

SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET QUESTIONS

FY 2021 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

May 2020

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QUESTIONS FROM SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS SENT TO STAFF

QUESTION 1: WHAT IS THE EXACT DATE THAT WE WILL HAVE FINAL DATA FROM THE STATE ON THE REDUCTION OF FUNDING FOR FY2021?

Question Number: 1
Board Member(s): Ms. Greene
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

There is not an exact date. Some of the state revenue items are dependent upon the strength of the economy and are projections for the year. Being that the total impact of COVID-19 is difficult to project many items will have to be monitored throughout the year.

QUESTION 2: COULD A PORTION OF THE CARES ACT FUNDING BE USED TO MAKE UP FOR THE PROPOSED \$213 NET PAY LOSS FOR THE AFFECTED TEACHER GROUP IN FY2021?

Question Number: 2
Board Member(s): Ms. Greene
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The CARES Act funding will enable ACPS to move forward with initiatives to address gaps and inequities that have been brought into clear focus as a result of COVID-19. It will not help off-set budget reductions for next school year. The CARES Act supports school divisions in reducing their losses in regards to COVID-19 - rather than providing for the future.

This funding can be spent on:

Services and expenses directly related to the pandemic, such as cleaning of schools and other facilities; Expenses related to providing extended learning opportunities, including summer and after-school programs; Instructional and support services for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, homeless students, migrant students, students in foster care, and racial and ethnic minority students; Expenses related to expanding and improving distance learning options for all students; Mental health services; Career and Technical Education.

Please refer to attached CARES Act Memo.

QUESTION 3: WHAT EMPLOYEE GROUPS WILL BE RESEARCHED IN FY2021 FOR POTENTIAL MARKET RATE ADJUSTMENT CONSIDERATION IN THE FY2022 BUDGET?

Question Number: 3
Board Member(s): Ms. Greene
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Hutchings

Our internal preliminary compensation review will guide the future job classes that are included in third party compensation studies. This review is expected to conclude in the fall of 2020.

QUESTION 4: WILL THERE BE ANY CHANGES TO THE RESERVE FTE POSITIONS FOR FY2021? IN WHAT SITUATIONS ARE THESE POSITIONS UTILIZED?

Question Number: 4
Board Member(s): Ms. Greene
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

No. Reserve positions are typically used when actual enrollment exceeds projected enrollment.

QUESTION 5: HOW WILL THE COMMUNITY BE ABLE TO WEIGH IN ON THE REVISED FY2021 BUDGET TO BE RECORDED PUBLICLY?

Question Number: 5
Board Member(s): Ms. Greene
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Hutchings

While the timeline for the budget process stayed roughly the same, the superintendent was required to go back to the School Board with proposed revisions to the budget they initially approved on February 20, 2020. The superintendent's Proposed Adjusted Budget for the Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget were presented to the Board on May 8. Between May 9 and 13, the School Board will submit questions that are answered by staff. These will be posted to the ACPS website. On May 20, the Superintendent's recommendations regarding add/deletes will be made public. There are two add/delete work sessions - one on May 22 and the other on May 29 for the Combined Funds and CIP. The second work session may not be needed.

Community members, parents, and staff are able to view and participate during this process via the ACPS website, ACPS Insider, Superintendent Video Q&A, etc. The School Board hosted their required public budget hearing January 23, 2020. There was not another public budget hearing in the revised Budget Calendar that the School Board adopted on May 1, 2020. Any additional comments on the budget can be emailed to ACPS.

June 5 is the date the Board is scheduled to adopt the Final FY 2021 Combined Funds and FY 2021-2030 CIP Budgets.

QUESTION 6: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR THE PUBLIC TO SUBMIT COMMENTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD REGARDING THE REVISED BUDGET, AND HOW IS THIS BEING COMMUNICATED TO THE PUBLIC?

