

**To:** ACPS School Board

**From:** Staff

**Date:** February 19, 2026

**Subject:** Responses to School Board Member Questions #1

---

**Budget Book References (FY 27 Draft Funding Request):**

<https://www.k12albemarle.org/our-departments/fiscal-services/budget/2026-27-budget-development>

- 1. Albemarle County Public Schools has not applied for nor received the IELCE grant since before 2019, yet this paragraph (FY 26 Adopted Budget, p. F-39) implies we've received the IELCE grant.**

It is accurate that we no longer receive the IELCE grant. Staff have reviewed and proposed the following change to this fund, which is reflected in the FY 27 budget document.

Adult Education English Education (63221): English classes are provided to adult English Learners, including ACPS parents, ACPS employees, and community members. English language development enriches parents' communication and engagement in their children's learning. Advancement in English proficiency supports positive community involvement and success in the workplace.

- 2. The consent agenda item (Feb. 12) for re-appropriating Special Revenue Fund balances is a little over \$13M. Is that pretty typical? Who decides how those funds will be spent? I noticed a little over \$1M to "Ed & Rec supplies." What is that? And is it possible that some of these funds may be spent for expenses like security cameras and/or additional SSO's at AHS?**

Special Revenue Fund balances have ranged between \$10M and \$16M the last few years, so the \$13M is a typical amount. As a matter of sound financial management, we request that any balances remaining in Special Revenue Funds be carried forward ("re-appropriated") for use in the current year. For federal grant funds, this is important because the federal fiscal year does not align with our fiscal year. For other programs such as Child Nutrition, balances are high because they are required to maintain a reserve balance.

The School Board ultimately determines how funds are budgeted and appropriated.

Re-appropriated funds are earmarked for specific use, so they must be spent within the original scope of the fund or program and cannot be reallocated to other uses. For the most part, Special Revenue Funds are grant funds, which must be spent within the scope of the awarded grant. There are also some self-sustaining funds (like Child Nutrition), which generate revenue from fees and

federal sources. Those revenues can only be spent on the program for which the revenues were generated.

“Ed & Rec Supplies” is a general expense category relevant in most programs. While the budget may be specifically assigned to that budget line, managers may spend in the expenditure line that is actually needed.

The only area where there is discretion is contingency funding. We have two revenue contingency funds (Fund 3911 and 3913) that were set up for revenue downturns. Staff does not recommend using these funds outside of revenue contingencies.

Alternative sources of funding include one-time funding / savings in the School Operating fund (Fund 2000) for cameras and recurring operating funding (Fund 2000) for SSOs.

Staff will address potential solutions to security cameras and SSOs in Work Session #3.

**3. Please include a list of other administrators that are included in the 1.7% of employees on p. A-15.**

Below are the 49 administrator position titles included in the HR Annual Report:

Assistant Director of School Technology Supp	Dir of Professional Development
Assistant Sch Div Counsel and Title IX Coord	Dir of School Improvement and Quality
Asst Dir of Enterprise Applications	Dir of School Safety and Security
Asst Dir of Infrastructure and Supp	Director of Building Services
Asst Dir of Professional Development	Director of Community Education
Asst Dir of Technology Integration	Director of Equity Education
Asst Dir of Transportation	Director of Food Service
Asst Supt for Instruction	Director of Instruction - EL, Dual Lang
Asst Supt for School Community Eng	Director of Special Education
Asst Supt for Strategic Planning	Director of Talent
Chief Communications Officer	Director of Testing
Chief Human Resources Officer	Director of Transportation
Chief Operating Officer	Director, EDEP
Chief Technology Officer	Educational Equity Data Scientist
Coordinator of Mental Health and Wellness	Executive Director of CAI
Coordinator of School Counseling	Executive Director of PreK-12 Instruc
Deputy Chief Communications Officer	Executive Director of Student Services
Deputy Chief HR Officer	Executive Director of the AFE
Deputy Chief Technology Officer	Manager of Enterprise Applications and Communications
Deputy Dir of Building Services	School Division Counsel
Deputy Director of Transportation	School Finance Officer
Dir of Accountability and Research	School Safety Coordinator
Dir of Budget and Planning	

Senior Infrastructure and Systems Engineer  
Superintendent of Schools

Supervisor of Facilities Management  
Technology Support Manager

**4. Any idea why economically disadvantaged students dropped in 24/25? Was it a change in calculation (p. A-16)?**

Through the CEP (Community Eligibility Program), nine schools receive school-wide free lunch services. In 24-25, for K-12, we saw a greater decrease in applications for free and reduced lunch at CEP schools than we had at non-CEP schools - likely because there is no requirement to apply to free and reduced lunch in CEP schools.

