

The Rockbridge County School Board held a Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 13, 2023 at the County of Rockbridge Administrative Building.

Present: Chairman Neil Whitmore; Trustees Catie Brown, Kathy Burant; Superintendent Phillip Thompson and Clerk Rhonda Humphries. Absent: Trustees Corey Berkstresser and Lenna Ojure.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Whitmore called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman Whitmore stated that this is the time for the school board to receive comment from the public specifically focused on the budget for Fiscal Year 2025.

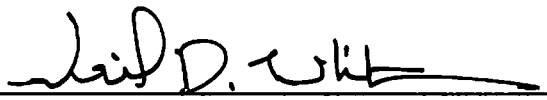
Superintendent Thompson stated that the document "Categorical Estimate of Needs" for Fiscal Year 2025 is simply a draft at this point. The Code of Virginia requires this document to be given to our local funding body, which is our Board of Supervisors, no later than March 31, 2024. The document presented is a draft and is a working document. He stated that, in regard to creating a budget for a school division in the Commonwealth of Virginia, it is a challenging task at this point as we have only the Governor's budget out of Richmond and we do not have a budget from the House of Delegates, nor the State Senate. Typically, once all three of the budgets are received, the governing bodies determine what pieces of the three of those budgets will be meshed into one budget that can be approved by the General Assembly and ultimately signed by the Governor. It is very early in the process, but the school board has taken the Governor's budget, as it is the only document available right now and tried to incorporate into our Categorical Estimate of Needs what funding will be needed in order to operate in FY25. The numbers in this draft document were determined by the priorities as set forth by the Rockbridge County School Board throughout the budget season this year via budget work sessions. The following are highlights of the RCPS School Board Budget Priorities FY25:

- Competitive Salaries for Teachers
- Competitive Salaries for Classified Employees
- Affordable Health Insurance Options
- Inflation/Rising Costs of Services and Materials
- Chairman Whitmore stated that all budgets are a compromise of needs. This document helps the school board members to establish a good focus on our needs and helps to establish primary needs. He stated that when he came on the board in 2018, the total budget was around thirty-two million and is now thirty-seven million and a lot of that budget are costs that cannot be controlled and are being absorbed by the school division.
 - Superintendent Thompson stated that, unfortunately, it gets more expensive with each year to run a school division.
 - Trustee Burant expressed her appreciation that the draft document contains all the priorities that were discussed that the board felt were of paramount importance. She expressed her appreciation for anything that can be done to see that these items happen.

There were no persons to address the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Trustee Brown, seconded by Trustee Burant, and passed by 3-0 vote, the Public Hearing was closed and adjourned at 5:16 p.m.


Neil D. Whitmore, Chairman


Rhonda B. Humphries, Clerk of the Board