

FY 2021 Budget Questions - Group 2
February 19, 2020

The following questions were received from Dr. Lateef following the presentation of the FY 2021 proposed budget at the February 5 School Board meeting.

1. What is the impact to salaries if we dropped the step/cola to 37,341,331? (so pull out a million from the raise)

Response: The approximate cost of a single percent change in salary is \$8.0 M. A drop in the salary increase of \$1.0M is therefore approximately a 0.125% change, reducing the salary increase to a step (average 2.8% per step) plus 1.875 salary scale adjustment.

2. Do we have to give the same raise to everyone?

Response: No, we have, however, made it a practice in each of the last 20 years, to give the same raise to each member of the Division.

3. What if we gave teachers a certain raise, Admins a different raise etc.? Can we do that?

Response: As stated in the response to question #2, we have, however, made it a practice in each of the last 20 years to give the same raise to each member of the Division.

4. Concept of slippage? Is that number close to the same every year? I thought you told me it was usually around the same but I can't remember for sure. And if so will we have that next year? And Is the slippage number accounted for in the carryover balance from last year? Or is that a reserve number that we have to maintain in our daily cash balance?

Response: Slippage is not the same every year. Several factors contribute to a "slippage" in the costs for providing step and salary scale adjustments each year. Slippage is the difference between the calculated cost of compensation and the actual cost. The Retirement Opportunity Program, salary placement policies, and the length of time positions are vacant all contribute to the actual cost for compensation being less than the calculated cost. Historically, the actual slippage in compensation has averaged about three percent of total compensation. The amount of slippage is also a function of the pay increases from the prior year. Typically, the amount of slippage realized decreases as pay raises decrease. The slippage from FY 2021 projects to be less than the historic norm. This is due to a higher retention rate of employees and a decrease in the rate of retirements. Therefore, the estimated slippage for next year has been budgeted at about 1.5 percent of estimated compensation. This means that \$12.8 million may reduce the effective cost for the pay raise.

Several things contribute the funds available for the beginning balance. One of those items is slippage to the extent the forecasted slippage is in variance to the actual slippage. This variance may increase or decrease beginning balance. Beginning balance is most simply described as funds available during a given year that are available from prior year's activities. This might include

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actual expenditures that are less than what is budgeted, unexpected/unbudgeted revenues (example: sales tax revenue greater than what was planned for and budgeted), and revenue from the county that is a function of the revenue true up that takes place during the audit process.

5. At the top of page 23 it says we made \$1.0 million on interest in investment income on the monies between bond sale and expenditure. Is that number typical each year and can we make more? I think you answered that for me before and I assume that is regulated and we can't really buy apple stock with it, but still worth asking?

Response: Interest income realized from the proceeds of these short-term investments fluctuates from year to year depending on the amount of debt sold and the speed with which the cash is spent down. How these funds are invested is controlled by the County.

6. Virtual high school costs? Why so high? New initiative or was that to cover the cost of providing the school for free and reduced kids?

Response: Effective in Fiscal Year 2020 (July 2019), the responsibility for Virtual High School was moved from the Associate Superintendent for Student Learning to the Associate Superintendent of Communications and Technology Services, within the Instructional Technology department. One objective of this restructure was to broaden access and equitable opportunities for all PWCS high school students. Additionally, as part of this reorganization a new director was named and a comprehensive review of related regulations, policies, and procedures was conducted. Through this review it was determined that Virtual High School needed to align to State Code §8VAC20-720-80 allowing Virtual High School to charge fees for summer school, and for distance learning classes for enrichment not necessary to meet the requirements for a diploma. The goal to increase access, including fee-free access for all students during the school year for classes to meet diploma requirements (per the State Code mentioned), required the appropriation of new dedicated funding for Virtual High School. This funding is primarily used for the cost of instructors for the classes. Under this new structure, Virtual High School enrollment has more than doubled year over year, to 1,648 enrolled during this school year, with students now attending from every high school. If this funding is reduced or eliminated it would significantly decrease the equitable access for students across PWCS.

7. What is the imaging center?

Response: The imaging center, also known as the Print Shop, is the central resource providing printing support Division-wide to schools and central offices. Last school year the shop completed 3,237 customer orders and printed more than 11,412,235 items. This includes key items such as report cards, employee W-2s, Code of Conduct, and the PWCS budget book. Other items printed for schools include programs, teacher materials, and other academic resources. The Print Shop operates as a fee-for-service with costs lower than available via commercial printing.

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8. Under Economically Disadvantaged funding on page 25, what does that ratio 645:1 down to 448:1 mean?

Response: The ratio 645:1 down to 488:1 means the student teacher ratio has decreased from 645:1 to 488:1. This reduction in student teacher ratio increases the funding to the schools.

