

**To:** ACPS School Board

**From:** Staff

**Date:** February 25, 2026

**Subject:** Responses to School Board Member Questions #2

---

**1. What has been the impact of reducing the Instructional Coach positions?**

Click here to access [raw data charts](#).

Impact to Overall Capacity for Coaching Support: To allocate available staffing in alignment with programmatic needs, coaching support available at elementary schools decreased by 38% and coaching support available to secondary schools decreased by 67%.

Impact to Support for Teacher Development: The number of teachers receiving 1:1 coaching support during the 1st semester of 2025-26 has decreased by 31% in comparison to the same time period in 2024-25. This includes a 22% decrease in coaching enrollment at the elementary level and a 47% decrease in coaching enrollment at the secondary level.

Impact to Support of School and Division Priorities: The coaching capacity available at each school to advance instructional priorities has decreased from 22.0 FTE in 2024-25 to 11.0 FTE in 2025-26, representing a 50% overall reduction in capacity.

Impact to Support Culturally Responsive Educator Micro-Credential & New Teacher Induction: The current restructuring of instructional coaching has significantly disrupted our plans to incorporate and build a New-to-ACPS induction program for veteran teachers to ACPS that embeds the CRE microcredentialing requirement. If staffing continues as-is, we will need to abandon our current plan and explore alternative solutions to meet this need.

**2. For the Previous Years Budget Proposals Dashboard, can you provide a summary of what put each proposal in the Yellow column there and anything being done to improve. I am especially interested in the STEP expansion but would like info on all others including why the recommendation to continue funding them. (p. A-40, 41)**

STEP Program Expansion

The STEP Program (Short-term Education Program) is the implementation of “restorative practices” in schools, which focuses on building relationships, empathy, and community to address behavior rather than relying solely on punitive discipline. Although administrators and staff have received professional development to implement this program, the needs at the schools have exceeded the staffing capacity as positions are also assigned disciplinary duties beyond the STEP Program such as lunch detention, in school suspension, and other interventions where supervision is required for students who cannot be in the classroom for reasons related to behavior.

Mental Health Services & Social-Emotional Supports

These positions work directly with students to support the security and safety in our schools through restorative interventions, mental health supports for both chronic and acute incidents, and working with teams to bring eyes, ears and ultimately additional skilled hands into the hallways and classrooms with our students.

Continued efforts to push advances into the “green” are the daily focus of efforts and energy by the Department of Student Services. Improvement areas include allocating resources more equitably, targeting intensive interventions, and incorporating progress monitoring into regular service delivery expectations. Assessing the possibility for Medicaid billing for these services would also be explored.

Albemarle Foundation for Education

The Albemarle Foundation for Education (AFE) was placed in the yellow column during SY 2024–2025 due to leadership instability and governance challenges that limited fundraising execution and infrastructure development. The resignation of the Executive Director in August 2024, combined with a lack of board consensus regarding clear fundraising priorities and goals, delayed the development of a comprehensive fundraising strategy.

While the foundation maintained approximately \$31,459 in funds, a significant portion was restricted for designated initiatives, limiting its ability to generate flexible, unrestricted revenue at scale.

Importantly, the yellow designation did not reflect a lack of programmatic alignment or need. The foundation exists to support ACPS strategic priorities, including Thriving Students and Empowered Communities. Programs such as Communities In Schools (CIS) represent the type of high-impact initiative that requires long-term philanthropic sustainability beyond time-limited federal or grant

funding. A strong and growth-oriented foundation is essential to ensuring the division can sustain and expand student-centered supports over time.

Since the close of SY 2024–2025, the root causes of the yellow designation have been structurally addressed. A new Executive Director has been hired for SY 2025–2026, restoring leadership stability and reestablishing forward momentum. AFE-District has reaffirmed its long-term commitment to standing up the foundation with the expectation that it will become financially self-sustaining. A Memorandum of Understanding is being finalized to formally define governance expectations, fundraising benchmarks, and a 5–10 year sustainability horizon tied to measurable progress.

Strategic priorities have been streamlined to focus on addressing students’ basic and essential needs through the Families Helping Families Fund, supporting teacher development and retention, and building philanthropic capacity to sustain division-wide initiatives such as CIS. Governance infrastructure improvements, defined annual fundraising goals for SY 2025–2026, quarterly revenue tracking, and board role stabilization are being implemented to ensure measurable advancement.

