School Board Meeting – FY26 Operating Budget Adoption, Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Date Tuesday, February 4, 2025
Place Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
Length 1h 49m (video)

- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <https://player.vimeo.com/video/1052098361?rel=0>
- BoardDocs (School Board): <https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DCWJ6F4BA5A5>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-11. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:01:29] Good afternoon. I call to order this February 4th, 2025, Loudoun County Special School Board Meeting, FY26, Operating Budget Adoption and Public Hearing. We will move to disclosures, and I'll go ahead and start.

[00:01:46] 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.

[00:02:03] 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.

[00:02:18] 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. 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.

[00:02:47] 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 court of the school board for five years thank you thank you miss chandler mrs griffiths thank you madam chair as a member of the loudon county school board i make the following disclosure to the school board and to the general public in connection with the

[00:03:23] item on tonight's agenda 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 LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees will only access of the statutory three employees whose interests may be affected of which I am included I can and will participate fairly objectively and in the public's interest 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. Straffy

[00:04:02] 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'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 records of

[00:04:36] 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 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.

[00:05:10] 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 Ms. LaBelle. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you Madam Chair. As a member of the Loudoun County School Board I make the following disclosure to the school board and 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

[00:05:49] affect benefits for LCPS employees specifically as a school board member I am eligible to receive health insurance and related benefits as an LCPS employee these benefits however affect thousands of employees well in 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 record of the clerk of the school board for five years thank you Miss Chernoff all right we will now move to move on to the agenda when vice chair Donahue gets here

[00:06:23] we will do her disclosure as well all right we will move on to our public hearing on the superintendent proposed FY 26 operating budget thank you for engaging with the school board through the public comment process the school board welcomes comments from Loudoun County residents and believes that strong community engagement and outreach are important components of a successful school system. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted. Based on the number of speakers in the agenda this evening, all speakers have been allotted one minute each for public comment. Speakers who miss their time slot will not be called at a later time. All audience

[00:07:01] members shall maintain civility, decorum, and respect for the functioning and the dignity of the school board at all times and abide by the public comment procedures set forth in school board policy 2520 entitled participation by the public and on the lcps citizen participation website those resources also provide information on the distribution of materials to school board members given that under no circumstances may a speaker approach the dais in accordance to school board policy 2520 speakers should refrain from vulgarity obscenities defamation profanity and other like breaches of civility decorum and respect.

[00:07:40] Target speakers may also not target, criticize, or attack individual students and or individual division employees during public comment or engage conduct that otherwise disrupts or delays the meeting. Inappropriately loud conversations or outbursts from those in attendance will not be tolerated and security staff will be asked to restore order.

[00:08:02] Per school board policy 2520, when reasonable, the chair will warn a speaker of breaches of decorum or of these rules prior to the chair terminating speaking privileges or taking other action to preserve the civility decorum and orderly conduct of the meeting, which could include, but is not limited to, the chair directing staff to remove the attendee from the remainder of the meeting and or public comment being concluded for the evening.

[00:08:28] The public is reminded that access to school board meetings is available through LCPS-TV on Comcast Channel 18 and Verizon Fios Channel 43. The live stream of the meeting may also be viewed on the website. We look forward to hearing your comments.

[00:08:44] We'll start with our virtual public comment, and the first one is Meredith Ray. Over 19 years, there was a 20% increase in students with disabilities receiving special education services in inclusive classrooms due to increased funding for DEIA programs.

[00:09:10] Students in inclusive settings have been proven to experience lower rates of anxiety and depression. Studies show that inclusive special education services improve reading comprehension in students with learning disabilities, and that children without disabilities in inclusive classrooms develop communication and leadership skills faster.

[00:09:28] These are just a handful of measurable benefits of DEIA. Any attempt to defund LCPS's DEI work is reckless, ignorant, and actively harmful. It serves no one and damages everyone. Thank you.

[00:09:44] Thank you. David Palancey. I urge you not to implement the proposed changes to the retiree's health insurance plan at this time.

[00:10:01] Instead, please defer the decision until next year's budget cycle. This delay would allow retiring employees turning 65 this year to remain on the LCPS Cigna Advantage Plan, likely at minimal cost. During the January 30th board work session, many questions were raised about the proposed changes to retiree health insurance.

[00:10:20] However, some of the explanations provided felt incomplete. I've had numerous discussions with current employees who are nearing retirement, as well as with current retirees who will be affected by changes to how LCPS administers health insurance. These employees and former employees feel blindsided by this sudden change.

[00:10:38] This change impacts many people and should have been properly presented and vetted through the board's committees. Deferring the decision would also allow for meaningful public comment and input. Thank you. Thank you. Alex Bennett? Dr. Spence has come to the school board as a young Oliver Twist and has asked for more money.

[00:11:08] But the budget is disguised as destitute and pleading for more when the bureaucratic stomach has been filled. Dr. Spence has asked for \$100 million or will receive \$100 million more from the Board of Supervisors. He's asked for an additional \$23 million.

[00:11:24] And instead of putting into salary and benefits, which he plans to increase at a 12% rate with \$150 deductible increase, He decides to, wants to spend money on instructional coaches that no teacher wants. I encourage the school board, if you want to know what the budget should look like and what we are, what is needed and what will help teachers and students, do not listen to the, look at or listen to the LCPS budget and come listen to the teachers to stop this bureaucratic spending.

[00:12:00] Thank you.

[00:12:01] So the next one is Mildred Perez, no Mildred Perez, Doris Serrano, no Doris Serrano, Gerson Ramirez, no Gerson Ramirez, Marta Saban.

[00:12:41] And according to policy 2520E, the next speaker is being assisted by an interpreter and will be allotted two minutes for their comments. One minute for the speaker and one minute for the translator.

[00:13:05] Hola, buenas tardes. Hola, buenas tardes, miembros de la Junta Escolar. Soy madre de familia, tengo a mis hijos en la Midi School, Parview y Wilford. Como padres estamos aquí abogando por la implementación de programas gratuitos después de la escuela.

[00:13:29] Como el programa Título 1, y pedimos que se ofrezca al menos 100 espacios disponibles, es fundamental que las familias de bajos recursos tengan accesos prioritarios a estos programas.

[00:13:45] porque no tenemos la capacidad de costear actividades extracurriculares. Agradecemos de antemano su apoyo en la implementación de estos programas y esperamos que cada uno de ustedes respalde este espacio esencial para la recreación y educación de nuestros hijos. Gracias.

[00:14:07] Thank you. Hello, good afternoon members of the school board. I am a parent, and my children attend Guildford, Sterling Middle School, and Parkview Schools. As parents, we are here advocating for the implementation of free after-school programs in the Title I schools.

[00:14:28] And we are asking that at least 100 available spaces be offered. It is essential that low-income families have priority access to these programs, because we do not have the capacity to pay for

extracurricular activities. We appreciate your support in implementing these programs and hope that each of you will support this essential space for the recreation and education of our children.

[00:14:52] Thank you. Thank you. The next one is Kellyn Oriana, followed by Eric Canales. And there will be an interpreter for this one as well.

[00:15:16] And so one minute for the speaker and one minute for the translator, please. Hola, buenas tardes, representantes de la Junta Escolar Sur y Superintendente. Soy Kelly Organizadora Comunitaria en Educación con la Nueva Mayoría de Virginia. Gracias antemano por brindarnos el espacio para que nuestra comunidad pueda expresar sus preocupaciones y los cambios que desean ver para mejorar las oportunidades de nuestros hijos en las escuelas.