9. Please break down the Brentsville turf \$4.1 million expenses.

Response: The proposed \$4.116M Brentsville HS Turf Field and Stadiums Enhancements project is intended to do the following:

Synthetic Field Turf for Practice Field	New synthetic turf	\$1,125,000
8 Lane Track	2 lanes to be added to existing 6 lane track.	\$300,000
Replace existing stadium lighting with new LED heads	Most existing light poles remain.	\$335,000
New LED Lighting for Practice Field	New heads and poles	\$300,000
Concessions / Bathrooms	Pricing based on 2015 design (w/ escalation)	\$2,100,000
TOTAL		\$4,160,000

10. Why does robotics need \$100k?

Response: The Robotics program supports all schools in the Division. PWCS is the only school division in the state of Virginia with robotics in every school. The limited funding provided Division-wide is often supplemented at the school level. This additional funding will provide additional resources to support school-based staff and investments in: materials and equipment for tournament set-ups; registration for all PWCS teams (FLL, VEX and VEX IQ); additional tournaments for PWCS students through the year; updates to all VEX and VEX IQ equipment; and supplies related to Robotics (boards, binds, shirts, cords/wiring).

11. Survey on homework K-2 etc. \$250k? What is that? Why does that cost so much?

Response: This one-time funding would cover contracted work to conduct surveys with parents, staff, and students about the consistency of implementation of regulations across schools in the areas of homework (both in general and assignments over breaks), standards-based grading, and testing/assessment. The Office of Accountability would be responsible for identifying and

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selecting the outside companies used to contract this work as well as to serve as a liaison with the selected company to provide information and context for survey development. The funds would be used to pay for the surveys as well as reports/presentations of the findings.

12. Please provide details on Destination Dance?

Response: Destination Dance includes funding to send students to dance competitions and Dance Residency. Funds allocated for Dance Residency are used to secure the services of guest clinicians to provide master classes with dance students. Services are provided onsite at the school, or off-site at a professional performance venue or studio. These funds are also slated to help with the expansion of dance offerings at Woodbridge HS and a western high school. Funds will also be used to expand dance opportunities at elementary and middle schools including partnerships similar to the grant with VDOE and Penn ES. This also pays for PWCS' partnership with Arena Stage where our students watch professional productions and interact with the cast and crew members.

13. SAT/ACT funding goes to what exactly?

Response: This funding will go to complete ACT and SAT test prep courses that will be offered free of charge to students at all high schools. The funding will be used to purchase materials, software licenses, and 2 teacher stipends at every high school. Additionally, the funding will be used to offset school testing costs for high schools wishing to offer the School Day SAT at their schools in which students take the SAT during the school day in place of on a Saturday.

14. Accountability needs another data officer? To do what exactly? Who does that now? What will the new position do that is not being done now?

Response:

Office of Accountability Position Request – Data Coordinator (grade 13)

Currently, the Office of Accountability has three Data Analyst II positions (grade 11) as part of the Data Analysis and Reporting team, along with one Data Quality Assurance Coordinator (grade 13), under the leadership of a supervisor. Each analyst supports one level (ES, MS, HS). These Data Analysts process data from the Student Information System as well as test data. This processing includes data verification, validation, clean-up, and formatting for either state reporting or inclusion in the Data Analytics and Reporting Tool (DART). The coordinator is responsible for state reporting – the official reports to the state on enrollment, average daily membership, teacher quality, special education, graduation, discipline, compliance with the state standards of quality, just to name a few. They are the reports used to determine funding and compliance and official statistics. An additional coordinator position is requested due to increased responsibility with

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managing state reporting data, shorter deadlines from the state, and increasing numbers of reports. Technical expertise is required for this position in the areas of data processing, analysis, and reporting, as well as coordinating with school and department staff across the division.

No new staff have been added to the Office of Accountability in this area in over a decade even as the numbers of students (10,000+), staff (1,000+), and schools (20+) have grown. The state reporting role in other jurisdictions has multiple positions located in multiple departments. In PWCS, the second largest school division in Virginia, this role is currently fulfilled by one dedicated position. In addition, with the move to The Hub, the responsibility for extracting state reporting data has shifted from IT to Accountability. While in the long term this will make things more efficient, it requires a resource to be a liaison to both IT as well as to schools and other offices to help them in the areas of data validation and quality assurance. The Superintendent is required to verify the accuracy of the data submitted to the state, and the Office of Accountability staff (currently the coordinator and supervisor, with the support and guidance of the director), are the ones responsible for determining that accuracy. The new position would also oversee the processing of some of the state testing data, which would provide additional support for the testing staff, which has also not increased in number in over a decade. Also, two years ago, the Office of Accountability took over responsibility for the Discipline, Crime, and Violence report (which up to that point had been completed by Risk Management) to have that reporting better align with the other state reports.

The volume of state and federal reporting requirements has increased each year and the state has consolidated them into their Student Record Collection process. This process requires data submissions at various points during the school year. Each one involves the submission of student-level data and serves a specific purpose. Information from most of the reports is published on the VDOE School Quality Profiles. Some examples are below:

- The Fall Student Record Collection generates the official fall membership numbers based on September 30 enrollment, and is used to determine funding levels for school divisions based on demographics and programs.
- The December 1 Special Education Child Count generates the official counts for students participating in special education programs, including primary, secondary, and tertiary disability levels, as well as the levels of service provided to each student. This report is used by VDOE for federal reporting as well as to determine special education funding.
- The Master Schedule Collections (done in the fall and spring) connect student schedules to teachers and is used to determine compliance with federal requirements for programs like Career and Technical Education, as well as teacher quality (proper certification and endorsement).

