School Board Budget Questions

FY 2027 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

February 2026

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Question 5: During the work session, in response to a question I posed, it was mentioned that the estimate for revenue generation from a potential new technology fee was calculated based on the assumption that certain families would have no or reduced fees given their income status (I understand details may be worked out later). Can you please confirm that my understanding is accurate? 6

Question 6: Douglas MacArthur is projected to see an increase of 10 teachers (pg 217). Is that simply as a result of redistricting? 6

Question 7: On page 174 of the budget book there are Homeroom Teacher projected reductions of 4 and CB and 2 at CK and an increase of 1 at MV. These changes appear to reflect our anticipated student enrollment at these schools (numbers on page 163 of the budget book). The project a 26% drop in enrollment at CK, a 5.7% drop at CB and a 5.4% increase at MV. In the redistricting process we aimed to slowly reduce over capacity at MV, while we increased the catchment area for CK. So, I'm surprised by what we anticipate for enrollment for these schools next year. Would you please provide more detail on what is causing these enrollment changes? And if there are other factors impacting Teacher projections beyond student enrollment, please advise what those are for these schools.? 7

Question 8: On page 171 of the budget book there is a projected 32% increase in Level 1 EL for next year. We seem to be anticipating 321 new EL students into our schools. Given other attendance trends in the last year I'm surprised by this significant increase. Please provide detail on why we think there will be such a large increase? 7

Question 9: This is more of an observation than a question… On page 153 of the budget book it states that "The economic status of the majority of families with children enrolled in ACPS is quite different from that of the average family in the City of Alexandria (emphasis mine). 5.9% overall of Alexandrians live in poverty but somewhere around half of student households fall below the poverty line. I can think of a number of reasons why there is such a stark difference in the economic status of our overall City vs. that of our student households. I think this has important implications for how we talk about ACPS to the broader community. The second graph on page 150 of the budget book seems to indicate that the poverty level is steady or dropping in surrounding counties and cities while it is increasing in Alexandria. Am I interpreting that graph correctly? 7

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Question 19: Is ACPS able to identify any efficiencies by using AI? 10

Question 20: Please provide a list of neighboring school districts and the employer/employee split on health insurance premiums for both licensed and support staff? 10

Question 21: What alternative solutions can address budgetary constraints without

sacrificing these language programs? For example, what grants have been investigated? Can teachers have cross-certifications in ancient history or other fields, giving ACPS additional programming flexibility? 10

Question 22: Are online and asynchronous learning models equal to in-person, interactive, feedback and accountability programs? Provide statistics and data that support this type of learning over in-person learning? 10

Question 23: How has ACPS promoted these two important languages? Parents have expressed concerns about how some elementary school guidance counselors discouraged the study of these two languages because they are assumed to be too difficult. If ACPS decided to keep these two non-traditional languages, how could ACPS promote the study of these two languages in a different way? For example, can Mandarin Chinese and Chinese culture be introduced to fifth graders, piquing their interest in further study? 11

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- Support staff collective bargaining unit 16

- Non-collectively bargained staff? 16

Question 45: How many of the above employees in each category are at the top of their salary scale? 16

Question 46: I would like to understand how increased healthcare costs are impacting take home pay for ACPS employees in FY26. 16

- What does the average step increase of 2.85% equate to in dollars for an individual staff member in FY26? Please provide the average amount for a licensed FTE and support FTE. 16

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QUESTIONS FROM SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS SENT TO STAFF

QUESTION 1: IN DOLLAR FIGURES, WHAT IS THE AMOUNT REDUCED FROM THIS BUDGET AS A RESULT OF STAFF REDUCTIONS AND NON-STAFF REDUCTIONS (PLEASE PROVIDE FOR EACH CATEGORY)?

Board Member(s): Ryan Reyna

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Budget Decrease from Staff Reductions = $810,800

Decrease from Non-Staff Reductions = $2,248,300

QUESTION 2: FOR EACH OF THE PAST 3 YEARS, WHAT HAS BEEN THE INCREASE (YEAR OVER YEAR) OF HEALTH CARE COSTS FOR OUR PLANS? DO WE HAVE INFORMATION ON ANTICIPATED INCREASES INTO THE FUTURE?

Board Member(s): **Ryan Reyna**

Staff Respondent: **Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner**

Plan Year	FY 2026 Rate Increase	FY 2025 Rate Increase	FY 2024 Rate Increase
Kaiser HMO			
EE Only	9.5%	2.0%	2.1%
EE+1	9.5%	2.0%	2.1%
EE+2 or More	9.5%	2.0%	2.1%
UHC POS			
EE Only	14.8%	0.0%	3.6%
EE+1	14.8%	0.0%	3.6%
EE+2 or More	14.8%	0.0%	3.6%
Dental			
EE Only	2.3%	0.0%	4.6%
EE+1	2.3%	0.0%	4.6%
EE+2 or More	2.3%	0.0%	4.6%
Vision			
EE Only	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
EE+1	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
EE+2 or More	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

QUESTION 3: IF THE DIVISION WERE NOT TO CHANGE THE SPLIT OF HEALTHCARE COSTS COVERED BY ACPS, HOW MUCH ADDITIONAL WOULD THAT COST FOR FY2027? IF THAT WAS ADDED TO THE REST OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET, HOW MUCH FURTHER WOULD THAT PUT THE DIVISION OVER THE CITY MANAGER'S GUIDANCE?

Board Member(s): **Ryan Reyna**

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Below is the table that shows the dollar values, by fund, of shifting 5.0% of the annual health insurance premiums from the employer to the employees. Because the ACPS Operating Budget is the only fund that is supported by a transfer from the City, the additional amount needed would be $1.83 million.

Fund	Value of 5% Premium Shift
Operating	$1,828,800
Grants	$91,000
Nutrition	$79,700
TOTAL	**$1,999,500**

QUESTION 4: WE ARE DECREASING CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF FOCUSED ON "IMPROVEMENT & INSTRUCTION." HOW DO WE ANTICIPATE COVERING THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES INTO THE FUTURE AS WE WORK TO INCREASE STUDENT OUTCOMES ACROSS THE DIVISION?

Board Member(s): Ryan Reyna

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

Some duties and responsibilities have been and will be dispersed amongst current staff. In some cases, this warranted position reclassifications due to the additional duties and responsibilities. In other cases those services will no longer be provided.

QUESTION 5: DURING THE WORK SESSION, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION I POSED, IT WAS MENTIONED THAT THE ESTIMATE FOR REVENUE GENERATION FROM A POTENTIAL NEW TECHNOLOGY FEE WAS CALCULATED BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT CERTAIN FAMILIES WOULD HAVE NO OR REDUCED FEES GIVEN THEIR INCOME STATUS (I UNDERSTAND DETAILS MAY BE WORKED OUT LATER). CAN YOU PLEASE CONFIRM THAT MY UNDERSTANDING IS ACCURATE?

Board Member(s): Ryan Reyna

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The assumption is not that some families would have no or reduced fees, but that we recognize some families are not going to pay the fee (much like school meal debt).

QUESTION 6: DOUGLAS MACARTHUR IS PROJECTED TO SEE AN INCREASE OF 10 TEACHERS (PG 217). IS THAT SIMPLY AS A RESULT OF REDISTRICTING?

Board Member(s): Ryan Reyna

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The projected student enrollment increase is primarily due to redistricting, however other student enrollment projection factors also play a role, such as cohort matriculation amongst the grade levels.

QUESTION 7: ON PAGE 174 OF THE BUDGET BOOK THERE ARE HOMEROOM TEACHER PROJECTED REDUCTIONS OF 4 AND CB AND 2 AT CK AND AN INCREASE OF 1 AT MV. THESE CHANGES APPEAR TO REFLECT OUR ANTICIPATED STUDENT ENROLLMENT AT THESE SCHOOLS (NUMBERS ON PAGE 163 OF THE BUDGET BOOK). THE PROJECT A 26% DROP IN ENROLLMENT AT CK, A 5.7% DROP AT CB AND A 5.4% INCREASE AT MV. IN THE REDISTRICTING PROCESS WE AIMED TO SLOWLY REDUCE OVER CAPACITY AT MV, WHILE WE INCREASED THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR CK. SO, I'M SURPRISED BY WHAT WE ANTICIPATE FOR ENROLLMENT FOR THESE SCHOOLS NEXT YEAR. WOULD YOU PLEASE PROVIDE MORE DETAIL ON WHAT IS CAUSING THESE ENROLLMENT CHANGES? AND IF THERE ARE OTHER FACTORS IMPACTING TEACHER PROJECTIONS BEYOND STUDENT ENROLLMENT, PLEASE ADVISE WHAT THOSE ARE FOR THESE SCHOOLS.?