[00:15:39] Sabemos que trabajando juntos podemos mejorar los recursos en programas para todos los estudiantes. Creemos que es fundamental la implementación de programas para garantizar que los estudiantes tengan acceso o oportunidades que les permitan desarrollar sus habilidades en un entorno recreativo y educativo. También es crucial asegurar que, como parte de su plan de implementación, haya 100 cupos para los estudiantes en cada escuela cuyas familias son de bajos ingresos, evitando estar en largas filas de esperas y permitiendo que se implementen en las escuelas necesarias. Queremos lograr cambios positivos de impacto en la educación, elevando las expectativas a niveles más altos de calidad y exclusividad.

[00:16:15] Seguiremos buscando las mejores opciones, trabajando juntos para mejorar la educación de los estudiantes de lecps gracias thank you hello good afternoon school board representatives and superintendent i am kelly a community organizer in education with the new virginity virginia majority sorry thank you in advance for providing the space for our community to voice our concerns and the changes they want to see to improve our children's opportunities in schools we know that by working together we can improve resources and programming for all students

[00:16:53] We believe that it is critical to implement programs to ensure that students have access to opportunities that allow them to develop their skills in a recreational and educational environment. It is also crucial to ensure that as part of each implementation plan, there are 100 spaces for students at each school whose families are low income, avoiding long waits and allowing them to be implemented in the necessary schools.

[00:17:20] We want to achieve positive and impactful changes in education, raising expectations to higher levels of quality and exclusivity. We will continue. Thank you. Thank you very much. All right. Eric Canelas, followed by Brayden Willis.

[00:17:49] Again, we'll have one minute for the speaker and one minute for the translator for policy 2520. Okay.

[00:18:06] So, I'll write my own speech to you. Hello. Good afternoon. Good afternoon, I am Eric and I am the father of two children who attend Rolling Ride in Sterling.

[00:18:22] It is our duty to shape good individuals for society and to provide opportunities for children who lack access to these kinds of activities. Activities that in turn foster values such as teamwork, personal discipline, and healthy competition.

[00:18:40] They also create a sense of belonging that they may have been taken from them by the current system we live in. This will be just a small step toward a better future for these children who need it so much. Human talent should be used for more than just generating profit.

[00:18:56] Let's give these children the chance to showcase their potential. Potential that may remain undiscovered simply because they lack the necessary resources. As their representatives, you have the power to provide that opportunity to them. Thank you. Thank you.

[00:19:13] Brayden Willis, followed by Jessica Berg. Brayden Willis. Okay. Jessica Berg followed by Julia Holcomb. Hi, good afternoon. My name is Jessica Berg. I'm a high school English and women and gender studies and I'm here in regards to our DEI program in the county.

[00:19:42] Frankly, I had a hard time figuring out what to say because it is so completely irrational to try to get rid of a program that helps every single one of our students. So I am not going to waste my time trying to convince some board members who apparently got into this work not to help kids, but harm them.

[00:20:04] History will judge you for that. Instead, I want to address our parents and our students that in this time of anxiety and fear-mongering, we as teachers will keep making our classrooms safe, inclusive spaces for everyone.

[00:20:25] because that is why we got into this profession. And the DEI program is integral to that work. I am lucky to be a teacher here in the county and to have my two daughters attending. Thank you, Ms. Burke. The next person is Julia Holcomb, followed by Samantha Zaboli.

[00:20:52] I'm not sure I can improve on what the previous teacher said, but I do want to cosign what she said. I'm Julia Jarvis. I teach English at George Mason University, this is my 27th year, which seems impossible, but there you are.

[00:21:08] And as I said, I want to co-sign what the previous teacher said. And the students who come to me from Loudoun County, and a lot of them do, and a lot of them also come from Fairfax County, reflect the valuable training that they have, and their social skills and their ability to look after each other and be there for each other partly a product of DEIA. What people sometimes don't realize is that it isn't only the children who have special needs for their education who benefit from being in a DEIA classroom. Children who have no problems at all,

[00:21:46] children who are neurotypical, also benefit from being with other students. So if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Leave DEIA where it is. Thank you. you no Raymond Qureshi followed by Carrie Alberts I'm sorry I'm it was Samantha Zaboli followed by no Raymond Qureshi I'm sorry good evening my name

[00:22:25] is Samantha Zaboli I am here as a on behalf of Rolling Ridge Elementary School as a parent as a PTA as an MSAC delegate and as a as an alum as well and I'm here to ask this board to consider after-school programs for title one schools because a lot of our families are working families low-income right now the burden of after-school is and I I'm sorry to say it's a burden but it's on the PTAs and for title one schools our PTAs are very overworked that a lot of the burden is on already working families and people get burned out pretty

[00:23:04] quick to run an after-school program it's like a part-time job and we just don't have that capacity. So it's something that could really help our students and our communities. A lot of these second,

third, and fourth graders are going home and waiting for their older siblings to come home, and that's just not great. They could have structured activities. Thank you.

[00:23:25] Thank you. Now, Nareman Qureshi, followed by Carrie Alberts. Good afternoon, Madam Chair, respected board. I'm actually just going to jump off where she ended. I was a family liaison for five years, and I can tell you that these after-school programs for our low-income families are crucial for a number of reasons.

[00:23:50] One, when I heard about this through New Virginia Majority, I thought it was the most beautiful marriage of what we're trying to do at LCPS under our 1LCPS 227 strategic plan. I think it really adheres to that content.

[00:24:07] It supports one of core values of equity and opportunity for every single student across the board. It ties in with three of our four goals, which are student empowerment and rich division, engaged community. For our low-income families, engagement is the biggest piece.

[00:24:25] And by providing them these after-school programs, you will bring a huge level of engagement for these families. I ask for the approval of this pilot program. Thank you. Thank you. Carrie Alberts, followed by Isabel Alcon. Good afternoon.

[00:24:46] For those of you who don't know me, my name is Carrie Alberts. I'm an LCPS teacher. I recently started coaching cross-country and track and field at Broad Run, which is my neighborhood high school. This afternoon, I'm speaking to you not just as a coach at Broad Run, but also as a parent of several student-athletes and a member of the wider Broad Run community.

[00:25:03] Broad Run's weight room is in need of refurbishment and has not been renovated for 18 years since 2007. During the course of a school year, over 300 student athletes use the weight room, as well as all the students in the weightlifting and advanced weightlifting classes. This is over 20% of our student population.

[00:25:20] We are asking for \$35,000 to cover the cost of refurbishment. I appreciate that the budget is tight and each department has growing needs. The amount I'm asking for is less than it would be if each of those 300 students using the weight room joined Planet Fitness for 10 months instead.

[00:25:36] And if you're unsure as to whether this expense is worthy of a line item in our budget, I invite you to come join my track team for a workout and see for yourself. Thank you for your consideration. Thank you. Isabel Alcon followed by David Liberto.

[00:25:58] No, Isabel Alcon. Okay. David Liberto followed by Patricia Lockwood. No, David Liberto.

[00:26:16] Okay. Patricia Lockwood followed by Erin Kunkel. Good afternoon.