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- The Spring Student Record Collection reports the average daily membership of schools and is used by the state budget office for funding.
- The End-of-Year and Summer Student Record Collections include, among other things, graduation data for students that are used to compute on-time graduation rates and dropout rates that are used in determining the accreditation status of individual schools.
- The Discipline, Crime, and Violence Report is an annual report of discipline information to VDOE that includes data about discipline violations and associated consequences.

VDOE has informed school divisions that deadlines for all these reports will be shortening so that they can process accreditation data faster and get accreditation reports out sooner. These tighter deadlines, with the same amount of work, are another reason why another position is needed.

15. \$1.7 million for middle school schedule restructuring? What is this?

Response: The July 1, 2018 revision of Virginia Standards of Accreditation (8VA20-131-240) established new limits on the number of class periods taught per week by middle school teachers and the total number of unique students taught per week per teacher. These changes resulted in the need to create additional class sections and compensate teachers whose student loads exceeded the new limits. This budget proposal provides each school with funding to add additional staffing to help offset a portion of the increased staffing costs required by the revised SOA.

16. [What is] One time cost?

Response: The designation “one time cost” indicates that the funding for this item is from one time funds and will have to be funded again next year or eliminated from the budget. The funds supporting these budget items come from beginning balance.

17. Please provide the results of the track pilot to allow community to use the school facilities for walking/running. Please let us know what the cost would be to open all high school tracks.

Response: Below are the funding requirements to open all HS tracks for community use.

All HS tracks open all the time – security

- Lights - \$10 per hour per school as needed, from above - **\$87,360**
- Grade 6 / 250 day - \$60,471 X 12= **\$725,652**
- Open hours are non-linear (AM/PM) during school, only 7.5 hours coverage during the summer

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18. I thought the Governor's budget put in money for new counselors? Is that correct? Can't we hire more counselors?

Response: Prince William County Schools currently maintain a student-to-counselor ratio lower than the Governor's proposed FY 2020. FY 2020 was the first year of a three-year plan to reduce student-to-counselor ratios. These reductions of ratios were originally to take place during FY's 2020, 2021, and 2022 and begin with the FY 2020 budget. The FY 2020 Governor's Proposed Budget (#1) included funding to achieve student-to-counselor ratios of 375:1, 325:1, and 300:1 for elementary, middle, and high schools respectively. The Governor's Proposed Budget is the budget that is used every year by the Division to develop its proposed budget.

During the FY 2020 budget process that took place last year, the Division funded schools at the same ratios that were included in the Governor's Proposed Budget (#1). The General Assembly (#2) then increased these funding ratios to 455:1, 370:1, and 325:1 for elementary, middle, and high schools respectively, effectively reducing funding to school divisions across the state. While state funding to Prince William was reduced by this action, the budget continued to fund the ratios in (#1). The Division absorbed the cost differential between the Governor's Proposed Budget (#1) and the adopted budgets (#2) for FY 2020.

The Governor's Proposed Budget for FY 2021 (#3) includes the same student-to-counselor ratios that were included in the FY 2020 Governor's Proposed Budget (#1). The Prince William budget for FY 2020 includes funding levels that support these ratios because of the choices made during the FY 2020 budget process.

Because the Prince William FY 2020 budget includes funding to support ratios of 375:1, 325:1, and 300:1 for elementary, middle, and high schools respectively the Division has flexibility regarding the use of the "additional" funding that may be received in FY 2021. The FY 2021 budget funds Counselors at ratios of 375:1, 325:1, and 300:1 for elementary, middle, and high schools respectively. Additional funds received by the Division are therefore, supporting other items in the FY 2021 Prince William budget.

Finally, the State plan for reduction of student-to-counselor ratios in FY 2020, FY 2021, and FY 2022 is to get the student-to-counselor ratio to 250:1 at all levels. If these funding ratios make it through the State budget process for the 2020-2022 biennium, there will be a requirement to have a student-to-counselor ratio of 250:1 in FY 2022 (#4).

Update: On February 16, the House and Senate of the General Assembly revised the FY 2022 target student-to-counselor ratios from 250:1 to 300:1 saving the State budget over \$53 million in the second year of the biennium.

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		Elementary	Middle	High
1	FY 2020 Governor's Proposed (Dec 2018)	375:1	325:1	300:1
2	FY 2020 Adopted Budget	455:1	370:1	325:1
3	FY 2021 Governor's Proposed (Dec 2019)	375:1	325:1	300:1
4	FY 2022 General Assembly Target	250:1	250:1	250:1
5	FY 2022 General Assembly Target-Updated	300:1	300:1	300:1

19. For the Pre-K money, are we putting down \$5 million to get \$5 million? Or are we putting down \$2.5 million to get \$2.5 million? (Lateef)

Response: PWCS is putting forth about 4 million (4.098) and the state is providing almost 4 million (3.883) to serve 900 students in addition to the 397 Head Start students.