Board Member(s): Tim Beaty

Staff Respondent: Dr. Taylor, Amanda Ou

The enrollment projections provided to the Budget Office in early December 2025 were a preliminary set of estimates. These figures for the SY 2026-2027 are based on where students live relative to the redrawn boundaries. A second set of SY 2026-2027 projections are currently being developed which incorporate new information from Technology Services that were not available in early December, most importantly Deferral decisions by families. In accordance with JCE-R2 (Redistricting Implementation) families had up to January 15, 2026 to make decisions on Deferrals. This information–and other updated information on student choice related to attendance zone redistricting for next school year–is being incorporated into forthcoming SY 2026-2027 projections that will be provided to the Budget Office. It is expected that this update to the estimates may alter staffing and space requirements at some schools. Until then, it is too early to weigh definitive decisions on staffing and space needs at schools.

QUESTION 8: ON PAGE 171 OF THE BUDGET BOOK THERE IS A PROJECTED 32% INCREASE IN LEVEL 1 EL FOR NEXT YEAR. WE SEEM TO BE ANTICIPATING 321 NEW EL STUDENTS INTO OUR SCHOOLS. GIVEN OTHER ATTENDANCE TRENDS IN THE LAST YEAR I'M SURPRISED BY THIS SIGNIFICANT INCREASE. PLEASE PROVIDE DETAIL ON WHY WE THINK THERE WILL BE SUCH A LARGE INCREASE?

Board Member(s): Tim Beaty

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

EL Enrollment Projection Methodology

The data is prepared using the long-standing projection methodology consisting of the following procedures:

- KG enrollment held flat (regression or growth carried over into the projected FY)
- Current Grades KG-11 advanced a grade level
- Current Grade 12 students aged out
- Overall, enrollment projections are reviewed in alignment with the above mentioned EL enrollment growth history and do not include relocation or transfer data from other divisions

FY 2027 EL Enrollment Projections Update:

Monthly EL data tracking has shown a decline in EL enrollment from September through January. We continue to monitor EL enrollment throughout the year and update projections to reflect current enrollment trends. Given this decline we have updated EL enrollment projections as of January with the following updates:

- FY26 Actual EL enrollment decreased by 72 students from the October to January projection update
- FY27 Projected EL enrollment decreases by 75 students from the October to January projection update

It is important to note that EL enrollment fluctuates throughout the school year. In addition to monitoring our year-over-year growth (typically from October to October of the following year), we also monitor our intra-year EL enrollment growth, which allows us to see patterns in enrollment during the school year from October through June. From FY15 through FY25, intra-year EL enrollment growth averaged approximately 4%. Most recently, from FY22 through FY25, intra-year EL enrollment growth has averaged approximately 5%.

QUESTION 9: THIS IS MORE OF AN OBSERVATION THAN A QUESTION… ON PAGE 153 OF THE BUDGET BOOK IT STATES THAT "THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE MAJORITY OF FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ENROLLED IN ACPS IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE AVERAGE FAMILY IN THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA (EMPHASIS MINE). 5.9% OVERALL OF ALEXANDRIANS LIVE IN POVERTY BUT SOMEWHERE AROUND HALF OF STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS FALL BELOW THE POVERTY LINE. I CAN THINK OF A NUMBER OF REASONS WHY THERE IS SUCH A STARK DIFFERENCE IN THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF OUR OVERALL CITY VS. THAT OF OUR STUDENT HOUSEHOLDS. I THINK THIS HAS IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR HOW WE TALK ABOUT ACPS TO THE BROADER COMMUNITY. THE SECOND GRAPH ON PAGE 150 OF THE BUDGET BOOK SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE POVERTY LEVEL IS STEADY OR DROPPING IN SURROUNDING COUNTIES AND CITIES WHILE IT IS INCREASING IN ALEXANDRIA. AM I INTERPRETING THAT GRAPH CORRECTLY?

Board Member(s): Tim Beaty

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The chart of page 150, from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey, indicates that from 2023 to 2024, the poverty level in surrounding jurisdictions is steady and/or increasing, while Alexandria's poverty level decreased from 7.1% to 5.9%.

QUESTION 10: WHAT IS THE BUDGET IMPACT OF INCREASING THE EMPLOYEE PORTION OF THE HEALTH CARE PREMIUM BY 5%?

Board Member(s): Tim Beaty

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

This equates to a $2.0M savings to the Combined-Funds Budget ($1.8M to the Operating Fund).

QUESTION 11: HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GIVE A STEP INCREASE TO OUR STAFF?

Board Member(s): Tim Beaty

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Fund	Value of a Step Increase
Operating	$7,085,900
Grants	$329,800
Nutrition	$165,500
TOTAL	**$7,581,200**

QUESTION 12: HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO GIVE A 1% PAY INCREASE TO OUR STAFF?

Board Member(s): **Tim Beaty**

Staff Respondent: **Mr. Turner**

Fund	Value of a 1.0% COLA
Operating	$2,649,300
Grants	$125,600
Nutrition	$56,400
TOTAL	**$2,831,300**

QUESTION 13: PLEASE PROVIDE A TABLE LISTING ALL FTES THAT HAVE REMAINED VACANT SINCE THE START OF FY26 AND INDICATE (1) HOW THE WORK FOR THOSE ROLES HAS BEEN COVERED AND (2) IF THESE POSITIONS ARE INCLUDED IN THE FY27 BUDGET.

Board Member(s): **Ashley Simpson Baird**

Staff Respondent: **Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner**

FY26 FTE	Position Desc	Dept	Location Desc	Current Status of Position
1.00	EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL - HIGH SCHOOL	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	DEAN OF STUDENTS	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Vacant since August 2025
0.50	DATA ANALYST	5700	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	PROJECT MANAGER (CIP)	7400	FACILITIES & OPERATIONS	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	DIRECTOR - ADVANCED ACADEMIC SERVICES	5330	TALENTED & GIFTED PROGRAMS	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - STUDENT SUPPORT	6400	STUDENT SERVICES	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	EXEC DIRECTOR - PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & FEDERAL PROGRAMS	5200	TALENT DEVELOPMENT	Vacant since October 2025; Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	KINDERGARTEN DL TCHR	7299	DIVISION WIDE FSD RESERVE	Placed on Hold due to Decreased Student Enrollments; Will be used for FY27
1.00	1ST GRADE DL TCHR	7299	DIVISION WIDE FSD RESERVE	Placed on Hold due to Decreased Student Enrollments; Will be used for FY27
1.00	2ND GRADE TCHR	7299	DIVISION WIDE FSD RESERVE	Placed on Hold due to Decreased Student Enrollments; Will be used for FY27
1.00	4TH GRADE TCHR	7299	DIVISION WIDE FSD RESERVE	Placed on Hold due to Decreased Student Enrollments; Will be used for FY27
1.00	4TH GRADE TCHR	7299	DIVISION WIDE FSD RESERVE	Placed on Hold due to Decreased Student Enrollments; Will be used for FY27
1.00	5TH GRADE TCHR	7299	DIVISION WIDE FSD RESERVE	Placed on Hold due to Decreased Student Enrollments; Will be used for FY27
1.00	READING SPECIALIST	3060	ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION	Vacant since August 2025
0.50	MATHEMATICS TCHR	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	SCIENCE TCHR	3043	ACHS - MINNIE HOWARD	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
0.50	RESOURCE TEACHER	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
0.80	BUSINESS & INFORMATION TCHR	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	SPECIAL EDUCATION TCHR - ASL	5400	SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	SPECIAL EDUCATION TCHR - AUTISM	2002	CORA KELLY	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	SPECIAL EDUCATION TCHR	3000	FRANCIS C HAMMOND	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST	5400	SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
0.10	PSYCHOLOGIST	2005	JAMES K POLK	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	SPECIALIST - TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION	6100	TECHNOLOGY SERVICES	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL COACH	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL COACH	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT I	3060	ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL ASST II - ID	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT II	5099	SCHOOL-WIDE RESOURCES	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT II	5099	SCHOOL-WIDE RESOURCES	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT II	5099	SCHOOL-WIDE RESOURCES	Position Funding Used for FY26 Purchased Services
1.00	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I	4000	SCHOOL BOARD	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	HR SPECIALIST - COMPENSATION & BENEFITS	7100	HUMAN RESOURCES	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	SCHOOL BOARD DEPUTY CLERK	4000	SCHOOL BOARD	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	FAMILY LIAISON - BILINGUAL	2006	JEFFERSON-HOUSTON	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	BUS DRIVER	7300	PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
1.00	BUS DRIVER	7300	PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
1.00	BUS DRIVER	7300	PUPIL TRANSPORTATION	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
1.00	CUSTODIAN	2012	SAMUEL TUCKER	Vacant since October 2025; Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICER	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
1.00	SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICER	3040	ACHS - KING STREET CAMPUS	Position Flagged for FY27 Reduction or Repurposing
0.44	SCHL NTRTN FLOATING MGR	7500	FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
1.00	SPECIALIST - EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	7500	FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES	Vacant since August 2025
0.75	SCHOOL NUTRITION - DELIVERY DRIVER	7500	FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES	Vacant since August 2025
0.88	SCHL NTRTN ASST I	7500	FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
0.88	SCHL NTRTN ASST I	7500	FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
0.50	CAFETERIA AIDE	2011	PATRICK HENRY	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
0.44	CAFETERIA AIDE	2011	PATRICK HENRY	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
0.69	CAFETERIA AIDE	2012	SAMUEL TUCKER	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
0.69	CAFETERIA AIDE	2015	EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER	Position Funding Used for FY26 Casual Wages
1.00	ATHLETIC TRAINER - 10 MONTHS	3041	ACHS - ATHLETICS	Vacant since August 2025
1.00	ATHLETIC TRAINER (11M)	3041	ACHS - ATHLETICS	Vacant since August 2025