Movement from yellow to green will be contingent upon finalization of the MOU, continued leadership stability, and demonstrated progress in governance clarity, fundraising growth, and measurable impact aligned with district priorities. Continued division investment remains transitional and performance-based within the defined sustainability framework.

With stable leadership in place, clarified strategic focus, a formal sustainability structure underway, and renewed development systems, AFE is positioned to transition from structural recovery to responsible growth. The foundation is again actively supporting students’ essential needs, strengthening school and community partnerships, and building the philanthropic capacity necessary to sustain high-impact initiatives aligned with the ACPS mission.

**3. What is the total FY26/ FY27 carryover across the division, and how much of that is discretionary versus already committed? In other words, what is the total recycled money entering FY27? Is our carryover affecting our view of structural sustainability or supporting recurring expenses?**

Per policy (p. A-23), up to 10% of unspent funds within school operational budget can be carried forward into FY 27. This is budgeted at \$173,000 and would be committed to school operating budgets, one-time expenditures.

During Work Session #3, we will present the second quarter financial report and make recommendations for spending projected one-time discretionary funding in Fund 2000 (use of fund balance) for both FY 26 and FY 27 carry-over. The recommendations will be one-time expenditures in order to maintain structural sustainability.

**4. Page B-10: What accounts for the discrepancy in ACPS & VDOE projections on enrollment? How much of a problem will we have if VDOE's lower number prevails?**

The ACPS enrollment projection is built using detailed cohort progression ratios by grade level and school that looks back at up to 10 years of historical patterns. The VDOE projection is a division-wide high level projection that uses a single-year and/or two-year trend. Due to the discrepancy in enrollment for FY 27, the revenue assumptions use the average projection between ACPS and VDOE. If VDOE's lower number prevails, then we would not release emergency and contingency staffing that are budgeted but not yet released to schools. The FY 27 expenditure budget is based on the ACPS enrollment projection, and if enrollment is higher than projected, additional staffing will be released, and additional state funding would be expected. If enrollment is lower than projected, additional staffing will not be released, which will offset the decrease in state funding.

**5. Page E-15: Do we know what EL grant that was that we lost? Is that federal funding that is being replaced by local funding? I want to make sure we recognize that this money might need to be sustained in the future.**

0.3 FTE was added to the Department due to the anticipated loss of Title III Part A funding.

**6. Page E-19: What accounts for the decrease in Community Engagement? Is that tied to staffing changes or vacancies, and does it affect service capacity going into FY27?**

The decrease from FY 26 is a function of personnel changes (position turnover in two out of four positions), but the department's overall staffing level is unchanged in FY 27.

**7. Page E-25: Are our Lapse Factor assumptions still realistic? I know we're basing this on historical trends, but it seems like a lot is changing.**

Lapse factor assumptions (historical savings as a percentage of the budgeted amounts) are reviewed each year and tend to err conservatively. While vacancy rates have been decreasing, the assumptions still remain realistic.

**8. Page E-27: Can you tell us how much of these non-departmental items will be recurring costs year over year, or intermittently?**

All costs in non-department in FY 27 are recurring costs that will be included in the baseline budget for future years. The one exception is the one-time transfer to the schools capital program, which is not anticipated to be recurring.

**9. It does not seem equitable at all that the MHS and WAHS athletics budgets are the same as AHS if they have significantly fewer athletes. Am I missing something? Do we have an estimate of the number of athletes at each of the 3 high schools?**

All of the schools offer the same number of sports, coaching stipends, and expense budgets for referees and games. There are variations between schools for participation in regional and state events and the distance traveled for regional and state events that are unrelated to the number of participants.

Data collected in 23-24 show the following numbers of participants:

- Albemarle: 975
- Monticello: 719
- Western Albemarle: 922

**10. The overall SPED department budget seems to be reduced. Is that true, if so why?**

The Special Education department is reduced by 1.0 FTE (Medicaid Specialist) as part of central office and department-based reductions implemented in FY 26. The services provided by the Medicaid Specialist were able to be provided by a third party.

While the department-based budget decreased, overall special education programs have increased by \$2,539,276 or 7.4% from the FY 26 Adopted Budget. This is largely driven by positions added for Special Education growth and the proposal to add three Specialists.