Question Number: 1
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Hutchings

Community members, parents, and staff are able to view and participate during this process via the ACPS website, ACPS Insider, Superintendent Video Q&A, etc. The School Board hosted their required public budget hearing January 23, 2020. There was not another public budget hearing in the revised Budget Calendar that the School Board adopted on May 1, 2020. Any additional comments on the budget can be emailed to ACPS.

QUESTION 7: HOW IS ACPS TRACKING COVID-19-RELATED EXPENDITURES AND HOW WILL THIS INFORMATION BE COMMUNICATED TO THE SCHOOL BOARD?

Question Number: 2
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

COVID-19 expenditures are tracked through period reporting. The School Board will still receive monthly financial reports throughout the school closure.

QUESTION 8: HOW DO YOU ANTICIPATE USING THE \$3.6M IN CARES ACT FUNDING AND HOW WILL THIS BE COMMUNICATED TO THE SCHOOL BOARD?

Question Number: 3
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Hutchings

The CARES Act funding will enable ACPS to move forward with initiatives to address gaps and inequities that have been brought into clear focus as a result of COVID-19. It will not help off-set budget reductions for next school year. The CARES Act supports school divisions in reducing their losses in regards to COVID-19 - rather than providing for the future.

This funding can be spent on:

Services and expenses directly related to the pandemic, such as cleaning of schools and other facilities; Expenses related to providing extended learning opportunities, including summer and after-school programs; Instructional and support services for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, homeless students, migrant students, students in foster care, and racial and ethnic minority students; Expenses related to expanding and improving distance learning options for all students; Mental health services; Career and Technical Education.

Please refer to attached CARES Act Memo.

Periodic reporting to the Commonwealth of Virginia will also be shared with the School Board regarding CARES Act funding.

QUESTION 9: DO YOU ANTICIPATE USING ALL CARES ACT FUNDING IN FY 2021?

Question Number: 4
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

CARES Act funding is expected to be utilized in FY 2021, however, funding is available for up to two years for eligible expenditures.

QUESTION 10: CITY EMPLOYEES PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES ARE RECEIVING AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PAY SUPPLEMENT OF \$4 PER HOUR FOR EACH HOUR WORKED ON SITE. IS ACPS PROVIDING EMERGENCY RESPONSE PAY OR HAZARD PAY TO ANY OF OUR ESSENTIAL WORKERS? IF NOT, WHY?

Question Number: 5
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Hutchings

ACPS is currently working on a plan to provide additional pay for essential employees.

QUESTION 11: CAN CARES ACT FUNDING BE USED TO SUPPORT EMERGENCY RESPONSE PAY OR A ONE-TIME BONUS FOR STAFF?

Question Number: 6
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The CARES Act funding will enable ACPS to move forward with initiatives to address gaps and inequities that have been brought into clear focus as a result of COVID-19. It will not help off-set budget reductions for next school year. The CARES Act supports school divisions in reducing their losses in regards to COVID-19 - rather than providing for the future.

This funding can be spent on:

Services and expenses directly related to the pandemic, such as cleaning of schools and other facilities; Expenses related to providing extended learning opportunities, including summer and after-school programs; Instructional and support services for economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, homeless students, migrant students, students in foster care, and racial and ethnic minority students; Expenses related to expanding and improving distance learning options for all students; Mental health services; Career and Technical Education.

Funding is not permissible for employee pay or bonuses to staff. However, pay associated explicitly related to COVID-19 response efforts and activities are.

Please refer to attached CARES Act Memo

QUESTION 12: AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE \$4M REDUCTION IN STATE REVENUE FOR FY 2021 IS AN ESTIMATE. HAVE YOU RECEIVED A MORE SPECIFIC AMOUNT FROM THE STATE, AND IF NOT, WHEN DO YOU EXPECT TO RECEIVE IT?