Some duties and responsibilities have been and will be dispersed amongst current staff. In some cases, this warranted position reclassifications due to the additional duties and responsibilities. In other cases those services will no longer be provided.

QUESTION 14: HAS ACPS CONSIDERED A PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL PRIVATE SCHOOLS TO CONTINUE TO OFFER ACCESS TO IN-PERSON LATIN INSTRUCTION?

Board Member(s): Ashley Simpson Baird

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

No, ACPS has not considered partnering with local private schools to continue offering in-person Latin instruction, as such a partnership would carry implications well beyond the availability of a single course. At its core, the question raises issues of public stewardship and policy alignment, particularly around the use of public funds to support instruction delivered by private institutions. Any such partnership would require careful legal review to ensure compliance with state law, School Board policy, collective bargaining, and licensure and staffing requirements, while also safeguarding ACPS's obligation to provide equitable, non-selective access to all eligible students.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) consistently requires:

- Credit-bearing instruction be delivered by school board–employed or statutorily authorized instructors
- Third-party instructional models are limited to virtual, dual enrollment, or non-credit enrichment.

Virginia school boards are legally responsible for providing the publicly funded instructional program and may exercise only those powers explicitly granted or necessarily implied by law. Although the General Assembly has explicitly authorized contracting with VDOE approved private providers for online instruction, it has not granted authority for school boards to outsource in-person, credit-bearing instruction to private schools or private instructional staff. Without such authorization, the essential instructional responsibilities are retained by the school boards and are not delegable.

QUESTION 15: COULD ONE ITINERANT INSTRUCTOR PROVIDE IN-PERSON/HYBRID INSTRUCTION TO ALL SECONDARY LATIN STUDENTS IN ACPS? COULD ONE ITINERANT INSTRUCTOR PROVIDE IN-PERSON/HYBRID INSTRUCTION TO ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL LATIN STUDENTS IN ACPS?

Board Member(s): **Ashley Simpson Baird**

Staff Respondent: **Dr. Finney**

VDOE allows for 150 students on a teacher's roster before additional compensation is required. Based on this, 1.0 Latin FTE could teach ALL of the Latin students throughout ACPS and still not have a full roster.

QUESTION 16: HOW WILL THE REDUCTION OF A CHINESE TEACHER IMPACT MIDDLE SCHOOL CHINESE INSTRUCTION? HOW WILL A DECISION BE MADE AS TO WHEN VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION WILL OCCUR?

Board Member(s): **Ashley Simpson Baird**

Staff Respondent: **Dr. Finney**

There will be no impact on Middle School Chinese instruction as a result of the reduction of a Chinese teacher. Students will continue to have access to Chinese language courses and will receive instruction either in person or virtually.

The availability of in-person and virtual Chinese courses will be determined by the master schedules at both George Washington Middle School and Hammond Middle School, ensuring student access and instructional continuity. Decisions regarding when virtual instruction will occur will be made through the master scheduling process, based on enrollment patterns, staffing allocations, and instructional feasibility at each school.

QUESTION 17: GEORGE MASON IS PROJECTED TO INCREASE BY 84 STUDENTS (P. 163), AND CONSEQUENTLY, AN ADDITIONAL 3.0 CLASSROOM TEACHERS (P. 235) ARE INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL'S BUDGET. HOWEVER, IN SY25-26, ALL CLASSROOM SPACES IN THE SWING SPACE ARE OCCUPIED, INCLUDING ONE CLASSROOM SHARED BY TWO TEACHERS. WHERE WILL THE THREE ADDITIONAL CLASSES BE LOCATED?

Board Member(s): **Ashley Simpson Baird**

Staff Respondent: **Dr. Finney and Dr. Taylor**

See response to Question #7.

QUESTION 18: HOW IS THE DECLINE IN ENROLLMENT IMPACTING THE BUDGET (BOTH REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES)? WHERE ARE THERE ANTICIPATED SAVINGS?

Board Member(s): **Ashley Simpson Baird**

Staff Respondent: **Mr. Turner**

The projected enrollment for FY 2026 did not show a significant decrease so therefore we did not see a reduction of budgeted instructional FTEs across the division (this is where savings would be seen if enrollment continues to decline). With the actual enrollment being down in FY 2026 this is going to impact state revenue that is a function of enrollment. Our state sales tax revenue has been increasing and offers an offset to this decline.

QUESTION 19: IS ACPS ABLE TO IDENTIFY ANY EFFICIENCIES BY USING AI?

Board Member(s): **Ashley Simpson Baird**

Staff Respondent: **Dr. Finney, Dr. Dillard**

Yes. Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is intentionally working to identify efficiencies through the thoughtful implementation of AI, with a clear focus on enhancing, not replacing, high-quality teaching and learning. ACPS has planned for AI implementation through the establishment of an AI Task Force that includes central office staff and school-based leaders to ensure alignment with instructional priorities, operational needs, and responsible use standards.

Currently, ACPS is exploring how instruction and professional practice can be enhanced through tools such as PlayLab and the launch of the ACPS AI Design Fellowship 2026. The fellowship is a hands-on learning and innovation experience for educators and leaders interested in how AI can support teaching, learning, and division operations. It begins with a full-day, in-person launch and continues with supported learning, coaching, and collaboration throughout the year.

Through the fellowship, participants will build foundational AI literacy, design and test AI-powered tools connected to their day-to-day work, collaborate across roles and schools, and critically examine issues of accuracy, bias, limitations, and responsible use. Insights from this work will inform future division-wide practices, helping ACPS identify efficiencies in instructional planning, data analysis, and operational workflows while maintaining a strong commitment to equity, transparency, and instructional quality.

Outside of the fellowship, staff groups continue to be supported with the utilization of AI to maximize their efforts while saving time. Recently, principals shared ways in which they are using AI to reduce time spent on administrative tasks with one another, including Google tools such as Gemini Gems and Notebook LM. Administrators also participated in AI professional development during a principal's meeting.

One example of how AI is also used to increase efficiency with cybersecurity is through our Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) tool. It allows us to quickly identify suspicious logins and threats to the ACPS network. This reduces time spent to identify and manage cyber threats.