[00:26:32] like to speak regarding the proposed changes in the insurance cover for our pre and post 65 year old retired teachers I urge you to table this proposal until more information is presented to the school board as well as the public this has been very little transparency in this proposal change since little and no data has been presented on how these changes will save money to the county there's no no information on what teachers with pre-existing conditions will have to face there's no information that if you opt for the monthly payment and then go off the county insurance and then a future date you're not satisfied with the county has in fact decreased the monthly siphon would you be able to go back

[00:27:10] on the insurance plan. I retired from Loudoun County I did so with the understanding that I would be provided insurance and not have to pay a cost and while this is still true for me I'm old I am just worried that this change that you're considering there are future changes considering those already on the Cigna Medicare plan. I think this discussion needs to be tabled and hopefully you will do that. Thank you. Thank you. Erin Kunkel followed by Lawanda Taylor. Good evening. My name

[00:27:48] is Erin Kunkel and I serve as the current chair of MSAC. MSAC stands firmly in support of the division of DEIA because their work is critical to ensuring that every child in LCPS feel seen, heard, affirmed, and above all, loved. DEIA is not about taking opportunities away.

[00:28:06] It is about making sure that every student has what they need to succeed. When we uplift all students, our entire school division thrives. But make no mistake, undermining DEIA does not protect children. It harms them. We cannot allow hate, fear, bigotry to dictate our policy at the expense of our students' futures.

[00:28:25] IMSEC urges this board to fully support the division of DEIA because children's lives and their futures are at stake. Thank you. Thank you. Lawanda Taylor, followed by Celeste Laskowski. Lawanda Taylor.

[00:28:50] Celeste Laskowski, followed by Josue Ayala. Good afternoon.

[00:29:05] I'm here as a taxpayer and a retiree. And choosing to retire is a life-changing decision, both emotionally and financially, and it's something not to be taken lightly. In observing the benefits process that has taken place this year, I'm really disappointed.

[00:29:24] There was no transparency, and retirees were not included in the process. Teachers have always had to show data, and what little data I saw just didn't seem to add up. It boils down to a lack of information at this time.

[00:29:42] So who knows retirement better than retirees? The fallback of the consultant said was really insulting, and teaching is all about making connections, so why hasn't anyone connected with us?

[00:30:00] We're really smart. We have master's degrees. That's why I got where we... Thank you. Jose Ayala, followed by Sandy Sullivan. No, Jose Ayala.

[00:30:22] Sandy Sullivan, followed by Lola Cadden. Good afternoon. The specific budget items I'm addressing this evening all relate to recognition and support.

[00:30:40] They ultimately support all, students and employees both. First, make no changes or cost increases to insuring retiree health care. Your retirees have served our students and deserve stability in the benefits they receive in their retirement. Second, ensure competitive step increases and scale adjustments are funded for all employees.

[00:31:01] And for those at the top of the salary scale, make sure their salary increase equates to what employees moving up the scale would receive, and making those funds a part of the base salary, not a one-time payment which does not go to retirement.

[00:31:18] And our diverse learners must have the supports and programs in place that DEIA provides. In order to support our diverse learners, DEIA programs must be maintained and strengthened. Thank you.

[00:31:33] Lola Kaden, followed by DJ Araki. Thank you. No, Lola DJ Araki, followed by Mahalat Abdallah. Forever lies in my blood, which belongs to a land that's been stolen, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, a land that is sodden with the cheers of children's pleas.

[00:32:06] I'm from this land my eyes have never seen, and a land I would return to, even if it's the last thing I ever see. Forever also lies in my heart, which is from a small peninsula named Qatar, where my family and I could live in peace, and me and my countless cousins ran around, demolishing said peace. This was my life, this was my childhood.

[00:32:23] Then a new life emerged, a little girl, my little sister, and forever she will be. My brain is from right here, on the land I stand on. I learned to think like an American, to act like an American, and most importantly, to be proud like an American. But beneath, an American I will forever be, but beneath everything there is my soul.

[00:32:39] My soul is not from one single place, but it is a cultivation of everywhere I've been, whether that's from the river to the sea or from sea to shining sea. This poem is one of many me and tens of other students wrote yesterday in a meeting held by MSAC and the DEIA department, which couldn't have happened without proper support and funding.

[00:32:56] Thank you. Thank you. Mahalat Abdallah, followed by Yvonne Sintala. Today I stand before you not only as an educator of the last 14 years, but also as a parent, deeply committed to the principles of DEIA in our schools.

[00:33:19] These values are not just buzzwords. They are the foundation upon which we build a brighter, more inclusive future for our children. As an educator, I witness firsthand the transformative power of a diverse and inclusive classroom. When students from different backgrounds come together, they bring unique perspectives, rich cultural experiences, and varied ways of thinking.

[00:33:38] This diversity fosters creativity, critical thinking, and empathy, skills that are essential in our increasingly interconnected world. By embracing DEIA, we create an environment where each and every student feels valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential.

[00:33:54] Equity ensures that each and every student has access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, regardless of their background. Inclusion means that each and every child feels a sense of belonging and is encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of school life. Accessibility guarantees that no student is left behind due to physical, cognitive, or...

[00:34:13] Thank you. Yvonne, excuse me. demonstrating DIA. Please sit down, please. Yvonne Centella. I am Yvonne Centella. I'll start at the beginning. My grandparents were European immigrants when their country was demolished.

[00:34:43] They moved here for the safety and education of their children. It's the same story now. People are coming to our country for the safety and education of their children. I have taught for a long time, and at the beginning of my experience, I taught in a South American country that would

[00:35:16] have uh the the people in it would have liked to follow me home when um strikes and and other um difficult times came about at the end of my um thank you sorry um excuse me thank you for your comment um i see um thank you all for your public comment um i want to remind everyone that

[00:35:55] Per our policy, maximum allowable size of any sign, banner, flag, or visual prop is 24 by 30. Any such item that extends beyond these limits in any dimension may not be brought inside the building.

[00:36:12] All items must be handheld and not supported by any stick, pole, frame, or handle. Items must remain on the person and may not be adhered to on the wall or any surface. All signs and flags and banners and visual props must be constructed of paper, non-corrugated cardboard, soft cloth, paper poster board.

[00:36:32] Signs mounted on or constructed of plastic, foam board, wood, or metal are not permitted in the building. And this is part of our citizen participation guidelines. So if anybody has those items, if you would please exit them out of the boardroom.

[00:36:54] I'd appreciate it. Thank you. With that we will ask Vice Chair Donohue to go ahead with her disclosure. 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 employee salaries, the budget, and or health insurance and any other discussion that may include or affect salary and benefits for LCPS employees. Specifically my spouse, my minor children, and I are enrolled in LCPS health insurance that may be affected by any

[00:37:30] potential changes to employee salaries the budget and or health insurance additionally my sister-in-law is an LCPS employee who does not reside with me and is not dependent on me these subjects include thousands of employees well 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 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 vice chair donahue before we get into the main part of this

[00:38:05] um i think i'd like to take a short recess for let's say i guess until what 5 15 okay the board

[00:38:17] is now in recess all right the board is back from recess and we will now move to what everybody is

[00:46:02] here for um the budget adoption so um actually well there is an information item of responses to budget questions but my understanding is there were no questions and so we're going to move on to number five the budget adoption okay vice chair donahue do you have a motion yes thank you madam

[00:46:34] chair i move to adopt the fy26 superintendent's estimate of needs and the fy26 budget resolution i have a motion do i have a second i have a second by a second by dr deans um that motion to adopt the superintendent estimates of needs and the budget resolution has been properly moved and seconded. Is there any discussion or amendments regarding the base motion? Vice Chair Donoghue.