The nine schools are: Agnor, Greer, Mountain View, Scottsville, Stone-Robinson, and Woodbrook Elementary Schools; and Burley, Journey, and Walton Middle Schools.

More context will be presented in Work Session #1.

**5. I would like to see a specific breakdown of what drove the increase in per pupil expenses over the last 4 years. (p. A-18)**

Section A of each year's budget document contains detailed explanations of expenditure increases. For the last four years, the greatest and most consistent expenditure increases that impact per pupil expenditures are health care, inflation, and compensation. Below is a summary of expenditure increases greater than \$1M:

23-24: Health care, Inflation, Compensation increase, Differentiated staffing restructure, Special education - Intensive support services, Substitute program improvements  
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1688744650/k12albemarleorg/tos7tylatqcrvpupoxfm/FY24SectionA.pdf> (A-27 to 28)

24-25: Health care, Inflation, Compensation increase, Social emotional supports, Intervention services  
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1719868736/k12albemarleorg/p9rasrceq9uxfmcwsgvy/FY25SectionA.pdf> (A-29)

25-26: Health care, Inflation, Compensation increase  
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1753710441/k12albemarleorg/ii7wpi9bpski5lgusdpp/FY26SectionA07282025.pdf> (A-31)

More context will be presented in Work Session #1.

**6. On the School Fund Expenditures Overview, can you explain what is included in "Admin, Attend., Health" and why the big increase particularly in benefits. (p. A-28)**

This category includes staffing and operating costs that serve the functions of administration, attendance, and health. Positions in this category include these areas:

- Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, and Chief Officers
- School Board clerk and School Board members
- Legal and Title IX services
- Fiscal Services
- Human Resources
- Communications
- Student services
- Safety and security services
- Administrative assistants
- School nurses
- School psychologists
- Mental health support specialists

The increase in this budget line compared to the previous year is simply the result of an allocation shift, and not an overall budget increase. For better fiscal alignment, we shifted the Workers' Compensation division-wide coverage costs from the Building Services function to the Fiscal Services function. Therefore, you will see an equal corresponding *decrease* reflected in the benefits cost for the Building Services function in the overall budget.

**7. Can you explain Service Reductions—eliminate Teaching Assistant and EDEP position allocations. What is it and why? (p. A-30,33)**

In FY 24, ACPS provided 15 half-time teaching assistant positions to combine with half-time Extended Day Enrichment Programs (EDEP) positions to create 15 full-time positions, with the purpose of increasing accessibility, reducing waitlists, and mitigating hiring challenges. The position allows us to attract highly qualified staff and maintain a stable workforce.

Although the positions were projected to continue through FY 28, this arrangement was meant to be temporary until the workforce returned to pre-pandemic levels. In addition, salary and benefits have significantly increased since the pandemic. EDEP is meant to be financially self-sustaining and cannot assume the costs for full-time salary and benefits for the shared position. Lastly, the school division has many instructional priorities, and cannot continue to fund a portion of the full-time position. Additional resources have been allocated to schools for teaching assistants (related to *Working Conditions*), reducing the need for the part-time TA/responsibilities role that was previously combined with the EDEP assistant role.

This will be presented in Work Session #1.

**8. What is the difference between “cost per pupil” (p. B-4) and “per pupil expenses” (p. A-18)? When and how are they used differently in reporting?**

B-4 shows actual expenditures where available and A-18 shows budgeted expenditures for all years.

**9. Can you note the biggest drivers for the increase or decrease in any School Fund category that is proposed to change by more than 10%. If it is due to a tied in budget initiative please note that. (p. C-11)**

<b>State Category/Function</b>	<b>% change</b>	<b>Major Drivers/Budget Initiative</b>
Instruction - Alternative Education	-14.3%	Decrease in allocation for educational & recreational supplies. Overall position costs decrease
Instruction - Intervention	55.2%	Budget Proposal for Math & Data Specialists Increased by 6 FTE
Instruction - Library/Media	12.7%	Budget Proposals for enrollment changes, new schools, and working conditions. Increased by 2.6 FTE
Instruction - Talent Development	23.9%	Budget Proposals for enrollment changes, new schools, and working conditions. Increased by 4 FTE
Instruction - Vocational Education	29.1%	Budget Proposal for ACE Academy Lambs Lane opening. Increased by 9.0 FTE
Admin/Attend & Health - Administration	10.4%	Reclassification of Workers’ Compensation costs to Fiscal Services function (see question 6 above)
Admin/Attend & Health - Health	10.5%	Reclassification of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Coaches to Mental Health Support Specialists (MHSS)
Transfers	81.3%	Budget Proposal for One-time Transfer to Schools Capital Program

**10. I am interested in learning more about how our psychologists are used in practice at the Elementary, Middle, and High School levels. What percentage is assessments, IEP meetings? Consultations with teachers? Support groups? (p. D-76)**

School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. They work across age and grade levels, preschool to 22 years old. School psychologists partner with families, teachers, school administrators, and other

professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments that strengthen connections between home, school, and the community.