QUESTION 20: PLEASE PROVIDE A LIST OF NEIGHBORING SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND THE EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE SPLIT ON HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR BOTH LICENSED AND SUPPORT STAFF?

Board Member(s): Ashley Simpson Baird

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

School Division (Premium Health Plan)	Single	Family	Support Staff (Single)	Support Staff (Family)
ACPS	$99.20	$264.69	$49.60	$132.35
Arlington	$127.35	$513.39	$127.35	$513.39
Fairfax	$76.68	$319.43	$76.68	$319.43
Falls Church	$93.70	$316.25	$93.70	$316.25
Loudoun	$71.68	$338.95	$71.68	$338.95
Manassas City	$122.00	$455.00	$122.00	$455.00
Manassas Park	$74.00	$415.00	$74.00	$415.00
Montgomery (MD)*	$104.01	$277.55	$104.01	$277.55
Prince William	$69.52	$449.45	$69.52	$449.45
Prince George's (MD)	$127.63	$315.20	$127.63	$315.20
Average	$96.58	$366.49	$91.62	$353.26
***added in cost of prescription coverage (+$22.26 Single, +54.88 Family) to provide more accurate comparison**				

QUESTION 21: WHAT ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS CAN ADDRESS BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS WITHOUT SACRIFICING THESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS? FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT GRANTS HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED? CAN TEACHERS HAVE CROSS-CERTIFICATIONS IN ANCIENT HISTORY OR OTHER FIELDS, GIVING ACPS ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING FLEXIBILITY?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

This has been a three-year process that has not been put forth lightly or without supporting data. The board was first made aware of declining enrollment during the 2023-2024 school year. Over the past three years, school counselors and school teams have actively worked to increase student enrollment through outreach, scheduling adjustments, and course advisement. It is important to note that the course is not being eliminated; rather, the instructional format is being adjusted to ensure continued access for students.

This approach is consistent with prior division decisions. Alexandria City High School transitioned to an online instructional model for Latin two years ago due to sustained low enrollment. As a division, ACPS must remain flexible and responsive in how courses are delivered so that programs are preserved rather than discontinued when student interest fluctuates.

In response to budgetary constraints, ACPS has explored and continues to consider multiple alternatives that maintain program viability, including:

- Adjusting instructional delivery models (in-person or virtual) to align staffing with enrollment demand.
- Staff certification has already been maximized and was not a factor in this decision. It was due to sustained low enrollment over time.
- Grant opportunities for one isolated course were not investigated. To ensure equitable services for all, it would need to be investigated for all courses.

These strategies reflect ACPS's commitment to preserving access to language programs, exercising fiscal responsibility, and ensuring that instructional offerings remain sustainable, equitable, and responsive to student interest over time.

QUESTION 22: ARE ONLINE AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING MODELS EQUAL TO IN-PERSON, INTERACTIVE, FEEDBACK AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAMS? PROVIDE STATISTICS AND DATA THAT SUPPORT THIS TYPE OF LEARNING OVER IN-PERSON LEARNING?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Dr. Dillard

Alexandria City Public Schools has offered online learning at both the middle and high school levels for many years, including a dedicated blended learning program via the Satellite Campus of Alexandria City High School and a fully virtual program via the ACPS Virtual Academy,

providing the division with sustained experience implementing high-quality virtual instructional models. Research and practice indicate that well-designed online learning environments can produce comparable instructional outcomes when they include strong teacher presence, structured interaction, timely feedback, and clear accountability systems. Additionally, taking an online course is a graduation requirement in Virginia.

ACPS utilizes research-based online learning platforms, and online instruction is not new to the middle school environment, where it is currently used for world languages and mathematics. These platforms provide a standards-aligned, curriculum-mapped instructional framework that ensures fidelity to state standards and graduation requirements regardless of delivery format, while offering direct instruction, embedded checks for understanding, formative and summative assessments, and automated progress monitoring to support student accountability. As outlined in A National Primer on K–12 Online Learning, effective online programs expand access to coursework, provide instructional flexibility, support personalization, and enable districts to sustain low-enrollment or specialized courses that might otherwise be unavailable, while maintaining instructional rigor and teacher involvement .

For teachers and administrators, online learning platforms offer real-time data dashboards that support monitoring of engagement, completion, and mastery, enabling timely intervention and personalized support through an assigned online mentor. While ACPS data can be analyzed through a formal program evaluation to assess outcomes, it is important to note that online learning has been successfully implemented in ACPS for over 15 years and should not be conflated with national data from the COVID-19 pandemic, where lower engagement and achievement were largely attributable to emergency conditions rather than the instructional model itself. As a division, ACPS uses online learning strategically and responsibly to preserve access to courses when enrollment is limited, while maintaining instructional quality through participation monitoring, feedback cycles, grading accountability, and alignment to curriculum standards. Each student taking an online course is assigned an ACPS Online Learning Mentor to monitor their pace and progress, help students create realistic pacing plans, serve as a liaison as needed between the student/family and online teacher, and enter quarterly grades.

Online learning offers many students an opportunity to take a course they would otherwise not be able to, as online courses can run with a single student enrolled. This has allowed students to take courses not offered in-person such as Gothic Literature, History of the Holocaust, Forensic Science, Intro to Legal Studies, Marine Science, Social Problems, and more.

QUESTION 23: HOW HAS ACPS PROMOTED THESE TWO IMPORTANT LANGUAGES? PARENTS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT HOW SOME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS DISCOURAGED THE STUDY OF THESE TWO LANGUAGES BECAUSE THEY ARE ASSUMED TO BE TOO

DIFFICULT. IF ACPS DECIDED TO KEEP THESE TWO NON-TRADITIONAL LANGUAGES, HOW COULD ACPS PROMOTE THE STUDY OF THESE TWO LANGUAGES IN A DIFFERENT WAY? FOR EXAMPLE, CAN MANDARIN CHINESE AND CHINESE CULTURE BE INTRODUCED TO FIFTH GRADERS, PIQUING THEIR INTEREST IN FURTHER STUDY?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Dr. Jackson

Each year, ACPS shares the secondary Program of Studies and full course offerings with all school counselors, ensuring that counselors have clear, consistent information to support students and families in course selection. While it is unfortunate to hear that some parents perceive discouragement related to the study of these languages, this has not been the division's perspective or intent**.** ACPS has consistently supported all approved courses and has made them available and accessible to all students**,** including those that are considered non-traditional or less commonly offered. As a division, ACPS actively supports and encourages students to pursue rigorous coursework**,** including world languages that may be perceived as challenging. In addition, as a division, we are continuing to monitor all low-enrolled courses and will need to make operational decisions that do not impact instructional quality.

As with all courses, ACPS will continue to strengthen counselor communication**,** highlight student pathways and postsecondary benefits associated with language study, and elevate visibility through cultural events, showcases, or interdisciplinary connections. These approaches would reinforce the message that rigorous language study is both supported and attainable, while aligning with ACPS's commitment to equity, access, and academic excellence.

School counselors also receive professional learning and reminders on their role in academic advising. These opportunities level set the expectations of school counselors supporting students with course selection and address steering students away from or towards courses. School counselors use multiple data sources to include career interest inventories, current and historical academic data to assist students with selecting courses that meet their interests while challenging them to grow as they work to meet their graduation requirements.

QUESTION 24: WHAT DO SOME OF THE OTHER DIVISIONS LIKE FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND FALLS CHURCH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL DO TO RETAIN A ROBUST PROGRAM IN CHINESE AND LATIN? FOR EXAMPLE, FAIRFAX COUNTY AND FALLS CHURCH HAVE EXPANDED THEIR CHINESE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AND ARLINGTON COUNTY SCHOOLS WERE SELECTED TO BE AMONG A HANDFUL OF BENEFICIARIES OF GRANTS FROM THE NATIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND. WHAT GRANT PROGRAMS HAS ACPS APPLIED FOR TO SUPPORT THE STUDY OF LANGUAGES LIKE CHINESE AND JAPANESE?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Mr. Turner

Yes—some Northern Virginia divisions do use online/virtual delivery to sustain or expand access to Chinese and/or Latin, especially when in-person enrollment is not sufficient to staff a full section. Publicly available information includes:

Arlington Public Schools

- APS explicitly offers virtual world language courses, including Chinese I–III and AP Chinese Language & Culture and Latin I–IV, through its virtual course options (including state-approved options such as Virtual Virginia and platform-supported courses).
- APS also documents the rationale: using Virtual Virginia to keep "lower enrollment" languages (including Chinese) available to students when staffing a face-to-face section is not feasible.