[00:47:11] Thank you, Madam Chair. I move to amend the budget by enacting staff's recommended changes that include reducing the student services specialist to coordinator reclassification in the amount of \$61,065, reducing \$100,000 from the Department of the Superintendent's Training and Continuing Education budget, reducing \$1,200,000 from the Safety and Security Camera AI Project to support a more phased-in approach, and removing one ERP trainer from the Department

[00:47:45] of digital innovation in the amount of \$163,154 for a total reduction of \$1,524,219. I have a motion by Vice Chair Donahue.

[00:48:01] Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Ms. Chandler. The motion's been properly moved and seconded. Is there any discussion regarding this amendment to the base motion? Seeing no more discussion, we will move to amend the base motion by electronic vote.

[00:48:37] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote.

[00:48:55] And that motion passes 8-1 with Mrs. Griffiths in opposition. Okay, do we have any other amendments now that the base motion has been amended? Yes, Ms. LaBelle.

[00:49:13] I move to amend the budget by changing the athletic trainer staffing standard to two per high school and adding six athletic trainers for a cost of \$773,424. I have a motion by Ms. LaBelle. Do I have a second?

[00:49:34] Second. Okay. We have a second by Ms. Chernoff. The motion for the athletic trainers has been properly moved and seconded.

[00:49:49] Is there any discussion? Actually, Ms. LaBelle, do you want to speak to your motion first, and then I'll have Ms. Chernoff? Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. We have heard innumerable times about the value and the need for more than one athletic trainer in our schools.

[00:50:09] And to this, an answer to these people who have been asking is, yes, I think we need to do that. And to that end, I made that motion. Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[00:50:26] And thank you, Ms. LaBelle. And Ms. LaBelle and I were able to kind of collaborate on this together. I know it's a shared passion of ours. I think this is important for safety of our students. I've spoken about it before. And they've been out advocating for, I think, over a year now to have these positions.

[00:50:42] So I think it's really important that we prioritize that, and I would ask for the support, and I'm grateful for the reductions in the First Amendment that will make way for this and not increase the base budget. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Any other?

[00:50:59] Yes, Ms. Donahue. I'm Vice Chair. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to thank my colleagues for putting this amendment forward. I will be proud to support this, both because, as Ms. LaBelle already stated, we have heard the concerns of the community and also because it's a safety issue many of us ran including myself on concerns of the safety of our safety and well-being of all of our students and that applies in all circumstances including in our athletic programs and I am excited that

[00:51:31] that this amendment is before us tonight thank you okay we can go ahead and move make that motion to amend the base motion as amended for athletic trainers. Clerk, would you please open the vote?

[00:51:48] Board members, would you please record your vote? Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion passes unanimously. Do I have any other amendments to the base motion as amended?

[00:52:09] Yes, Vice Chair Astrafi. No longer Vice Chair, out of respect for... Gosh, Mr. Astrafi. Vice Chair Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move to amend the budget by adding \$280,278 and one coordinator to expand the international baccalaureate program to Parkview High School.

[00:52:31] I have a motion by Mr. Estreffi. Do I have a second? Second. I saw Dr. Rasheed. I have a second by Dr. Rasheed. The motion has been properly moved and seconded.

[00:52:49] Would you like to speak to your motion, Mr. Estreffi? Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, very briefly. I have spoken publicly about the expansion of the IB program to Parkview High School. I believe that this is an opportunity to expand, provide access to and expand opportunities for rigorous learning that the IB program provides to Eastern Loudoun, where we don't have other special programs, and how it's important that we continue to expand these opportunities in eastern Loudoun.

[00:53:25] Thank you, Ms. Tristrophe. Yes, Ms. Chandler. Thank you. I'm really pleased to offer my support in this amendment as well. Although I appreciate that Leesburg is considered a central location, I'd love to point out, and will continue to do so, that 85 percent of the Loudoun population lives east of 15 and having services like this in eastern Loudoun will go a long way to making sure that we're providing access to all of our students

[00:53:54] any other discussion seeing no more discussion um we will move to further amend the base motion as previously amended for uh ib program at parkview by electronic vote clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote and that motion does

[00:54:32] not it does pass with uh eight to one with mrs griffiths in opposition do i have another amendment to the base motion as previously amended i think i can yes mrs griffiths i have um several amendments that i'd like to go through but i would like to say that um due to enrollment being down I'd like to stay within the FY25 budget all I see are programs that are not needed for achieve the achievement of our students LCPS is not being run

[00:55:07] properly like a business I see too much waste so there should be cuts I move to amend the budget by adding well first off this is an ad I moved to amend the budget by adding high school key club sponsorships to ban 10 of the hourly banded rates schedule, increase the budget by \$26,691, and direct staff to continue refining stipends and additional compensation for inclusion in the FY27 budget. That's number one.

[00:55:41] I have a motion by Mrs. Griffiths. Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Ms. Donahue. Ms. Griffiths, would you like to further speak to your motion? Well, based on our discussions, we have talked about adding these costs for the key clubs.

[00:56:05] I took the opportunity to provide this amendment, so I was hoping this can be considered. Thank you. Any other discussion? Seeing none, we will move to go ahead and vote on Mrs. Griffith's amendment to further amend the base motion as previously amended.

[00:56:26] There's going to be a lot of amending in this tonight. Clerk please open the vote. Board members please record your vote. Clerk please close and display the vote. That motion does not pass one to eight with Ms.

[00:56:51] Chandler, Dr. Deans, Ms. Mansfield, Vice Chair Donohue, Mr. Estreffi, Ms. Chernoff, Dr. Rashid and Ms. LaBelle all in opposition. Is there another amendment to the base motion as previously amended? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. I have several amendments and again when I go through these amendments I ask that you think about being fiscally responsible when you vote I moved to amend the budget by removing resources in support of the recovery school by reducing the budget by nine hundred thousand nine nine hundred thousand twelve dollars I'm

[00:57:28] I'm sorry, \$912,760, and the associated 8.5 FTE. I have a motion by Mrs. Griffiths. Do I have a second? I do not have a second, so that motion.

[00:57:46] I'll second it. Okay. Mrs. Chernoff is seconding the motion. Mrs. Griffiths, would you like to speak to your motion? As far as the recovery school goes, I don't know that we'll be able to sustain it with enrollment, and I think the money going towards this recovery school is wasted.

[00:58:05] so that's why i'm putting this amendment forward we will need the enrollment from loudon county or surrounding counties to help this recovery school continue so i know we're starting it this year and there are not a lot of costs associated with it but i think that we need to reevaluate whether or not we need this recovery school thank you thank you mr griffiths any other discussion seeing no board discussion we will move to further amend the base motion as

[00:58:38] previously amended by the electronic vote uh clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote and that motion does not pass with um two to seven with miss chandler dr deans miss manfield miss donahue mr astreffy miss shirnoff and dr rasheed

[00:59:10] in opposition uh is there another amendment to the base motion as previously amended mrs griffiths thank you madam chair um i move to amend the budget by removing resources in support of the elementary alternative program by reducing the budget by uh 60 630 000 and the associated 7.0 fte thank you i have a motion by mrs griffiths do i have a second second i have a second by

[00:59:43] Ms. Chernoff is there any uh Mrs. Griffiths would you like to speak to your motion um being fiscally responsible I'm not sure why we would need an elementary school or alternative program that costs over six hundred and thirty thousand dollars so that's why I put this amendment forward thank you thank you Mrs. Griffiths any other discussion seeing no more discussion we will go

[01:00:12] ahead and vote on mrs griffith's motion for the alternative school clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display your vote and that motion does not pass one to eight with ms chandler dr deans ms mansfield vice chair donahue mr streffi ms Chernoff, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle in opposition. Do I have another motion? Yes,

[01:00:52] Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you. Again, I am looking at being fiscally responsible here, and I don't see the need for an elementary after-school pilot program that provides free transportation.

