



**Minutes  
School Board Budget Work Session  
Greene County Schools  
WMHS Digital Media Classroom  
January 24, 2024**

**Members Present: Mr. Brooks Taylor, Chair; Ms. Becky Roach, Vice-Chair; Ms. Kelly Greer, Member; Ms. Cherish Alberts, Member; Dr. Andrea Whitmarsh, Superintendent; Ms. Rhonda Houchens, Clerk; Ms. Kristie Spencer, Director of Financial and Human Resources; and Dr. Kyle Pursel, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Donna Payne, Director of Teaching and Learning and Ms. Dawn Gillette, Director of Student Services.**

**Mr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. in the WMHS Digital Media Classroom.**

**Mr. Taylor stated that Cara Bickers is unable to be here tonight so we are going to do an Electronic Participation Motion. In accordance with Greene County Public Schools' Policy BDD: Electronic Participation in Meetings from Remote Locations – The Greene County School Board must approve Ms. Bickers' request to participate electronically by a majority vote of members present.**

**Mr. Taylor asked if there was a motion to allow Ms. Bickers to participate electronically in this evenings meeting. Ms. Alberts made a motion to approve Ms. Bickers request to participate electronically in accordance with Greene County Public Schools' Policy BDD. Ms. Greer seconded. All Ayes, motion carried. Mr. Taylor stated for the record that Ms. Bickers is missing this meeting due to personal business reasons in accordance to Policy BDD.**

**Mr. Taylor requested a motion to approve the agenda.**

**Ms. Roach made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Greer seconded. No discussion. All Ayes, motion carried.**

**Mr. Taylor officially welcomed Ms. Bickers to the meeting.**

**Mr. Taylor invited everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.**

Ms. Spencer began the FY2025 Budget Presentation with an overview of school finance. This overview included general operating fund, school nutrition fund, and school activity fund. Ms. Spencer then provided an overview of state, federal, local and other revenues. Ms. Spencer explained how expenditures are categorized into functional areas defined by the state and shared expenditure charts. She provided information on expenditure descriptions and shared that the majority of expenses are fixed and non-discretionary. Ms. Spencer shared the local budget process and the state process.

Dr. Whitmarsh presented FY2025 Budget Presentation. Dr. Whitmarsh stated she was going to share the budget presentation which is a lot of the same information you heard at the last meeting. Dr. Whitmarsh shared a budget is a moral document and should reflect our priorities with our vision, mission statement and strategic plan Impact 2027. The budget is a reflection of our goals for the school division. She stated VA Code mandates that it is the duty of the Superintendent to prepare a budget with an estimate of the amount of money deemed to be needed to support the school division. This is commonly referred to as a "needs-based budget." These numbers are preliminary broad estimates to illustrate potential revenue and expenditures. Dr. Whitmarsh also shared that two weeks ago on January 10<sup>th</sup> we had School Board Meeting with a budget update. Dr. Whitmarsh stated this evening we are having a School Board Work Session to review priorities and draft a budget proposal. On February 7<sup>th</sup> we will have a public hearing on the proposed budget. On February 28<sup>th</sup> the School Board will adopt initial budget. Then we will move to the county process.

Dr. Whitmarsh gave an overview of FY2025 Influencing Factors. When we budgeted for FY2024 our budget number that we used to project enrollment was 2762 and our actual right now is 2732 and moving forward for FY2025 we are going to plan for 2702. This is the first year of the new biennium and our VRS rate will change from 19.17%, the Governor's proposed rate is 17.78%. Effective with 7/1/2024 there is also a rate separate for the VRS Hybrid Plan. The Local Composite Index - this is the first year of the new biennium and the LCI went down from .3505 to .3411. The Composite Index determines a school division's ability to pay education costs fundamental to the commonwealth's Standards of Quality. It is calculated using: true value of real property, adjusted gross income and table retail sales. Operating Expense – fuel rates have decreased based on current market value. We are not currently on a contract but county is working to negotiate a contract with a provider. We may have some changes in utilities but any fluctuations will be offset within the existing budget structure. Building insurance expected to remain flat. Other economic factors – social security payment increase last year was 8.7% this year it's 3.2%. The current rate of inflation is 3.1%. Dr. Whitmarsh stated every year when the Governor releases a budget in December he also releases a Caboose Budget. Which means there is a budget that is released for the year we are current in, so that's FY2024, and one for FY2025. Our final payments are based on our ADM. The projected FY2025 state budget is \$29,035,641. The Governor's budget did not include any salary action for the first year of the biennium. It did include a 1% one-time bonus for SOQ employees. In 2023 divisions across the Commonwealth was provided an amount of money to go to school construction needs. That money was given to us in that year but we were allowed to carry it over by local government for three years. That money we are using towards the Tech Center. This year we also have All in Virginia per pupil funds in just over a million dollars. All the money will be received this year and we will carry that forward because it is meant for three years. Looking at

federal dollars the FY24 budget is just over \$3 million. The FY2023 Federal Funding Budget was \$3,124,867. FY2025 Estimate Funding \$3,070,000. Dr. Whitmarsh shared guidelines of federal revenues. Federal funds are targeted and specific. We are told how much money we are going to get and we have to apply for it. Every expense has to be reimbursed. We have had a huge influx of Pandemic Related Funds and these funds have to be obligated by September 30, 2024.

