

FY 2021 Budget Questions - Group 1
February 24, 2021

1. I am getting emails from parents regarding the line item in the Budget for Virtual High School and/or questions about virtual offerings for next year. Can you please explain where we are in this process? I know this is a lengthy question and this will be added to the agenda at some point but a brief explanation (or status update) is much appreciated to avoid misinformation in the public. (Jackson)

FYI- from Walts' Budget remarks:

Within this category, I am also excited to propose \$1 million to begin the process of creating a full-time virtual high school. As we have learned from the pandemic, virtual learning can be beneficial for some students, along with the flexibility that it can offer. This investment will help us build upon lessons learned and bring further choices to our students.

Response:

There are currently three types of virtual instruction available in Prince William County Public Schools.

1. The first type of virtual instruction is what we refer to as the Virtual Prince William. This has been an offering of the Division for many years and is not to be confused with the virtual instruction that is a result of the pandemic, or the newly proposed Virtual High School. This type of virtual instruction is a supplemental program that provides select virtual classes for students who attend school at the Division's traditional High Schools.
2. The second type of virtual instruction is the item that you saw in the Superintendent's presentation and was proposed in Mr. Guilfoyle's Technology Improvement Program (TIP) presentation. This is a new type of instructional model altogether. It is intended to be a virtual high school with all of, or many of the elements of a standalone high school. This school would be akin to a specialty program that students would choose to attend. This type of school is in the planning stages. A virtual middle school and elementary school were proposed in the TIP for future years but funding for them has not been included in the budget for the 2021-2022 school year
3. The third type of virtual instruction is the instruction that is being provided as a result of the pandemic. Every school at all grade levels is providing this type of virtual instruction this year. While it is likely this type of virtual instruction will be available next year, no final decisions about this have been made as of yet, and the General Assembly is currently considering legislation that would require it be available as an option for all students next school year.

2. Regarding Tier 1 employees, are schools having to pay for coverage for when teachers have full immunity or is the coverage centrally funded? (Jackson)

Response:

Immunity has no impact on the source of funding to support tier one employees. Some items are centrally funded (PPE). Other mitigating costs may be borne by the individual school budgets.

3. When does PWCS expect to have to refresh the student and staff devices as well as software licenses? (Williams)

Response:

PWCS did see a slight increase in FY22 for our security management of devices, but the majority of the cost was offset by decommissioning older devices and we will continue to do so over the next year. The refresh of laptops purchased during the Pandemic (April 2020-September 2020) will begin in FY24. Amounts account for increases in device cost and increased enrollment

The following information comes from the **Technology Improvement Plan** (Figure 2):

- a. **FY24:** 25,632 new laptops allocated to high schools. High school laptops purchased during the Pandemic (3 years of age) will be reallocated to elementary schools.
- b. **FY25:** A total of 25,632 new laptops will be purchased. 3,000 will be allocated to high school, and 22,632 will be provided to middle schools. Middle school laptops purchased during the Pandemic will be reallocated to elementary schools.
- c. **FY26:** A total of 33,185 new laptops will be purchased (25,632 refreshed Pandemic laptops and 7,553 refreshed FY22 laptops). 21,000 laptops will be allocated for students in grades 3-5, and 12,185 laptops for students K-2 for one device per three student ratios.

Figure 2

Student Device Refresh	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
PWCS Laptops 3 years of age or less as of FY21 (7,553 per year)	\$3,345,979	\$3,247,790	\$0	\$0	\$0
25,632 laptops purchased during the Pandemic	\$0	\$0	\$11,688,192	\$0	\$0
25,632 laptops purchased during the Pandemic	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,047,040	\$0
33,185 laptops purchased during the Pandemic	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$16,061,540
Total	\$3,345,979	\$3,247,790	\$11,688,192	\$12,047,040	\$16,061,540

4. Can I please have a copy or be directed to the complete Staff and Compensation 2017 Survey that compares our staffing ratio or other districts? It is referred to often and I would like to research a few things. (Jackson)

Response:

The data collected from the staffing and compensation studies done in 2017 is now approximately 4 to 5 years old and due to its age may not be a helpful resource. If you are looking for specific information or trends, we may have other resources that contain more up to date information.

5. There are a number of new positions being created - will we get an explanation of them in the near future? I know you are working on putting more Budget materials together so I didn't want to ask for specifics if there was a plan for specifics to be provided. (Jackson).

Response:

As you suggest, the budget book being delivered at the February 24th Work Session contains narratives for each department that include explanations of new positions requested.