Question Number: 7
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The specific revenue reductions were related to the Governor's amendments which were approved by the General Assembly. These items include the state's share of the teacher pay raises (Compensation Supplement), increases for counselor ratios, and At-Risk add on, etc. The estimated portions relate to revenue that is driven by the strength of the economy, states sales tax, and lottery funding. There is not an exact date. Some of the state revenue items are dependent upon the strength of the economy and are projections for the year. Being that the total impact of COVID-19 is difficult to project many items will have to be monitored throughout the year.

QUESTION 13: GIVEN THAT THERE IS UNCERTAINTY REGARDING FUTURE REVENUE AND EXPENSES DUE TO THE EVOLVING COVID-19 SITUATION, HOW WILL UPDATES AND BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS BE COMMUNICATED TO THE BOARD?

Question Number: 8
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The School Board will continue to receive monthly financial and transfer reports. Should the revenue picture continue to deteriorate a revised budget will be presented to the School Board.

QUESTION 14: WHICH EMPLOYEE GROUPS WILL BE INCLUDED IN FY 2021 COMPENSATION STUDIES?

Question Number: 9
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Wilkins

Our internal preliminary compensation review will guide the future job classes that are included in third party compensation studies. This review is expected to conclude in the fall of 2020.

QUESTION 15: WHAT IS THE COST OF THE MRA FOR TRANSPORTATION STAFF AND PARAPROFESSIONAL IV?

Question Number: 10
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The cost of the MRA for Transportation Staff is estimated at \$279,500 while the estimated impact cost for the Paraprofessional IVs is \$8,600.

QUESTION 16: WHAT IS THE REVISED PROJECTED TOTAL INCREASE IN HEALTHCARE COSTS IN FY 2021, AND HOW MUCH OF THIS WILL BE PAID BY EMPLOYEES?

Question Number: 11
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The revised increased cost for healthcare expenses is projected to be \$2.125 million (+7.6% average) in FY 2021. Of this amount, the School Board will pay \$1.764 million (83%) of the increase, while employees will assume \$360,800 (17%) of the increase. The amount of the individual employee premium will depend on the employee's plan selection as well as the employee group (Professional, Support, or Administrative) into which the employee falls.

QUESTION 17: CAN YOU PROVIDE A CHART OF FY 2021 HEALTH INSURANCE RATES? WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE HEALTHCARE PREMIUM IS PAID BY THE EMPLOYEE?

Question Number: 12
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Wilkins

Please refer to the attached Health Insurance Rates chart.

Employees pay either 10% or 20% of their healthcare premium depending on their job class. Support staff pays 10% all others pay 20%.

QUESTION 18: WHAT STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN FOR ACPS TO CONTRIBUTE ENOUGH TO OUR SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLAN TO MEET ALL FUTURE OBLIGATIONS?

Question Number: 13
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Providing an employer contribution would have to be prioritized, as funding any employer contribution takes funding away from other priority areas.

QUESTION 19: WHAT ITEMS WILL BE CUT AS A RESULT OF THE 5% REDUCTION (\$750,146) FROM THE FACILITIES DEPARTMENT? WILL WE STILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE ALL PROJECTS IDENTIFIED AS “PRIORITY 1” IN FY 2021?

Question Number: 14
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Dr. Wilkins

The Operations Department, including Educational Facilities, Maintenance & Custodial Services, Capital Programs, Planning & Design, Safety & Security Services, and Transportation submitted the following reduction items as a result of the 5% reduction to non-personnel budgeted expenditures:

- Facilities: Furniture -\$100,000
- Facilities: Grounds & Trees -\$100,000
- Facilities: HVAC -\$200,000
- Facilities: Maint/Repair -\$210,000
- Security: Security Services -\$100,000
- Facilities: Travel -\$ 12,000
- Facilities: Other Misc -\$ 25,000
- Facilities: Staff Development -\$ 23,000
- Facilities: Other Prof Svcs -\$ 30,000
- Transportation: -\$133,859
- **-\$933,859**

Although these reductions may have an impact on delivery of services, they will not impact the ability to complete all projects identified as “Priority 1”.