Fairfax County Public Schools

- FCPS maintains a large world language program with broad offerings (including Chinese and Latin across the division) and also operates an FCPS Online Campus with courses delivered using synchronous and asynchronous components aligned to standards and the FCPS Program of Studies.
- FCPS' public pages confirm the online-campus model, but they do not clearly list—on the pages retrieved—whether Chinese and/or Latin are specifically offered through Online Campus versus only in-person at certain schools, so I cannot state that definitively from the sources above.

Falls Church City Public Schools

- Falls Church's high school (Meridian) publicly lists Mandarin Chinese and IB Chinese B (Mandarin) within its language acquisition offerings, supporting the point that they have expanded Chinese pathways.
- We did not find a clear public reference to Falls Church offering Chinese or Latin online as a standard delivery model.

You referenced Arlington's selection as a beneficiary of grants from the National Foreign Language Center. No public information was available to verify this for our further analysis. However, this is not a matter of ACPS using the grant for less commonly taught courses, because we continue to offer all courses and the referenced courses have not been eliminated. It is a matter of whether the division will continue to offer low-enrollment courses despite budget

challenges, particularly as we face over-enrollment in some elementary and high school courses.

QUESTION 25: COULD THE CHANGE FROM IN-PERSON TO HYBRID OR ON-LINE LEARNING CAUSE SOME STUDENTS TO HAVE TO START ANOTHER LANGUAGE TO MEET COLLEGE ADMISSION OR GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

A change from in-person instruction to an online learning format will not require students to begin a different world language in order to meet graduation or college admission requirements. Student course selection is based on student interest, and students enrolled in a language course—whether delivered in person or online—will earn full credit that applies toward graduation and postsecondary expectations. The instructional delivery model does not alter the course's status, rigor, or credit value, and ACPS ensures continuity so that students may remain on their chosen language pathway.

QUESTION 26: IN WHAT WAY DOES ELIMINATING THREE LANGUAGE POSITIONS AFFECT OUR TEN-YEAR ACPS TEACHERS' ELIGIBILITY FOR LONGEVITY PAY INCREASES WHEN THEY ARE FORCED TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT IN OTHER DIVISIONS?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

We are unaware of any 10-year longevity pay increases being offered to any employee.

QUESTION 27: DOES ELIMINATION OF IN-CLASS PROGRAMS IN CHINESE AND LATIN AFFECT THE STANDING OF ACPS IN RELATION TO OTHER DIVISIONS?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

No it does not as all of our neighboring schools offer online courses in World Languages to include Fairfax, Arlington, and Prince William County.

QUESTION 28: UNDERSTANDING THE MASSIVE CHALLENGES THAT AFGHAN REFUGEE FAMILIES FACE, WHAT OTHER PROGRAMS DOES ACPS HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUES THESE STUDENTS FACE?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

The International Academy model at Francis C. Hammond Middle School and Alexandria City High School (ACHS) is designed to meet the unique needs of secondary immigrant students, including our Afghan families. In addition to this instructional model, ACPS provides supports to Afghan students and families through Student Services, English Learner (EL) programs,, Special Education and Community Partnerships and Engagement, all of which play a critical role in supporting newcomer and refugee students. Our departments work collaboratively to address attendance, academic progress, mental health needs, and access to essential services.

ACPS will continue to partner closely with partners like Fresh Start/NOVA RAFT, Women for Afghan Women, Liberty's Promise, English Empowerment Center and numerous City agencies to provide wraparound support, including connections to health services, housing resources, food access, legal assistance, and adult education. These partnerships are essential in addressing barriers that extend beyond the school setting and directly impact student success.

The ACPS Family and Community Engagement (FACE) team will continue to work with schools to build capacity of all staff members by serving as cultural brokers and connectors, and providing guidance and collaborative outreach staff need to master the culturally responsive practices needed to ensure families are effectively connected to the resources they need to thrive.

QUESTION 29: HOW WILL THESE EXPIRED SERVICES BE ASSUMED AND PROVIDED BY EXISTING STAFF? DO ACHS AND FRANCIS C. HAMMOND MIDDLE SCHOOL HAVE BILINGUAL AFGHAN STAFF WHO CAN PERFORM THESE ROLES? WHAT SPECIFIC SERVICES WILL BE AFFECTED OR WILL NOT BE CONTINUED DUE TO LOSS OF THE POSITIONS? WHAT ARE STAFF PLANS TO ADDRESS THIS GAP?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Ms. Burgos

As was the case when ESSER-funded services expired, responsibilities associated with these services will need to be discontinued, scaled back and/or assumed by existing staff. At this time, Alexandria City High School (ACHS) and Francis C. Hammond Middle School do not have bilingual Afghan staff who are capable of performing these roles. ACPS does have one Family Engagement Liaison (FACE) and one Translator (TLL) in the operating budget. As a result of the expiration of grant funding, some services will require adjustment in how they are delivered, though the division remains committed to supporting students and families to the greatest extent possible. School-based staff will work collaboratively with division-level staff to identify priority

needs, determine which services can be absorbed, and develop plans to address gaps created by the loss of these positions. This collaborative planning will focus on continuity of support, appropriate use of available resources, and alignment with division expectations.

QUESTION 30: WHAT OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE/HAVE BEEN RESEARCHED, AND WHAT PROGRAMS HAS ACPS APPLIED FOR? WHAT OTHER MEASURES ARE AVAILABLE TO REMEDY THIS LACK OF FUNDING?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Ms. Burgos. Dr. Tardieu

ACPS is not aware of other eligible, grant-funded opportunities that would support immigrant students and families.

As a result of the expiration of grant funding, some services will require adjustment in how they are delivered, though the division remains committed to supporting students and families to the greatest extent possible. School-based staff will work collaboratively with division-level staff to identify priority needs, determine which services can be absorbed, and develop plans to address gaps created by the loss of these positions. This collaborative planning will focus on continuity of support, appropriate use of available resources, and alignment with division expectations.

QUESTION 31: LATER THE SCHOOL BOARD WILL BE INVOLVED IN "ADD AND DELETE" POSITIONS. IN THE PROPOSED ACPS BUDGET, WHAT ALTERNATIVE FIVE (5) POSITIONS WOULD BE NEXT ON YOUR LIST TO ELIMINATE? WHY?

Board Member(s): Donna Kenley

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

We have already proposed all the positions that ACPS can weather the impacts of. Our Proposed Budget used the data available to limit the impact on the classroom, while ensuring ACPS can still function as a school division. Other positions that would be eliminated from this point would include classroom positions.

QUESTION 32: FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, WHICH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SCENARIO IS ASSUMED IN THIS PROPOSAL, AND WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED COST VARIANCE ACROSS SCENARIOS?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Collective Bargaining negotiations cannot be discussed until there is a CBA in place.

QUESTION 33: BENEFITS INCREASE BY $2.07M. HOW MUCH OF THIS GROWTH IS DRIVEN BY SALARY INCREASES VERSUS BENEFIT COST INFLATION, AND WHAT ASSUMPTIONS ARE WE USING FOR HEALTHCARE TREND RATES?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

A number of benefit variables are changing between FY26 and FY27, including a proposed reduction in employer-paid Virginia Retirement System (VRS) rates, increases in health insurance premiums, and a 5.0% shift in the cost of health insurance between employees and employer. The following is a summary of the impact of these various changes:

Benefit Category/Item	FY27 $ Change
Change in Salary-Based Benefits:	$3,175,600
- Offset by Reduction in VRS Rates:	($1,656,800)
Anticipated Increase in Health Premiums:	$2,382,700
- Offset by 5.0% ER/EE Premium Shift:	($1,828,800)
TOTAL	**$2,072,700**

The healthcare cost escalation factors, based on trending data, are calculated at 9% increase for UnitedHealth Care plans, 8% increase for Kaiser plan, and 3% increase for dental benefits.