*This will be reviewed in Work Session #2.*

**11. What are the cost savings for pharmacy services with the employee care clinic?**

*From Lara Andrade, Chief of Shared Services in the Albemarle County Office of Finance and Budget:*  
We had 3 goals for the clinic as a new employee benefit.

- Enhancing the overall health of our employees and their families,
- Removing barriers and ensuring equitable access to health and wellness services, and
- Managing rising healthcare costs.

In the original feasibility study, the model included 2 FTEs for the Pharmacy, one pharmacist and one pharmacy technician. We pivoted from that original staffing model to incorporate a Rx Dispensary that did not require these positions, allowing us to decrease our original start up and staffing cost outlay. The Rx Dispensary option addresses the first two goals of the Employee clinic by increasing medication adherence rates and providing convenient access to generic prescription drugs, potentially defraying larger future expenses. We are currently sourcing a practitioner that is licensed to dispense medications. Once they are onboard, we will proceed with the Rx Dispensary.

Unfortunately, I cannot provide the specific Rx savings expectations that were factored into the model since the ROI modeling included both medical expenses and pharmacy. I can share that the model shows with adequate employee utilization of 45-49% and dependent utilization of 20-22%, the costs of the clinic will be offset by medical savings in Year 3.

**12. Please provide market comparison data. Do we have data for central office positions?**

At [this link](#) you will find a summary of the teacher market comparison data. Here are [non-teacher positions](#) that were reviewed over the summer. There has not been a broad review of Division Services positions since the [2022 Compensation Study](#).

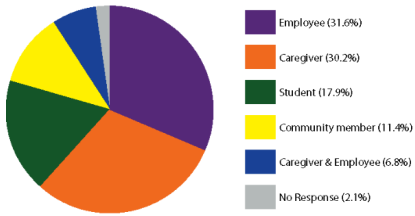
**13. Please provide the results of the budget survey, disaggregated by respondents.**

We asked the community to rank- order specific initiatives along with two key focus groups - student senate and ACPS leadership. The Community Survey was the primary factor in determining top priorities we should address to provide the level of service and instruction expected from ACPS.

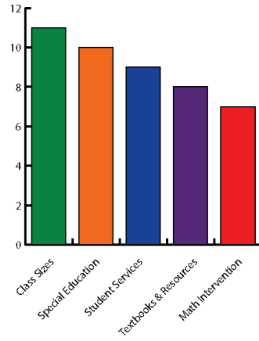
As noted in the graphs below, 31.6% of community survey respondents were employees. 30.2% were student caregivers. The remaining 40% were: Students (17.9%), Community members (11.4%), and those who identify as both a caregiver and employee (6.8%) with two percent of respondents not identifying their relationship to ACPS.

There are two ways in which we evaluated the ranking of all respondents to the community survey. The first is the "Condorcet Method," which puts each issue in a head-to-head comparison to identify which item has the greatest level of priority. We applied this methodology to understand what was of greatest importance for all respondents, student senate, and ACPS leadership respectively. These findings are presented in the top three bar charts below.

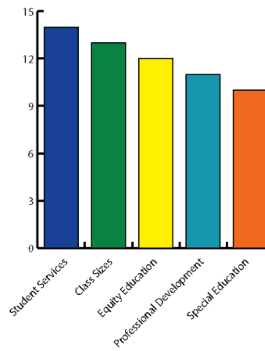
The second method we used was the weighted ranking for each item. Through this method, the greater rank priority receives a higher weighted value. The six bar charts at the bottom of the graphic below show how each segment of responders from the community survey prioritized the initiatives.