QUESTION 20: CAN YOU DESCRIBE WHAT SERVICES WILL BE PROVIDED BY THE \$1M INCREASE (\$100,000 ANNUALLY) FOR “SYSTEM-WIDE DIRECT OR CONTRACT EMPLOYEE SUPPORT” IN THE CIP BUDGET?

Question Number: 15
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Dr. Wilkins

This line item, as originally intended, will fund contracted or direct hires supporting the Capital Programs, Planning & Design office, including project managers, and designated, full-time Communications support for CIP projects.

QUESTION 21: GIVEN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL OUTLOOK AND GROWING STUDENT ENROLLMENT, HAS THERE BEEN DISCUSSION ABOUT MAINTAINING THE MINNIE HOWARD BUILDING BEYOND 2025 TO MEET FUTURE CAPACITY NEEDS?

Question Number: 16
Board Member(s): Dr. Rief
Staff Respondent: Dr. Wilkins

ACPS staff continue to evaluate all available resources and space, including buildings like the existing Minnie Howard building, to accommodate capacity needs. Future public discussion will be required should this be

considered further and, please note, that additional CIP funding may be required to maintain the building for interim or long-term use.

QUESTION 22: BASED ON THE DIVISION’S PAST CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ACPS SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLAN, MAY YOU PLEASE PROVIDE SOME CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND ON WHY THE DIVISION WENT FROM CONTRIBUTING 2.25% IN 2010-2011 TO 0% IN 2011-2012?

Question Number: 1
Board Member(s): Ms. Thornton
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Wilkins

Throughout the years as the economic conditions, market performance, and ACPS division priorities changed, shifts between employer and employee contributions occurred, as well as the rate fluctuated. For instance between 2011 and 2012 the employer contribution for the VRS retirement plan increased from 8.93% to 11.33% the same year the employer contribution for the supplemental retirement plan decreased. The employee contribution decreased from 2.25% to the current 1.5%, because the plan was overfunded and this could provide relief for employees’ “take-home” pay.

QUESTION 23: ALTHOUGH THE RECOMMENDATION IS TO REMOVE THE 0.5% INCREASE TO THE EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLAN, IS THERE AN EXPECTATION THAT THIS INCREASE WILL OCCUR IN SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEARS? HOW OFTEN IS THIS CONSIDERED BY THE INVESTMENT ADVISORY BOARD? WHAT ARE THE PLANS TO INCREASE CONTRIBUTIONS, SO THAT THEY MEET THE ACTUARIALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTION (\$4.5 MILLION THIS YEAR)?

Question Number: 2
Board Member(s): Ms. Thornton
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Adding an employer contribution in future years depends on the budget priorities established by the School Board. The ACPS Supplemental Retirement Investment Advisory Board meets quarterly to discuss the plan. The actuary report is dependent on market performance so any changes to contribution levels will be reviewed by the Investment Advisory Board during their quarterly meeting.

QUESTION 24: MAY YOU EXPLAIN IN FURTHER DETAIL WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR THE DIVISION’S HEALTH BENEFIT SAVINGS OF \$720,500 THIS YEAR, WHILE EMPLOYEE HEALTH PREMIUMS ARE INCREASING?

Question Number: 3
Board Member(s): Ms. Thornton
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Each year the Budget Office and Human Resources Department project the annual increase to healthcare costs based on actual expenditures from the prior year. This projected increase is included in the Superintendent’s Proposed Budget (which was approved by the School Board on February 20, 2020). These projections are revised in the Spring Semester when further information is available. This year the projected premium increase for both health plans and the dental plan were reduced upon receiving additional information in the Spring Semester. This led to a reduction in overall premium costs for both the employer (ACPS) and the employee.

QUESTION 25: RECOGNIZING THAT WE ARE STILL PENDING FURTHER GUIDANCE FROM THE VDOE, WHAT WILL BOARD INVOLVEMENT LOOK LIKE IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT HOW TO UTILIZE THE ADDITIONAL \$3.6M IN CARES FUNDING?