With our current school psychologist to student ratios (approximately 1:1000 or higher due to current vacancies) school psychologists in ACPS typically spend approximately 80% of their time in "core/essential" roles (assessment, report writing, IEP and eligibility meeting attendance, and IEP counseling) and 20% of their time in the intervention/consultation role along with other duties.

**11. What drove the increase in budgets for these department budgets– International and EL Program and Communications? (p. E-3)**

International & English Learners Program - moved \$20,000 to operating budget (from school program allocations for EL tutoring) to use for contract services. A 0.3 FTE was added due to the loss of grant funding, and there was various position turnover with net % increases within the 6.0 FTE staff. As a small department, minor revenue and expenditure changes result in large percentage increases in the departmental budget.

Communications - added \$10,000 to operating budget for A/V Equipment replacement funds. Position turnover for one position impacted the salary and benefit % increase. The department has 5.0 FTEs. As a small department, minor revenue and expenditure changes result in large percentage increases in the departmental budget.

**12. What is our percentage of cost sharing for VPI this year and how is that different than 25/26? (p. F-33)**

The formula for the state portion of cost sharing for VPI will remain the same. However, ACPS' actual costs are rising and the VPI number is capped at \$5,000 per student. We are expecting more seats from the Head Start grant next year, which will defer some costs due to the higher reimbursement levels provided by Head Start. The total budget in table F-33 is rising to accommodate the increase in costs, and the increase in students served. The budget assumes smaller class sizes due to the increasing number of students with special needs we are including in VPI classrooms and opening a second VPI/Head Start classroom at Baker-Butler.

**13. Please clarify the staffing standards for School Counselors. What and why were there changes not discussed in 25/26? I know our staffing standard for counselors is 1:250; what is the cost to get part-time staff if we go over? (p. G-11)**

The standards for secondary school counselors were clarified in the 25/26 budget. As part of the regular staffing standards review process, standards are reviewed and updated and changes are published in the budget document. If there is no material financial impact, there is no Board action required, and so it is not typically brought forward to the School Board.

During 24/25, we conducted an audit of school counselor staffing allocations and how they were being used. We found that schools were not using the “fractional” FTE that were part of the original standard.

Burley: Allocation 2.12, used 2.00  
 Henley: Allocation 3.22, used 3.33  
 Journey: Allocation 2.41\*, used 3.00  
 Lakeside: Allocation 2.04\*, used 2.00  
 Walton: Allocation 2.00, used 2.00

\*Journey’s final allocation was 2.86 (+0.45) and Lakeside’s allocation was 2.59 (+0.55) when including additional allocations provided outside of the adopted staffing standard. This additional 1.0 FTE allocation total was provided as part of an FY 20 budget proposal

<https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1590144992/k12albemarleorg/gi9zicmagv8aqfj6kgtc/2019-20-SB-Adopted-Budget-A-Overview.pdf> (page A-38).

After thorough review of staffing, ACPS required staff to develop an updated (and simplified) staffing standard to which principals are held accountable to staffing. The following allocations were approved to minimize changes in staff:

Burley: used 2.00, new allocation 2.00  
 Henley: used 3.33, new allocation 3.00  
 Journey: used 3.00, new allocation 3.00  
 Lakeside: used 2.00, new allocation 2.00  
 Walton: used 2.00, new allocation 2.00

Lakeside’s projected enrollment in 26/27 is 616 students. At 625 students, the school would receive a 3rd counselor (625 / 250 = 2.5, rounded to 3.0). If we were to provide fractional FTE to middle schools for each 250 students rather than the current standard, the overall net change in cost would not be material, but other schools may lose FTE.

	Enrollment	Rounded Allocation (current)	Fractional Allocation (1:250 students)	Difference
Burley	520	2.0	2.1	0.1
Henley	869	3.0	3.5	0.5
Journey	657	3.0	2.6	-0.4
Lakeside	616	2.0	2.5	0.5
Walton	347	2.0	1.4	-0.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>12.0 FTE</b>	<b>12.0 FTE</b>	<b>0.0 FTE</b>

**14. What are the Athletics budgets for the three high school athletics departments and how do they compare?**

The three high school athletic departments have the same operational budgets:

- \$162,000 each for operations (p. G-29)
- \$45,900 each for supplemental wages (G-31)
- \$238,600 each for coaching stipends (G-32)
- \$306,400 for additional supplemental wages budgeted in multi-school (G-31)