[01:01:09] we already have transportation issues at this time so I'm sorry my computer so I am looking to amend the budget removing resources in support of elementary after-school pilot programs by reducing the budget by one million four hundred sixty three thousand four hundred and nine dollars thank you I have a motion by mrs. Griffiths is there a second second second by vice chair Donahue That motion has been properly moved and seconded.

[01:01:46] Ms. Griffiths, would you like to speak to your motion? I think I spoke to my motion when I said, basically, we should be fiscally responsible. It's not necessary. And we already have transportation issues, and then we're providing additional free transportation.

[01:02:05] I don't think that's fiscally responsible, and I don't think it would work. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Griffiths. Any more discussion? Seeing no more discussion, we will move to further amend the base motion as previously amended by electronic vote.

[01:02:21] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote.

[01:02:39] That motion will not pass 1-8 with Ms. Chandler, Dr. Deans, Ms. Mansfield, Vice Chair Donohue, Mr. Streffi, Ms. Chernoff, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle in opposition. Is there another amendment to the base motion as previously amended?

[01:02:59] - Yes, Mrs. Griffith. - I move to amend the budget by removing additional behavioral resources by reducing the budget \$807,000 that is associated with five FTE. Again, it's about being fiscally responsible with this budget.

[01:03:18] Thank you. - I have a motion by Mrs. Griffiths. Do I have a second? - Second. - I have a second by Vice Chair Donahue. Would you like to speak to your motion again, Mrs. Griffiths? - Well, I think it speaks for itself that I am looking to cut the budget and stay within FY25.

[01:03:39] Thank you. - Is there any discussion? Seeing no more discussion, we will move to further amend the base motion by Mrs. Griffiths as previously amended by electronic vote. Clerk, please open the vote.

[01:03:56] Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion does not pass.

[01:04:11] One to eight with Ms. Chandler, Dr. Deans, Chair Mansfield, Vice Chair Donahue, Mr. Estreffi, Ms. Chernoff, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle in opposition. Is there another motion? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths.

[01:04:28] I move to amend the budget by removing the staffing standard enhancement for instructional coaches by reducing the budget by \$650,000 and 5.0 FTE, again, being fiscally responsible and keeping the budget within FY25.

[01:04:49] Thank you. - I have a motion by Mrs. Griffiths. Do I have a second? - Second. - I have a second by Ms. Chernoff. The motion has been properly, the motion to amend the base motion as previously amended has been by Ms. Griffiths is getting all mixed up now.

[01:05:10] Anyway, do you want to speak to your motion, Ms. Griffiths? - Again, staying within the FY25 budget, we have to make reductions. Thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Griffiths. Is there any other discussion?

[01:05:27] Okay, seeing no more discussion, we will move to further amend the base motion as previously amended by electronic vote. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote.

[01:05:48] Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion does not pass 2-7 with Ms. Chandler, Dr. Deans, Chair Mansfield, Vice Chair Donahue, Mr. Streffy, Ms. Chernoff, and Dr. Rasheed in opposition. Do I have another motion?

[01:06:06] Yes, Ms. Griffiths. might as well just keep looking at me down this way um yes um as far as my next uh motion i would like to amend the budget by removing uh the resources supporting the lexia core 5 by reducing the budget by 270 000 this is another way to reduce the budget and help us stay within fy25 thank you thank you miss griffiths do we have a second second i have a second by miss donna by Vice Chair Donahue. Would you like to speak to your motion, Mrs. Griffiths? It's really about

[01:06:45] expenses that are not needed and keeping the budget within FY25. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Is there any other discussion? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Chair Mansfield.

[01:07:01] While I have many grievances with the digital component of the Lexia platform, we are moving that through our curriculum and instruction committee starting tomorrow, and I feel that that's the best

way to evaluate the program since it is a one-year renewal in this budget cycle so while I saw myself getting there originally I just wanted to clear up that I will not be supporting getting rid of it I also noted that this is really the funding that supports interventions that are supported by the Virginia Literacy Act so whether or not that is Lexia we do need those funds to help intervention with our students and so that is where I have landed with this and I

[01:07:38] just want to make sure that was on the record. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Is there any discussion? Seeing no more discussion, we'll move to further amend the base motion as previously amended by electronic vote. Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote.

[01:07:58] Clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion does not pass. One to eight with Ms. Chandler, Dr. Deans, Chair Mansfield, Vice Chair Donohue, Mr. Streffi, Ms. Chernoff, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LaBelle in opposition. Mrs. Griffiths, do you have another motion? Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:08:17] I move to amend the budget by removing the Child Find Staffing Standard Enhancements related to the Full Day Step Program by reducing the budget by \$314,966 and the associated two FTE.

[01:08:35] I have a motion by Ms. Griffiths. Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Ms. Chernoff. Ms. Griffiths, would you like to speak to your motion? Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. as i put these amendments forward this is strictly to stay within the fy25 budget and it just basically stay there and not have a lot of items that are not needed for lcps students that do not help in achievement thank you thank you miss griffiths is there any discussion

[01:09:13] seeing no more discussion we will move to further amend the base motion as previously amended by the electronic vote clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote clerk please close and display the vote and that motion does not pass one to eight with ms chandler dr dean's chair mansfield vice chair donahue mr streffi ms shurnoff dr rasheed and ms labelle in opposition

[01:09:46] is there another uh amendment to the base motion is previously amended yes thank you madam chair i moved to amend the budget by removing the expansion of the el uh welcome center by reducing the budget by 651 024 and the associated fte thank you i have a motion by uh mrs griffiths do i have a second second i have a second by vice chair donahue um that's been probably moved and

[01:10:23] seconded is there any discussion actually miss griffiths would you like to speak to your motion Um, a welcome, an additional welcome center is not needed at this time. I suggest we do a reevaluation next year. Uh, but I'm trying to stay within the FY25 budget and stay fiscally responsible.

[01:10:41] Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Um, any other discussion? No. Okay. So seeing no more discussion, we will move to further amend the base motion as previously amended by the electronic vote. Clerk, please open the vote.

[01:10:58] Board members, please record your vote. clerk please close and display the vote and that motion does not pass with two to seven with miss griffis i mean with uh miss chandler dr deans chair mansfield vice chair donahue mr astreffi ms shirnoff and dr rasheed in opposition um do i have another amendment to the base motion as previously amendment i'm almost done yes mrs griffis um in alignment with the president's

[01:11:31] executive order, I moved to amend the budget by removing all resources to the DIEA office by reducing the budget by \$2,802,616 and the associated 11 FTE in reallocating \$2,780,332 to fund 23 special

education teachers and reallocating \$22,000 to the Department of school leadership to create a fund stream application and approval process for band or theater group trips. This action will result in a reduction of force. In accordance with the

[01:12:11] regulations with regulation 7910, all affected licensed employees will be notified as soon as possible within two weeks after the approval of the school budget by the appropriating body and later than July 1st. From the reduction in force, any leftover money for a booster would be for booster club funds. This would provide supplemental funds to boosters. The booster clubs would need to fill out specific paperwork to be applicable for funding. It should be focused on trips for the band, theater groups, and sports teams that are traveling out of state or the country.