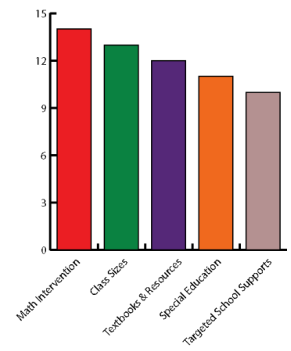
Community Survey Respondents



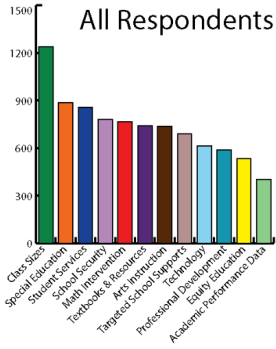
Student Senate



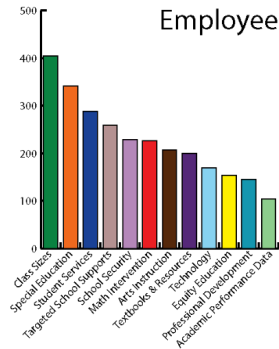
ACPS Leadership



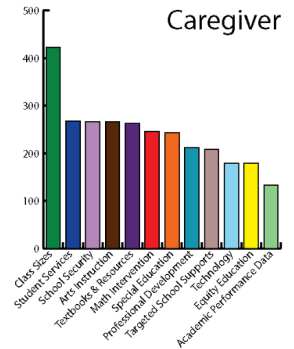
All Respondents



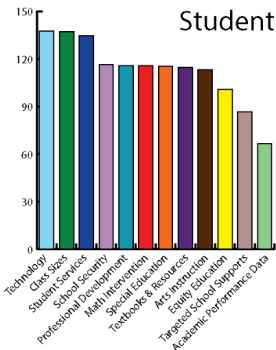
Employee



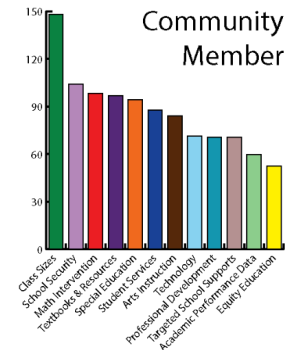
Caregiver



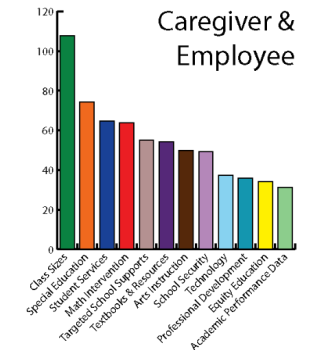
Student



Community Member



Caregiver & Employee



14. Are EDEP tuition rates increasing next year? No

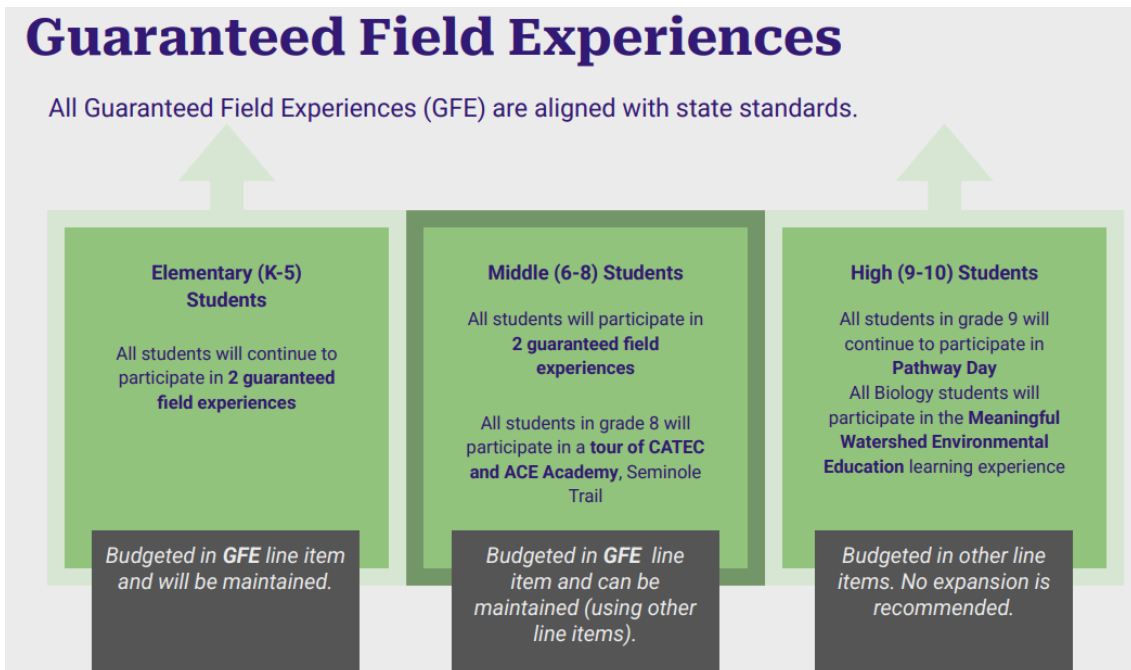
**15. Please provide the breakdown between school-based budgets and department-based budgets for the last several years.**

