

2023 Legislative Advocacy Update

Update for the Richmond City School Board

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Venue: Richmond City School Board Meeting

Date: March 6, 2023

Legislative Priority Overview

In the second year of the state budget process, the General Assembly adjourned without a budget agreement, leaving many policy proposals unresolved.

Priority	Outcome
Reform Virginia's Education Funding Streams & Formulas	No Action - recommendations expected in forthcoming JLARC report and possible House budget language regarding modernizing finance systems.
Supporting all Levels of English Learners	Pending - additional EL Teacher funding included in Senate budget.
Invest in Teachers and Support Staff	Pending - additional teacher compensation included in House and Senate budgets, and elimination of support staff cap included in Senate budget.
Support Localities in School Construction & Modernization	No Action
Modify the Classroom Size Reduction Waiver	No Action

House & Senate Budget Proposals - Statewide Policy Proposals

Proposal	Governor	House	Senate
Total Direct Aid to School Divisions	\$321.1m	\$382.8m	\$1.02b
2% Salary Increases	Not included	\$109.6m	\$116.8m
Retention Bonus	1% Bonus - \$45.2m	N/A (only for regional programs)	\$1k Bonus - \$140.4m
Teacher Performance Pay Incentives (\$5,000)	\$50m	Not included	Not included
Teacher Recruitment Incentives	\$10m	Same as Governor	Same as Governor
Eliminate Support Staff Cap	Not included	Not included	\$270.6m
Specialized Support Staff	Not included	Not included	\$56.9m
Reading Specialists	Grades 4-5: \$16.9m	Grades 4-8: \$30.8m	Grades 4-8: \$51.1m
EL Teacher Ratios	Not included	Not included	\$24.3m
Math Specialists for K-8 Schools with Low SOLs	\$7.2m	Same as Governor	Same as Governor
Hold Harmless from Calculation Error	Error not yet discovered	Maintains FY23 Funding Levels: \$4.9m	Full fix: \$58.1m
School Security Grants	Not included	\$13.5m	\$50m
At-Risk Add-On	Not included	Not included	\$37.1m
Lab Schools	\$50m	\$50m	-\$95m

RPS Direct Aid Estimates

Budget Version	FY23	FY24
Base Budget (Chapter 2)	\$165.8m	\$169.3m
Governor's Budget Proposal*	\$169.3m	\$173.4m
House Budget Proposal	\$169.1m	\$175.0m
Senate Budget Proposal	\$169.9m	\$192.4m

*The RPS FY24 School Board approved budget was based on the Governor's proposed budget.

Sources: [House Appropriations Committee](#) and [Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee](#)

Other Legislative Highlights

Below is a brief list of legislation of interest that passed this session:

- [HB 1526 \(Coyner\) & SB 1175 \(Lucas\)](#) - Expands the Virginia Literacy Act from students in kindergarten through grade three, to students in grades four through eight.
- [HB 1514 \(Adams\)](#) - Requires the Board of Education to provide for the waiver of graduation requirements and the subsequent award of a high school diploma upon the request of the parent of any high school senior who died in good standing prior to graduation during the student's senior year.
- [HB 1592 \(Davis\) & SB 1072 \(Bell\)](#) - Requires principals to notify the parent of any student who is involved in an alleged bullying incident of the alleged incident within 24 hours of learning of such allegation. Current law only requires the principal to notify any such parent of the status of any investigation into an alleged incident of bullying within five school days of when such allegation was made.
- [HB 2187 \(Rasoul\)](#) - Defines the terms "direct counseling" and "program planning and school support" for the purpose of the provision of law that requires each school counselor to spend at least 80 percent of his staff time during normal school hours in the direct counseling of individual students or groups of students and clarifies that each school counselor may also spend up to 20 percent of his staff time during normal school hours on program planning and support.
- [SB 1124 \(Stanley\)](#) - Requires the Board of Education to make recommendations to the General Assembly for amendments to the Standards of Quality to establish standards for the maintenance and operations, renovation, and new construction of public elementary and secondary school buildings. The bill requires such recommendations to include standards for the percentage of the current replacement value of a public school building that a school board should budget for the maintenance and operations of the building and such other standards as the Board deems appropriate.
- [SB 1215 \(Lucas\)](#) - Requires the VDOE to convene a stakeholder workgroup to prepare recommendations on the appropriateness, feasibility, potential fiscal impact, and potential unintended consequences of competitive teacher pay.
- [SB 1300 \(Deeds\)](#) - Directs the Board of Education and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to develop a trauma-informed care training program for the purpose of ensuring that all teachers are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and resources to recognize and address signs of childhood trauma, to foster a trauma-sensitive learning environment, and to ensure that students who have experienced childhood trauma receive the support they need, both inside and outside of the classroom. The bill requires the trauma-informed care training program to be provided once every three years by a representative from the DBHDS. Finally, the bill requires annual completion of the trauma-informed care training program by each teacher in the school division.

Next Steps

Budget Special Session

Given the impasse on the budget conference report, a special session to address the budget is anticipated sometime in the coming months.

Reconvened Session

On April 12, 2023, the General Assembly will hold the Reconvened Session to consider Governor Youngkin's vetoes and amendments to legislation.

Advocacy

It is never too late to advocate with legislators! It is critical that legislators feel pressure to adopt a new budget for the coming year. Visit www.virginiageneralassembly.gov to find legislator contact information and email them to ask them to fund the Senate's public education budget proposals.