[01:12:45] I do have a proposal. Should I mention that as well? I think you need to stick with a motion. okay all right so i'll just stay with my motion for that thank you so i have a um i have a uh motion by miss mrs griffiths do i have a second second i have a second by ms shirnoff ms griffiths would you like to speak to your motion yes thank you madam chair i think um in regards to the

[01:13:20] president's executive order, we should follow through with reducing DEI department and taking that money and putting it towards much needed teachers for special education. And also, I have had several booster groups, sports teams, theaters, bands, asking for supplemental money for trips that could be out of state or out of the country.

[01:13:49] So I think if we started a fund with an application process, that that would be helpful to them. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Any other discussion? Yes, Dr. Deans. I would like to speak to that, please.

[01:14:07] I do want to take a moment to affirm why the work of the Division of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accountability is essential in our schools. At its core, DEI is about ensuring that every child, not some, regardless of race, background, ability, or identity, has the opportunity to succeed.

[01:14:35] Research consistently show that schools with strong DEI initiatives see higher student achievement, improved graduation rates, and increased student engagement.

[01:14:53] A study from the American Educational Research Association found that students in inclusive schools perform better academically and report a stronger sense of belonging. If we are truly committed to student success, we cannot ignore the proven benefits of these programs.

[01:15:19] Thank you, Dr. Deans. Do I have any other discussion? Yes, Dr. Rashid. I will not be supporting this motion. I am a firm believer in promoting DEIA. I refuse to hear any type of defunding, dismantling, or taking away from DEIA, especially coming from a brown woman myself.

[01:15:42] I find that diversity, all of what it stands for, is imminent to a child's education. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Rasheed. Ms. Griffiths? Thank you very much for that. I think that if we had the data from LCPS that told us exactly how it's been helping our students, that would help a little bit more, but we do not have data, and at this time, I think we're jeopardizing potential funding for LCPS that could affect Title I

[01:16:17] schools, so that's why I'm putting this motion forward, and thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, Dr. Deans. Some of the data involves creating safe and inclusive learning environments.

[01:16:40] Students perform better when they feel a sense of belonging. A 2022 Ed Week Research Center survey found that students in schools with strong DEI programs were 35% more likely to feel valued and

supported.

[01:17:00] Schools with comprehensive DEI programs report fewer disciplinary incidents and reduce absenteeism. And we know that the state is going to measure us on attendance for the new year.

[01:17:18] So defunding DEI would hurt vulnerable students the most. And as a result, I am very much against defunding. Thank you, Dr. Deans. Any other? Thank you so much.

[01:17:35] I'm sorry. You've spoken twice already. Let me get Ms. Chandler and then Ms. LaBelle. I would like to speak to. Can I get Ms. Chandler and then Ms. LaBelle? Didn't know who was first.

[01:17:52] Thank you. I would like to go on the record as saying we belong together. The fact that we are together is just a fact. We have to look at how we as a division can be responsible to each other and expand the circle of who matters right education has always been and will always be one of the best ways to ensure access to the American dream and we cannot falter so with that

[01:18:30] I will not be supporting the motion. Thank you Ms. Chandler. Ms. LaBelle. Thank you Madam Chair. While I feel like we are an inclusive community and I feel like all our teachers are inclusive and caring and kind, I would like to point out that currently we have been directed to not implement DEI from the federal level. The president has said that he will take away any funding for

[01:19:06] the states that support DEI. The government has received notice as of today that they are going to look at what the various county school boards are doing in the state of Virginia and in particular Arlington Public Schools, Alexandria Public Schools, City of Alexandria Public Schools, Prince William and Loudoun. And so we will be facing an inquiry and possibly the loss of federal

[01:19:46] funding, which, yes, is only 1% of the CION that we are looking at today, but does come to over \$48 million. It would injure not only our DEI programs, but also all Title I money would be gone, as would our cafeteria funding for nutrition, school nutrition, also CTE programs with the Perkins funds, and additionally, special ed income for supporting our special students.

[01:20:22] So my question that I keep asking myself over and over again, are we willing to lose over \$48 million supporting all these programs? Thank you. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle.

[01:20:38] Yes, Dr. Spence. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. I hope it's okay, based on the conversation, if I just share a little bit of administrative perspective on a couple of things that have been offered so I will say just first I want to be kind of upfront as superintendent I am committed to ensuring that every student in our school division has the opportunity to thrive learn and succeed I think everybody on the school board is as well but I would say the division of diversity equity inclusion and accessibility is essential in that mission and it ensures that our schools do remain welcoming and supportive for all of our students and staff I do want to be clear about a few things so despite what some have come to believe

[01:21:16] our DEI efforts are not about divisiveness our DEI efforts are instead about opportunity and about inclusion and has been noted research does consistently show that when students feel a sense of belonging in our schools their academic success and overall well-being improve we can point to multiple research studies around this but we can also point to our own data and I think it would be fair to say that we have seen improvement and access and an achievement amongst reporting groups and LCPS since these initiatives came into being which came into being before my arrival and came into being before this board's arrival. I also think it is important to note that the work of DEIA

[01:21:54] ensures that our curriculum is inclusive, that our policies are non-discriminatory, and that our teaching is culturally responsive as required by the State Board of Education. I think the work also upholds a fundamental principle that every single child deserves equal access to education free from discrimination. I want to address the recent presidential executive order.

[01:22:12] the recent order does not ban all DEI initiatives. As many legal experts have already noted, it targets only practices that violate the law. And in fact, in point of fact, our work in this area is firmly rooted in compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws, ensuring that our schools do remain places of fairness and opportunity. Furthermore, I think it is important to note that the order does not prohibit state and local governments, federally funded institutions, or contractors from engaging in First Amendment protected speech. I do want to assure the board if I felt the work of the division was illegal or infringing on staff or student rights, I would ensure that we were addressing that. But with regards to this order, here's where LCPS stands.