	School-based Section D	Dept-based Section E
2026-27 Draft	72.1%	27.9%
2025-26 Adopted	73.4%	26.6%
2024-25 Adopted	72.5%	27.5%
2023-24 Adopted	72.0%	28.0%
2022-23 Adopted	70.1%	29.9%

The increase in department-based budgets in FY 27 is due to the increase in transfers budgeted in non-department. The department is proposed to increase by 100% from \$7M to \$14M. Drivers include the \$4M one-time transfer to Schools CIP, \$1.4M increase in transfer to Technology Replacement, and \$0.8M increase in transfer to the Learning Resources Fund.

**16. In the list of cutbacks, there was an item that said the guaranteed field trips were cut/reduced. What does this mean?**

The budget for guaranteed field trips was reduced in FY 26, which means that the budget would not cover the planned expansion for middle school students. However, other instructional line items can be used to provide these experiences.



**17. Can you provide details of the \$1.9M Technology Increase under Inflationary & Contractual Changes?**

\$378, 933 is added for technology repair, contracts, cyber security, and web filter costs.

\$1,482,550 is added to the Transfer to Technology Replacement to meet the needs of the established replacement cycle and to address cost increases. \$400,000 in costs were deferred in FY 26 due to budget reductions and are included in the FY 27 increase amount.

Items on the planned replacement cycle for the 26-27 School Year include:

Specialty Lab computers, Student Laptops, Staff replacement laptops, New Teacher laptops, Custodian laptops, K12 iPads, Document Cameras and VOIP phones.

*This will be discussed in Work Session #2.*

**18. Please provide more specifics about the expenditure plan for the \$800K for instructional materials.**

The \$800,000 is proposed as an increase to the current recurring annual operational cost of \$600,000, for a total of \$1.4M per year. This will allow us to supply textbooks over time for standards of learning (SOL) and advanced placement (AP) classes in Language Arts, Math, Science, History, and World Languages. It will take time to update all high quality instructional materials (HQIM) for SOL and AP courses. For FY 27 we recommend prioritizing funding in the following order: Secondary Math, English Language Arts (ELA) grades 6-8, and Algebra Bridge Program. Once those materials have been purchased, the next set of instructional materials would be ELA grades 9-12, AP Science Courses, AP History Courses, followed by SOL High School Science Courses, World Languages, and Electives. We also recommend restoring per pupil funding to schools so that they can maintain resources to address individual issues such as damage or enrollment growth. Those funds were previously suspended due to the significant cost for HQIM purchases for Elementary ELA and Math. We are in the process of obtaining quotes for all of our resources that need to be purchased for adopted curricula. We know that the total will exceed the proposed annual budget. However, we will defer any unmet funding needs for HQIM to the next fiscal year based on Office of Instruction Priorities. Once we have those quotes, we will be able to make a more definitive list of what will be purchased in FY27.

The FY 27 spending plan for instructional materials was outlined in the FY 26 Bellwether Implementation Proposal, Year 2 as follows:

- Complete Secondary Math Textbook Adoption \$650,000
- 6-8 English Language Arts Textbook Adoption: \$750,000
- Algebra Bridge Program for 7th graders: \$60,000

**19. Why is the per pupil spending so low for Crozet Elementary? For example, why is it lower than Brownsville Elementary?**

Brownsville has more Special Education programs and associated FTE than Crozet. For example, they have a B-Base program, C-Base program, and Early Childhood Special Education program that Crozet does not have. While enrollment and economic demographics play a significant role in per pupil expenditures, there are other factors that play a role that were not covered during Work Session #1, which was simplified for understanding.

*This will be discussed in Work Session #2*

**20. What cuts and/or evaluations to programs/departments were made in the budget process?**

There is an ongoing review of logic models as listed on page A-40 to 41. The FY 25 and FY 26 budgets included significant reductions based on these reviews and are proposed to be maintained for FY 27. For the FY 27 budget process, the EDEP and Instructional Assistant full-time positions are proposed to be reduced.