QUESTION 34: NON-LABOR SHOWS A NET REDUCTION OF $820K, INCLUDING A 5% CUT. ARE THESE REDUCTIONS TEMPORARY EFFICIENCIES, OR DO THEY DEFER COSTS INTO FUTURE YEARS?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

As part of the budget development process, staff were asked to identify 5% efficiency reductions. These reductions were not meant as temporary reductions, but efficiency reductions, not deferred costs.

QUESTION 35: WE ARE USING $6.46M FROM THE OPERATING FUND BALANCE. WHAT IS THE MINIMUM REQUIRED BALANCE UNDER THE POLICY, AND HOW MANY YEARS CAN WE SUSTAIN THIS PRACTICE IF REVENUE GROWTH REMAINS CONSTRAINED?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Per School Board Policy DAB, The Board will maintain a minimum unrestricted Operating Fund balance of 3 percent of the current fiscal year's original Operating Fund expenditure budget, with a maximum of 5 percent, exclusive of the amount reserved for encumbrances, calculated as of June 30 each fiscal year upon completion of the annual financial audit. Unrestricted fund balance consists of committed, assigned, and unassigned fund balances as previously defined.

Operating Fund Balance may be committed and used as follows:

Subsequent Years' Operating Budgets - The Board may utilize fund balance to support the Operating Budget each year. The amount used for this purpose *may not exceed 2 percent* of the Operating Fund expenditure budget. Based on historical experience, total spending is usually within 98 percent of the budget and therefore up to 2 percent of the budget is typically anticipated as budget savings. As a result, fund balance may be used to support the subsequent year's operating budget within this limit. This may result at the close of any fiscal year in up to 2 percent being already reserved and budgeted for the current fiscal year, and another up to 2 percent amount reserved for the immediate next (subsequent) fiscal year.

The number of years ACPS can sustain the budgeted use of Fund Balance is dependent upon the actual use and/or the amount of use of Fund Balance. Based on the average of the actual use of Fund Balance from FY 2023 to FY 2025, the current Fund Balance is sustainable for another 2 years before reaching the minimum balance of 3%, while it would take 6.3 years, upon which ACPS will have fully depleted its Fund Balance.

QUESTION 36: EXCLUDING ONE-TIME REVENUES AND FUND BALANCE USAGE, DOES THIS BUDGET CLOSE THE STRUCTURAL GAP, OR DOES IT CARRY FORWARD AN OPERATING DEFICIT INTO FY28?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Every year we balance the budget with the use of the Fund Balance. Ending the structural deficit that is projected in the fiscal forecast requires increased revenue and/or significant personnel reductions.

QUESTION 37: MULTIPLE LINE ITEMS REFERENCE FSD RESERVE ADJUSTMENTS. WHAT IS THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF THOSE RESERVES, AND WHAT RISK DO WE ASSUME BY REPURPOSING THEM FOR RECURRING EXPENSES?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The original and primary purpose of the FSD Reserve is to budget for contingency-related staffing adjustments to include factoring a system-wide vacancy savings to account for budgeted, yet vacant position savings as well as a contingency for emergencies and/or to cover any other unanticipated costs. .

QUESTION 38: SEVERAL STAFFING POSITIONS ARE TIED TO FEDERAL PROGRAMS. IF FEDERAL REVENUE DECLINES OR IS DELAYED, WHAT IS OUR HIGH-LEVEL CONTINGENCY PLAN?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Dr. Finney, Mr. Turner

If federally funded grant programs are eliminated by the federal government the services provided by that grant would be eliminated as well. Grant funding is for supplemental services, the Operating Fund does not have the resources to continue grant programming.

QUESTION 39: THE CIP TRANSFER FROM THE CITY IS $368M. HOW DOES PRESSURE ON THE CITY'S CAPITAL PROGRAM AFFECT FUTURE OPERATING TRANSFERS, PARTICULARLY DEBT SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE OBLIGATIONS?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Dr. Taylor, Amanda Ou

The CIP Budget is linked to the Operating Budget through PAYGo (cash) and debt financing. The larger the outstanding debt the greater the debt service payment becomes which is paid through the Operating Budget. PAYGo is dedicated cash financing for CIP projects, which is also funded by the Operating Budget. The greater these two items are the less funding available to fund annual operating expenses.

QUESTION 40: IF REVENUE PROJECTIONS FALL SHORT MID-YEAR, AT A HIGH LEVEL, WHICH COST CATEGORIES ARE MOST ADJUSTABLE MID-YEAR VERSUS CONTRACTUALLY FIXED?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Purchased Services, Other Charges, Materials and Supplies, and Capital Outlay are the most fungible expenditure types if revenue projection shortfalls require a mid-year adjustment to spending. All contracts will be honored in full, however, discretionary spending may need to be curtailed.

QUESTION 41: WHAT IS THE PROJECTED GROWTH RATE OF LABOR COSTS COMPARED TO PROJECTED REVENUE GROWTH OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Projected Salary Growth- 3.5-5.0%

Projected Employee Benefits- 8.0-10.0%

Historical State Revenue Growth- 3.13% (when removing outlier)

Historical City Revenue Growth- 4.3%

QUESTION 42: PLEASE PROVIDE AN AGGREGATE SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPENDING BY DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING TRAVEL-RELATED COSTS?

Board Member(s): Chris Harris

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

FY 2027 Proposed Budget in travel and staff development by department displayed on the table below.

Section Title		FY 2027 Proposed Dollar
School Board		32,500
Office of the Superintendent		19,400
Accountability and Research		13,800
Ofc. of Schl, Bus. & Com Partn		1,950
Community Partnerships & Engag		34,128
Communications		32,500
Teaching, Learning, Leadership		31,583
School Leadership		20,500
Curriculum Design & Inst Srvcs		3,000
Career and Technical Education		20,000
Humanities		20,000
Literacy		45,283
Science, Tech, Eng, and Math		23,700
Talent Development		109,454
Adult Education		3,480
Pre-Kindergarten Programs		35,000
Talented and Gifted Programs		27,326
AVID/College Readiness		42,517
Specialized Instruction		56,098
English Learner Services		101,300
Title I Programs		4,000
School Improvement		126,950
Instructional Support		12,500
Technology Services		11,473
Student Services		82,635
Alternative Programs & Equity		94,288
Human Resources		19,000
Financial Services		39,100
Pupil Transportation		12,500
Facilities & Operations		24,500
Safety & Security Services		19,000
Grand Total	**$**	**1,119,466**

QUESTION 43: CAN YOU PROVIDE A TABLE THAT LISTS FY26 SALARY INCREASES FOR SCHOOL DIVISIONS IN OUR REGION, AND INDICATE WHICH DIVISIONS HAVE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

School District	CBA	Dates	Salary Increase
Falls Church City	Yes	July 1 2024 - June 30, 2027	Cost of Living Adjustment of 2.5% - CBA Step Increase - Collective Bargaining Agreement Average 5% increase
Manassas City	No		Compensation Increase 5.5%
			COLA 1.2% adopted
			Average 6.7% increase
Manassas Park	No		5.2% average increase
			includes 3% COLA and 2% step
Arlington	Yes	July 1 2024 - June 30, 2027	COLA 2%
		https://www.apsva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2024/06/APS-AEA-Licensed-Agreement-Signed-@-06.20.2024.pdf	step increase
			4.26% average increase
Fairfax	Yes	July 1, 2025 THROUGH June 30, 2028	6% increase - cba 5% increase - other SOQ - one time $1,000
Loudoun County	Yes	November 2025 July 1 2026 - June 30, 2029 15% raise over 3 years	2.5% Step average and 4% adjustment to scales (4% COLA for B/C and 4% strategic adjustment A/Teacher Scale) average
Prince William County	Yes	May 2025 - 2027 13% raise over 2 years	2 year agreement 7% average raise - Year 1 6.4% average raise - Year 2 (2027)

QUESTION 44: HOW MANY ACPS FTES ARE IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

- LICENSED STAFF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT
- SUPPORT STAFF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT
- NON-COLLECTIVELY BARGAINED STAFF?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

As of December 22, 2025, the breakdown of FY 2027 FTE positions by employee group is as follows:

- Licensed: 1,669.1 FTE
- Support: 843.4 FTE
- Non-Union: 218.6 FTE

QUESTION 45: HOW MANY OF THE ABOVE EMPLOYEES IN EACH CATEGORY ARE AT THE TOP OF THEIR SALARY SCALE?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

As of December 22, 2025:

- Licensed Employees: 69 at top of scale
- Support Employees: 69 at top of scale
- All Other Employees: 40 at top of scale

QUESTION 46: I WOULD LIKE TO UNDERSTAND HOW INCREASED HEALTHCARE COSTS ARE IMPACTING TAKE HOME PAY FOR ACPS EMPLOYEES IN FY26.