[01:22:52] LCPS is unaware of any policies and practices that violate applicable civil rights laws, particularly in a manner that would be discriminatory to any individual. The existence of equity is not inherently illegal. Rather, the aspirational work LCPS engages and assures that all individuals experience a safe and welcoming environment. LCPS does recognize merit and at the same time does have an aspirational goal to prepare individuals for a diverse community and workforce. LCPS does not engage in practices whereby it affords or applies preferential treatment based on race, color, sex, or national origin, which appears to be an aim of these

[01:23:29] presidential actions. LCPS will continue to make sure all policies and practices are applied in a way that is legal and not discriminatory. LCPS legal counsel will continue to monitor relevant updates to inform any necessary action, but at this time, further guidance from federal agencies may not be forthcoming until at least the end of March or beyond, and there could be legal challenges that may further delay such guidance or the implementation thereof or require modifications and revisions to any kind of forthcoming guidance. Beyond the legal issues, concerns about federal funding also appear to be misplaced at this time. As noted, this appears to only be a concern where

[01:24:08] there are violations of the law, which again is not likely the case. Moreover, the majority of federal education funds, including some mentioned this evening, like Title I, IDEA, and Perkins Grants Funds for Career and Technical Education are allocated specifically in statute by Congress and cannot be unilaterally rescinded by executive order. Any significant funding changes would require legislative action, which would make an immediate response unnecessary. Additionally, the executive order itself allows, as has been said, a 120-day assessment period, underscoring the idea that any drastic action right now would be premature moreover eliminating the division of

[01:24:46] dei is not going to erase the challenges our students and staff face and instead i sincerely believe it would hinder our ability to provide a high quality and equitable education for all our division provides vital programs and resources that help remove barriers to learning offering students support from all backgrounds including those with disabilities different cultural experiences and varying socioeconomic needs through initiatives like mentorship programs cultural competency training and accessible learning materials the division of DEIA ensures that every child has what they need to reach their full potential which matters because our role as educators is to prepare students for the future in an environment where they feel valued and supported

[01:25:25] and the work of the division of DEIA is integral to that responsibility. I strongly urge the board to continue in the investment of this mission. I'll speak just for a moment about the recent call for an investigation into the five northern Virginia counties and cities that were mentioned that is specific to concerns around gender ideology which is a different presidential order and not related directly to the work of DEIA but rather to policy directives from the school board and compliance with statutory law under the Gavin Grimm case. I do welcome direction from the board but I do think it's critically important that my perspective the

[01:26:03] administrative perspective is clear and I do think it's important our community knows that our commitment to fairness, opportunity, and excellence will remain steadfast, and I believe that includes supporting the work of our division of DEIA, and also I want our community to know that no matter what happens next, we will continue to ensure that every student in our division is known, seen, loved, and heard. Thank you, Dr. Spence. Is there any further discussion? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. Regarding the DEI program, I think it's fairly new. We've

[01:26:37] had it for the past, what, five years. I have yet to see any data that it's helping any students achieve, especially with the Title I schools. Scores have gone down. So without this data, it is very hard for me to be in favor of funding the DEI department. And just to reiterate, I wanted to move, I'm suggesting a motion to move money from DEI into special ed that needs it more.

[01:27:17] Reallocating this money would get 23 special education teachers. So without the data for my constituents, for myself and my constituents, I don't believe here today, it's been proven that it is effective in achievement. And again, the executive order might be at the federal level, but we are at risk of losing that money.

[01:27:50] I just want to point that out. To be fiscally responsible, I think we should be taking that money that's much needed for special education. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Griffiths. Is there any other discussion? Seeing no more discussion, we will move on to the vote for Ms. Griffith's amendment to further amend the base motion as previously amended. Clerk, please open the

[01:28:19] vote. Clerk, please, board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion does not pass with three to six. I think you did. Can

[01:28:50] we um mr allen do we have to we can do can we revote since we haven't moved on thank you madam chair yes that's that would be appropriate to take a re-vote if there was an incorrect vote that you're aware of okay i think dr deans has stated that her vote was incorrect okay let's let's clear

[01:29:20] the board please and revote so this is a motion to amend the base motion to defund deia um board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion does not pass two to seven with Ms. Chandler, Dr. Deans, Chair Mansfield, Vice Chair Donohue, Mr. Estreffi, Ms. Chernoff, and Dr. Rasheed in opposition. Okay, we were moving on. Is there

[01:30:00] another amendment to the base motion as previously amended? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Thank you, Madam Chair. This is my last one. I move to amend the budget by removing the additional one family liaison position added per the staffing standard, resulting in a budget reduction of \$69,311.

[01:30:21] This is for the Department of Communications and Community Engagement. There is one additional position for FY26. Thank you. I have a motion by Mrs. Griffiths. Do I have a second? Second. Yes, I have a second by Ms. Chernoff.

[01:30:39] Ms. Griffiths, would you like to speak to your motion? Being fiscally responsible, we would be removing \$69,311 from the budget. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Griffiths.

[01:30:56] Any other discussion? No, seeing no more discussion. We will go ahead and vote to further amend the base motion as previously amended by electronic vote.

[01:31:12] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion fails one to eight with Ms. Chandler, Dr. Deans, Chair Mansfield, Vice Chair Donahue, Mr. Streffi, Ms. Chernoff, Dr. Rasheed, and Ms. LeBell in opposition.

[01:31:38] Is there another amendment to the base motion as previously amended? Yes, Mr. Streffi. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move to amend the budget by increasing the budget by \$186,689 for the addition of one summer programs and after school services coordinator.

[01:31:54] I have a motion by Vice Chair Struffy. Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Vice Chair Donohue. Did I say Vice Chair Struffy again? Nope, you didn't. I said Mr. Struffy. Vice Chair Donohue. It's been properly moved and seconded. Is there any discussion?

[01:32:13] Actually, Mr. Struffy, would you like to speak to your motion? Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. Very briefly, just want to add that this was brought up in a previous discussion at one of our work sessions by the board. And I feel that the after-school services coordinator, this relates to the after-school programs pilot.

[01:32:32] I think this position would be vital to make sure that we can manage all of the after-school programs that we have proposed, as well as fill one of the gaps for a summer programs coordinator that we know exists.

[01:32:50] Thank you, Mr. Estreffi. Any other discussion? Yes, Mrs. Griffiths. Once again, I will add that we're not being fiscally responsible here and we're adding to the budget instead of making cuts and taking costs away.

[01:33:07] So I will not be voting for this motion. Thank you. Thank you, Mrs. Griffiths. Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Mr. Streffi, for bringing this forward. I just wanted to note that I had shared some concerns about a third-party vendor being involved in running these programs.

[01:33:27] And I think having a coordinator on the LCPS side will help to be a liaison. between the values that we hold here in LCPS and a third-party vendor, so sort of an accountability check. So while, in general, I do not love increasing the budget, I do think that this is a necessity if we are going to move forward with a third party.

[01:33:46] So I will support that. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Is there any discussion? Seeing no more discussion, we will move to the electronic vote. Board members, clerk, please open the vote.

[01:34:02] Board members, please record your vote. clerk please close and display the vote that motion passes eight to one with miss chandler with mrs griffiths in opposition um okay i have two amendments uh i'll start with this one um one item that's always been important to me is high dosage tutoring and the research around

[01:34:39] high dosage tutoring to move the needle for struggling students is irrefutable it needs to be done according to what research has found to be highly effective in person in person with highly trained

and supported tutors with aligned evidence-based school curriculum small groups during this school day. It has been shown to be 20 times more effective than standard tutoring models for math and 15 times more effective for reading and studies demonstrate that the practice increases students learning by an additional three to 15 months across all grade levels. So my motion

[01:35:14] I move to further amend the budget as previously amended to reallocate 500,000 of vendor-based online tutoring funds to in-person tutoring services for high dosage tutoring during the school day by highly trained and supported tutors with structured curriculum that is aligned with the school's instruction for math and literacy grades three through eight having no financial

[01:35:39] impact on the budget do I have a second second I have a second by Ms. LaBelle and I think I did speak to it I think everybody knows how passionate I am about literacy and struggling readers and writers and also math and I think that the evidence is is and the research since before

[01:36:14] the pandemic and after the pandemic is irrefutable for high dosage tutoring in schools not out of schools and I'm not a huge fan of online homework assistance so because I think we need to focus on the kids right now and evidence-based instruction and those struggling readers and right and kids in math so is there any other discussion yes Miss LaBelle I appreciate you making this motion as the new national report card came out and it shows additional instruction

[01:36:53] is needed. We're still not up to par here in Virginia. So thank you for that. Thank you, Ms. LaBelle. Any other discussion? Yes, Ms. Griffiths. Thank you so much for bringing this forward. I did have a question for you. Does this mean we get away from all in for tutors and varsity tutors and we would have instruction in the schools? Is that what you're saying? We're getting away from the actual vendors that we have been using there could be the possibility of a vendor with university instructors which are in person and come to the schools they are also being

[01:37:27] trained they also have training in the vla modules and so the the principals would have the opportunity to either hire their own or move with university okay thank you any other discussion Okay. Okay, so we will go ahead and move for the vote to amend the base motion as previously amended by electronic vote.