Question Number: 4
Board Member(s): Ms. Thornton
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

This funding will be allocated to meet the needs of ACPS. Each year the School Board gives the Superintendent the discretion to transfer funds to accomplish the goals of the school division. Information on this funding will be given to the School Board in the monthly financial, and transfer reports. Regular Board Briefs may also be provided to update the School Board.

QUESTION 26: IS THERE STILL THE EXPECTATION THAT THERE WILL BE A DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM AT GW IN THE FALL OF 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR? IF SO - WHAT ARE THE COSTS INVOLVED?

Question Number: 1
Board Member(s): Ms. Nolan
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner, Dr. Mosingo

Yes. Currently an additional 0.5 teacher has been provided for the Dual Language program. The average compensation (salary and benefits) is projected at approximately \$54,100.

QUESTION 27: WHAT WOULD THE COST BE FOR A COUNSELOR AND SOCIAL WORKER (INDIVIDUALLY) AT GW?

Question Number: 2
Board Member(s): Ms. Nolan
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The projected compensation cost (salary and benefits) for a Counselor and Social Worker position is \$114,400 and \$117,800, respectively.

QUESTION 28: CAN YOU PLEASE BREAKDOWN THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RECOMMENDED MRA FOR PARTICULAR ROLES AND ACCOMPANY IT WITH THE DATA THAT WAS PROVIDED IN THE SALARY STUDIES THAT RECOMMENDED THESE INCREASES?

Question Number: 3
Board Member(s): Ms. Nolan
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The projected costs associated with the recommended MRA are:

	Estimated Total Cost
Transportation	\$ 279,500
Principals	\$ 75,100
Chiefs	\$ 53,900
Para IV	\$ 8,600
Note: Numbers Rounded to Nearest hundred	

The following link to the Segal Waters Consulting Executive Summary of Phase I Market Comparisons highlights the driving force behind the recommended MRAs for the respective employee groups. Based on the study results, the respective employee groups' pay ranked below the average pay amongst market comparisons. The resulting recommended increases are a start to a multi-year approach to bringing their pay to the average market rates.

<https://esbpublic.acps.k12.va.us/attachments/065af502-c159-4516-bef0-2ed69d77eb82.pdf>

QUESTION 29: WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR DECIDING HOW THE ONE TIME CARES ACT FUNDING, APPROX \$3.6 M, WILL BE ALLOCATED? DOES THIS HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY THE BOARD?

Question Number: 1
Board Member(s): Ms. Lorber
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The CARES Act Funding is a part of the Grants and Special Projects Fund. The School Board will be approving the use of these funds as a part of their adoption of the Combined Funds Budget. The School Board will continue to receive monthly financial and transfer reports showing the use of funds.

QUESTION 30: HOW DO THE PROPOSED CUTS IN PAY COMPARE ACROSS SCHOOL DIVISIONS TO OUR PEERS IN THE REGION?

Question Number: 1
Board Member(s): Mr. Suarez
Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

The Revised Budget eliminates compensation increases to staff other than the recommended MRAs for the targeted employee groups as recommended by the most recent Compensation Study conducted in December 2019. Surrounding jurisdictions have proposed a variety of budget reduction initiatives including eliminating salary enhancements, Reductions-in-force, furlough days, and/or hiring freezes.

QUESTION 31: DEPENDING ON HOW FEDERAL/STATE ALLOCATIONS CHANGE OVER TIME, WILL IT BE POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE STAFF WITH ONE TIME BONUSES LATER IN THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR AS A THANK YOU FOR THEIR HARD WORK DURING THE PANDEMIC?

Question Number: 2
Board Member(s): Mr. Suarez

Staff Respondent: Mr. Turner

Yes, however, signs do not point towards revenue increases for FY 2021. On the contrary, the City Manager has signaled the potential for future reductions, state revenue (sales tax and lottery funds) will continue to be impacted by the economic slowdown, and local revenue will be severely impacted by the closure of school buildings.