- WHAT DOES THE AVERAGE STEP INCREASE OF 2.85% EQUATE TO IN DOLLARS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL STAFF MEMBER IN FY26? PLEASE PROVIDE THE AVERAGE AMOUNT FOR A LICENSED FTE AND SUPPORT FTE.
- HOW MUCH IN DOLLARS DID THE ANNUAL EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE PREMIUM CONTRIBUTION INCREASE FOR INDIVIDUAL STAFF MEMBERS IN FY26?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Mr. Turner

A step increase would equate to a salary improvement of $2,256 for the average ACPS employee. For a Licensed Employee, the average increase would be $2,671; for a Support Employee, the average increase would be $1,268.

Single UHC POS plan increased $1,533.36 (pre-tax deduction) in FY 2026 for Licensed Staff.

Single UHC POS plan increased $766.68 (pre-tax deduction) in FY 2026 for Support Staff.

QUESTION 47: FOR FY 2026, HOW MUCH TOTAL STATE FUNDING DID ACPS RECEIVE AND WHAT AMOUNT PASSED THROUGH THE LOCAL COMPOSITE INDEX? CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE TIERS OF STATE FUNDS ON P. 96?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

For FY 2026, ACPS is projected to receive approximately $70.2, of which $67.5 million is calculated based on the ACPS' Local Composite Index (LCI) of 0.8000 . Please refer to pages 98 and 99 of the Proposed Budget Book for a detailed explanation of the various state revenue tiers.

The Virginia Department of Education published calculations templates and budget information related to the Governor's amended FY 2026 budget and introduced 2026-2028 biennial budget. Information can be found on the Virginia Department of Education website. The Direct Aid Payment Budget Calculation Templates and Planning Tools is a publicly-accessible website, see link below:

https://www.doe.virginia.gov/data-policy-funding/school-finance/budget-grants-management/calculation-templates

QUESTION 48: IS THERE A REDUCTION IN VIRGINIA PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE (VPI) FUNDING FOR FY27 AND, IF SO, WILL THIS IMPACT PROGRAMMING?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Mr. Turner

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has reported that the FY27 VPI funding will maintain the 0.5 Local Composite Index (LCI). The VPI budget will increase from $10,701.00 to $11,488.00. The state funding will amount to $5,744.00, and ACPS will provide a local match of $5,744.00.

This results in an increase of $393.50 per child for ACPS. Currently, VPI serves 256 students, leading to a total FY27 increase of $100,736.00 for ACPS.

The local match can be fulfilled with a combination of 50% cash and 50% in-kind contributions. ACPS can utilize in-kind contributions to offset the increased costs.

QUESTION 49: CAN YOU PROVIDE A BREAKDOWN OF HOW STUDENT ACTIVITY STIPENDS HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED FOR FY26 AT THE ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS? PLEASE LIST THE STIPEND AMOUNT FOR EACH ACTIVITY SUPPORTED?

Board Member(s): Dr. Michelle Rief

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Mr. Turner

Amount Per Stipend (FY 2026)		
Elementary Student Activity	$	767.00
Middle Student Activity	$	1,419.00
High Student Activity	$	1,277.00

School	Number Per School	Salary*
Charles Barrett	2	1,534.00
Cora Kelly	2	1,534.00
Douglas MacArthur	2	1,534.00
Ferdinand T. Day	2	1,534.00
George Mason	2	1,534.00
James Polk	2	1,534.00
Jefferson-Houston	2	1,534.00
John Adams	2	1,534.00
Lyles-Crouch	2	1,534.00
Mount Vernon	2	1,534.00
Naomi L. Brooks	2	1,534.00
Patrick Henry	2	1,534.00
Samuel Tucker	2	1,534.00
William Ramsay	2	1,534.00
SUB-TOTAL		**21,476.00**
Francis C. Hammond	12	17,028.00
George Washington	12	17,028.00
SUB-TOTAL		**34,056.00**
Alexandria City - King Street	49	62,573.00
Alexandria City - Minnie Howard	16	20,432.00
SUB-TOTAL		**83,005.00**

*Excludes benefits

QUESTION 50: PLEASE SHOW ON A TABLE OUR RENTAL FEES VS THE CITY'S FEES?

Board Member(s): Alex Scioscia

Staff Respondent: Dr. Taylor, Amanda Ou

ACPS Rental Fee Schedule can be found on page 99 of the Proposed Budget Book. Link is provided: https://www.acps.k12.va.us/departments/financial-services/budget/fy-2026-budget

As of 2/6/2026 we have not received the city's fee structure. Once received we will add to posting.

ROOM RENTAL FEES (BASED ON OCCUPANCY)

Room Type	Group[1]	Fee/Hour[2]
Small Room (up to 50 people)	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$79
	Resident/local non-profit	$59
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Kitchen	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$53
	Resident/local non-profit	$39
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Dance Studio	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$79
	Resident/local non-profit	$59
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Large Room (51-125 people)	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$95
	Resident/local non-profit	$75
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Exhibit Hall/Large Multipurpose (125+ people)	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$135
	Resident/local non-profit	$115
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Gymnasium	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$135
	Resident/local non-profit	$115
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Lee Center Kauffman Auditorium	Non-Resident/Business/Non-local	$199
	Resident/local non-profit	$149
	City agency/sponsored	TBD
Audio Equipment		$50

ROOM RENTAL APPLICATION, SECURITY DEPOSIT AND STAFFING FEES

Fee Type	Fee
Facility Rental Application Fee	$25/per application
Refundable Security Deposit	Up to $500
Rental Staff Support Fees	$45 per hour per staff (M-F); $59 per hour per staff (Sa, Su, Holidays & After Hours)

The City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities' (RPCA) rental fee schedule is above.

QUESTION 51: PLEASE ESTIMATE A 5% TO 10% INCREASE TO BUILDING USAGE FEES - CAN WE ALSO SET A STANDARD INCREASE EVERY YEAR OR SET THEM TO MATCH THE CITY'S RENTAL FEES (ASSUMING THEY ARE HIGHER)?

Board Member(s): Alex Scioscia

Staff Respondent: Dr. Taylor, Amanda Ou

Based on the FY 2025 Community Services Program Revenues collected, a 5% increase in fees would generate approximately $9,750, while a 10% increase equates to approximately $19,500 in additional revenue. Staff will assess and analyze the prospect of incorporating a standard fee escalation schedule in the future.

It is critical to note, per School Board policies KG and KQ, designated partners of ACPS are not charged facility use fees.

QUESTION 52: WHAT IS THE NUMBER OF THE AFGHAN SUPPORT COUNSELORS WE ARE LOSING? HOW MUCH WOULD IT COST TO MAKE THEM PERMANENT FTES?

Board Member(s): Alex Scioscia

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Mr. Turner

We have six Family Liaisons, two Cultural Liaisons, and one Instructional Assistant position funded through the School Support for Afghan Students (SSAS) grant. The funding expires Sep 30, 2026. The estimated cost of salary plus benefits for the positions:

Family Liaison: $64,060 salary, $39,354 benefits = $103,414 x 6 positions = $620,484
Cultural Liaison: $60,970 salary, $39,354 benefits = $100,324 x 2 positions = $200,648
Instructional Assistant: $32,130 salary + $29,925 benefits = $62,055

QUESTION 53: CAN WE REALLOCATE THE FTES BEING REMOVED FROM CHINESE AND LATIN TO OTHER CLASSES OR FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS?