[01:38:05] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion passes unanimously.

[01:38:23] My next amendment, we have received several emails about retiree benefits. I heard the fear, the confusion, and the hurt, and I would like more public-facing education discussion and input around this area, so my amendment is to a pause on the vote and giving the direction to staff to put together a separate work session on this item, in addition to it having to go through the board process of information item in action.

[01:38:58] I thought about having it in committees after that board work session, but then concluded that it really is the whole board, and I think we all need to be more educated on it, and it needs to be included from the beginning, and that will also provide more input and more public comment from everybody else, and I think we should work through it together.

[01:39:25] So I move to further amend, I mean, I can tell you Ms. Chernoff is also a part of, and Ms. Labelle, I mean, there were a lot of us who were very concerned and we heard you. I move to further amend the budget as previously amended by increasing the health self-insurance fund expenditures by

\$890,000, increasing the health self-insurance fund revenues by \$890,000, and increasing the school operating fund non-departmental expenditures by \$740,000.

[01:40:02] Additionally, I propose delaying any changes to the retiree health plan and directing staff to present the topic to the school board in a work session for further discussion and deliberation with the possibility of taking action on plan changes, possibility, in the spring of 2025 to be effective January 1st, 2026.

[01:40:29] Do I have a second? Second. I have a second by Ms. Chernoff. I think you heard what I had to say about it. Board members, is there any other discussion? Ms. LeBell. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to make sure that by your motion, you are grandfathering the current plan that's in place until we make a change. Is that part of this? Nobody wants to go without health insurance. That's why I'm asking.

[01:41:06] So I am keeping things as is for now, and we will have further discussions during the work session and be more educated and have more input so yes it will stay as is until we vote differently do we need to put that in the motion itself so that it's there okay thank you any other discussion yes dr spence i think just to layer additional clarity for miss labelle so if the

[01:41:46] board votes on this motion and this is in the budget then everything stays the same until such time as the board would vote to make any other changes post post a work session on this kind you know on this conversation if changes were to be made the the current proposal that we had in that you are now sort of backing away from and delaying any kind of implementation on would only result in saving so it wouldn't have a negative impact on the budget that you would approve this evening. Thank you Dr. Spence. Yes Ms. Chernoff. Thank you Chair Mansfield and thank you for

[01:42:22] your partnership in this work and the questions asked and this is just one of those instances I think that really highlights reaching out is really important we need to hear your feedback I missed this I sat here I listened to the presentation and I'm not retired so I don't understand and I thank the comments earlier like talk to us and so that's really what made me pivot on this and take pause and I've had lots of conversations over the last couple of weeks with our retirees and our almost retirees and you know it we really we need to hear from you and so feedback matters we see it we read it we we will pick up the phone we will talk to you

[01:43:00] treating our employees and the people that have served this county matters I know to me and I know to this board and so I just I want to reiterate that that that is important you don't have to stay quiet if something is bothering you please bring it to our attention and we're going see where this goes like we said possibly changes um but we are going to be more informed along the way and then hopefully you'll be part of that process with us so thank you any other board discussion no seeing no more board discussion we will move to further amend the base motion as

[01:43:35] previously amended by electronic vote clerk please open the vote board members please record your vote.

[01:43:53] Clerk, please close and display the vote. That motion passes unanimously. Okay. I think that's it. Under. Okay. So are there any other amendments?

[01:44:23] Seeing no more amendments. We had IB. We had coordinator. Okay. All right. I think vice chair Donahue. Are we in the, yeah, Mrs. Wilby. Would you please? If I could just kind of pause of where we're at

and give a quick recap after all the motions that have been made so far the adjustments to the budget have resulted in a net increase of four hundred and fifty six thousand

[01:45:02] one hundred and seventy two dollars with the with an accompanying increase to the county transfer request in the same amount we've also increased FTEs by seven FTEs to maintain a balanced budget and maintain the same level of request to the county we would be looking for a reduction of four hundred and fifty six thousand one hundred and seventy two dollars and so there could be a motion staffs recommendation would be we could easily make a reduction in the Department of Support Services and move some purchases in the FY 26 budget into it FY

[01:45:41] 25 year-end funds and it would need to be the amount that is shown up here the \$456,172. Thank you, Ms. Willoughby, for keeping us in check. Vice Chair Donohue, do you have an amendment? Yes, thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Ms. Willoughby. I move to amend the budget by reducing the Department of Support Services materials, supplies, and equipment account by \$456,172 in funding the associated purchases out of FY25 appropriated unspent fund balance.

[01:46:20] Thank you, Vice Chair Donahue. Do I have a second? I have a second by Ms. Chandler. Is there any discussion? Seeing no discussion, we will move to, we will go ahead and vote to further amend the base motion as previously amended by electronic vote.

[01:46:48] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote.

[01:47:06] Clerk, please close and display the vote. And that motion passes unanimously. Okay, on to our last motion, Vice Chair Donahue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:47:23] I move to adopt the FY26 Superintendent's Estimate of Needs and the FY26 Budget Resolution as amended. I have a motion by Vice Chair Donahue. Do I have a second? I have a second by Mr. Estreffi.

[01:47:41] The motion's been properly moved and seconded. Is there any discussion? Yes, Ms. Chernoff. Thank you, Chair Mansfield. I'll make this brief. but at the beginning of this process, I had really looked for us to get to that \$100 million number, which was projected by the Board of Supervisors.

[01:48:00] I tried a lot of different ways to kind of get there and just came up short, no pun intended, and also just feel that there's a lot in this budget ask that doesn't reflect giving every employee a step increase and certain things that just never are, that were not addressed.

[01:48:19] And so I have struggled with the process in terms of, you know, questions create, you know, information creating more questions and needing more answers and just never really landing there. So I am grateful for the good things that have gotten in this budget and, you know, should try to show that with my votes tonight.

[01:48:37] I will not be supporting the overall 123 million because it exceeds the ask that we were offered. Thank you, Ms. Chernoff. Any other discussion? Okay, seeing no more discussion, we will move to our final motion.

[01:48:57] Clerk, please open the vote. Board members, please record your vote. Clerk, please close and display the vote.

[01:49:15] And the motion passes 6-3 with Ms. Griffiths, Ms. Chernoff, and Ms. LaBelle in opposition. Thank you, everyone, for your hard work. We are going to move to adjournment the February 4, 2025 Loudoun County School Board meeting.

[01:49:35] For the FY26 operating budget, adoption and public hearing is now adjourned. Please drive safely home.



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