Dr. Whitmarsh shared the local funding for the last three years. Other funds are comprised of funds from sources such as rents, regional programs, insurance payments, insurance settlements, sale of equipment or the miscellaneous revenue. The county funds have increased to fund things like 5% raise and to cover health care increase in FY2023. Dr. Whitmarsh stated VRS rates are changing for FY25. They still have to be adopted by the General Assembly. She reviewed the rates for FY2024, FY2025 Governor Proposed Rate and FY2025 VRS Board Approved Rate. Another huge expense for the school system is health care. We are fortunate that our projection for increase for our renewal is 3.5% which is about \$160,000. Dr. Whitmarsh shared a summary chart on Capital Debt. We have retiring debt in the amount of \$56,391. Our debt payments are going down by that amount. Dr. Whitmarsh shared the results of the budget survey. Dr. Whitmarsh stated the Governor's budget proposal includes money to give a 1% bonus to SOQ funded employees that would cost about \$252,800. The state would contribute \$147,281 of that. She provided information for 1, 2 and 3 percent raises. Dr. Whitmarsh provided a chart on regional salary data for Bachelors and Master Degrees. Dr. Whitmarsh shared meeting goals: to determine board priorities for the FY25 budget and provide direction to prepare Superintendent's budget proposal for adoption.

Dr. Whitmarsh shared the budget request workbook. She shared the process of gathering input and requests from buildings and departments. Dr. Whitmarsh shared that during public hearings and board meetings, the idea of adding strength and conditioning to our curriculum was presented by a community member. Dr. Whitmarsh shared the cost and requirement for adding EL Teacher. We have to add this based on our numbers for SOQ positions.

Dr. Whitmarsh shared the cost and requirement for new textbooks under the Virginia Literacy Act and Math Standards which go into effect in FY25.

Dr. Whitmarsh shared the cost and need for a family support specialist. This is one portion of how we intend to address the loss of the Student Success Coach Program.

Dr. Whitmarsh shared cost of 1, 2 & 3% salary increases, 1% one-time bonus cost, sub rate increase, individual supplement and stipend increases, and insurance rate increase. Dr. Whitmarsh requested that the board absorb the increase for health insurance.

Dr. Whitmarsh shared the budget survey and the feedback.

Dr. Payne provided additional information for the requirement for the EL position.

Dr. Payne gave an overview of the proposed reading and math textbook adoptions.

Ms. Gillette provided additional information for the proposed Family Support Specialist position for the 2024-2025 School year.

Dr. Whitmarsh provided the board with a detailed worksheet.

School Board Members had budget discussion.

The board agreed to include EL Teacher, textbook adoptions, health insurance increase, 12% sub rate increase, 12% supplement and stipend increase, 3% salary increase, Family Support Specialist Position for the FY2025 Proposed Budget.

Ms. Alberts asked about the strength and conditioning position. Ms. Roach responded there is a stipend for strength and conditioning and advanced PE classes. Dr. Whitmarsh shared we do pay a supplement for each season for athletes to come and do strength and conditioning. It's offered two days a week. Dr. Whitmarsh shared the low attendance numbers for strength and conditioning and enrollment numbers for advance PE. These are offered to all our students all year long. Mr. Taylor stated it doesn't sound like these programs are not being utilized at this time. Dr. Whitmarsh stated we need to see how we are getting the word out and we may need to restructure advanced PE. Dr. Whitmarsh said with how we utilize our tax payer dollars it's better for us to start with bolstering the opportunities we have for students and as that demand fills, if we fill one advance PE then maybe we add another one. Dr. Whitmarsh stated I don't think we ever jump from zero to 100 and go full-time. We don't do that with any electives unless something new is required from the state. Ms. Roach stated the position would not be for one specific person we would need to advertise that job position and it would be given to the best qualified candidate. Ms. Bickers stated the times for strength and conditioning may need to be altered. Dr. Whitmarsh stated most students that attend strength and conditioning do so in off season. Dr. Whitmarsh stated there are a lot of things to look at before we jump to adding a full-time position. All the board members agreed.

Mr. Taylor stated there will be no closed session.

Mr. Taylor requested a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Roach made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Alberts seconded. No discussion. All Ayes, motion carried.

Meeting ended at 7:38 pm.



Chair



Clerk