Board Member(s): Alex Scioscia

Staff Respondent: Ms. Valmond, Dr. Finney

From a division perspective, it is advisable for ACPS to develop a standardized, data-driven process for determining whether courses are offered in-person or online, particularly considering

financial responsibilities. Three years' worth of declining enrollment data has been provided to the School Board for review. At the high school level, courses enrolling 15 or fewer students are typically not offered in person. However, we will continue to seek innovative methods to deliver in-person instruction for these courses, which may include accommodating multiple student levels and requiring significant differentiation by the instructor. Continuing to implement clear guidance and enrollment thresholds is essential to ensure consistency, transparency, and equity in decision-making across middle schools. As with previous scheduling decisions for encore courses, the division must balance maximizing financial resources with maintaining access to quality instructional programs. While these decisions are challenging, instructional integrity and course availability can still be preserved through virtual learning when implemented with appropriate structure and oversight.

When reallocating FTEs, licensed educators must hold the appropriate Virginia endorsements for the subject areas they are assigned to teach. Educators who currently possess endorsements in other subject areas or are willing to complete the necessary Praxis examinations to obtain additional endorsements may be eligible to transition into different roles or classes within the middle schools. Any reallocation will be guided by licensure requirements, instructional needs, and division staffing priorities. If funding permits, further exploration of reallocated positions in other high-need instructional areas, such as special education, may also be considered.

QUESTION 54: WHAT IS THE COST TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR US TO INCREASE INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS NEXT YEAR?

Board Member(s): Kelly Carmichael Booz

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Mr. Turner

The additional cost to the division would be the cost to extend the day for non-exempt employees currently working less than 8hr/day. This is limited primarily to our Instructional Assistants. Adding 0.25 hours to their day would cost ACPS an estimated $363,900 (total compensation).

QUESTION 55: HOW DO OUR INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS COMPARE TO ARLINGTON, FAIRFAX, PRINCE WILLIAM, AND FALLS CHURCH? CAN YOU SHARE THIS BREAKDOWN BY ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL?

Board Member(s): Kelly Carmichael Booz

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

Under Virginia Code and the Virginia Board of Education's Standards of Quality, all public school divisions in the Commonwealth—including ACPS, Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, and Falls Church—must provide a standard school year of at least 180 instructional days or a minimum of 990 instructional hours per year for students in grades K-12. Virginia regulations further clarify that the school day must average at least five and one-half instructional hours for students in grades 1-12, with a minimum of three instructional hours per day for kindergarten, and that local divisions must also provide minimum hours in core academic disciplines in the elementary grades to ensure sufficient instructional opportunity across disciplines such as English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. While we are meeting this requirement it does not give us a cushion for extended snow days without increasing the number of days per year.

These state requirements form the baseline for instructional time across divisions; Arlington Public Schools, Fairfax County Public Schools, Prince William County Public Schools, Falls Church City Public Schools, and Alexandria City Public Schools all adhere to these same statutory and regulatory requirements, though bell schedules and start/end times may differ locally to meet transportation, community, and program needs. Instructional hours are determined at the division level within the state-mandated framework, and divisions periodically review bell schedules and instructional minutes to ensure compliance and optimize instructional opportunities.

While individual divisions may structure their daily schedules differently (for example, different start/end times or period lengths at elementary, middle, and high school levels), all operate within this same statutory and regulatory framework. As a result, instructional hours in Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, Falls Church, and ACPS are fundamentally comparable by school level because they are governed by Virginia's uniform minimum requirements for instructional hours and core academic instructional time. A comparison by instructional days is provided below:

Instructional Days by Division (2025–26) with Official Calendar Links

This document summarizes the actual number of instructional days for selected Northern Virginia school divisions based on their adopted 2025–26 school year calendars. All divisions meet the Virginia Standards of Quality requirement of a minimum of 180 instructional days or 990 instructional hours per year. A comparison by instructional day is provided below:

School Division	Instructional Days (2025–26)	Official Calendar Website

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS)	180 days	https://www.acps.k12.va.us/families/calendar
Arlington Public Schools (APS)	180 days	https://www.apsva.us/aps-calendar/
Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)	180 days	https://www.fcps.edu/calendars
Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS)	180 days	https://www.pwcs.edu/calendars/school_calendar/index
Falls Church City Public Schools (FCCPS)	180 days	https://www.fccps.org/page/calendars

School division vary slightly in everyday schedules (e.g., earlier or later start times or differing pass periods), they all operate within the same minimum instructional time requirements set forth in Virginia law and regulations, and there is no statutory difference by locality in the total number of instructional hours required for elementary, middle, or high school students in public school divisions in Virginia. What is not visibly or publicly available are impacts on instructional hours, such as advisory and other school division mandates.

Bell-to-bell minutes by division and level (typical ranges)

Division	**Elementary**	**Middle**	**High**
ACPS	**8:00–2:35** (395 min)	**8:30–3:15** (405 min)	**8:35–3:15** (400 min)
Arlington (APS)	**7:50–2:40** *or* **9:00–3:50** (both 410 min)	**7:50–2:35** (405 min)	**8:20–3:10** (410 min)
Fairfax (FCPS)	**8:30–3:15 thru 9:20–4:05** (405 min)	**7:30–2:15** (405 min)	**8:10–2:55** (HS) (405 min)
Prince William (PWCS)	**8:45–3:25** *or* **9:20–4:00** (both 400 min)	**8:10–2:50 / 8:15–2:55 / 8:20–3:00** (400 min)	**7:25–2:05** *or* **7:30–2:10** (400 min)

Falls Church City (FCCPS)	**9:00–4:00** (420 min)	**8:30–3:10** (secondary campus) (400 min)	**8:30–3:10** (secondary campus) (400 min)

The complexity of instructional hours comes when school divisions must meet core academic hours in both elementary and middle school. Elementary school is required to have 660 academic hours in the areas of math, English/Language Arts, science, and social studies, while middle school is required to have 550 academic hours in the core academic areas. High school does not have that requirement. The VA codes are linked for further review.

- Instructional Days
- Elementary
- Middle School

QUESTION 56: WHAT CRITERIA DO WE USE WHEN DECIDING TO OFFER A CLASS OR DISCONTINUE OFFERING A CLASS? IS THERE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF STUDENTS REGISTERED TO ALLOW A CLASS TO CONTINUE? DO WE HAVE A STANDARD FORMULA FOR THIS?

Board Member(s): Kelly Carmichael Booz

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney

Decisions to offer, continue, or discontinue a course are guided by a set of consistent, division-level criteria that balance budget constraints, instructional integrity, and the impact on the master schedule. At the secondary level, course viability is evaluated in the context of the overall master schedule, available staffing, and the total course load assigned to educators. Typically, secondary teachers serve approximately 100–150 students during their instructional day, and course sections must be structured to support this expectation while maintaining program balance and fiscal responsibility.

In determining whether a course will run, ACPS considers minimum and maximum enrollment thresholds. As a general guideline at the secondary level, a course section is expected to meet a minimum enrollment of approximately 15 students, with a maximum enrollment aligned to the established class cap for that course and grade level. These thresholds help ensure efficient use of staffing resources while preserving access to a broad range of courses. When enrollment falls below the minimum threshold, the division may consider alternative delivery models—such as combining sections, offering the course online, or adjusting the schedule—before discontinuing the course.

At the elementary level, staffing and course offerings are driven by class size expectations, which typically range from 24, 26, to 28 students, depending on the school, grade level, and program configuration. These class size ranges, combined with projected enrollment and available staffing, inform decisions about sectioning and instructional assignments.

While there is no single rigid formula applied in all cases, ACPS uses a data-informed, standardized approach that includes enrollment projections, course registration data, staffing capacity, licensure requirements, budget parameters, and scheduling feasibility. This approach ensures that decisions are equitable, transparent, and aligned with instructional priorities, while also allowing the flexibility needed to respond to student interest and fiscal realities.

QUESTION 57: OF THE STUDENTS WHO USED TO TAKE LATIN IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, HOW MANY STUDENTS STARTED TAKING A DIFFERENT WORLD LANGUAGE RATHER THAN CONTINUING WITH VIRTUAL LATIN?

Board Member(s): Kelly Carmichael Booz

Staff Respondent: Dr. Finney, Dr. Jackson

Of the 48 students total who took Latin in middle school over the past three completed school years (22-23, 23-24, 24-25), this is the breakdown of what language they took in their freshmen and sophomore year in high school.

- 7 students over the past three years have not continued in any World Language
- 3 students over the past three years have switched to ASL
- 1 student over the past three years have switched to French
- 3 students over the past three years have switched to German
- 8 students over the past three years have switched to Spanish
- 26 students over the past three years have continued in Latin