



**MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET WORK SESSION**  
**CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Walker Upper Elementary School Cafeteria, 1564 Dairy Road**  
**Thursday, February 15, 2024 (5:00 PM)**

**1.1 Call to Order:** Ms. Larson-Torres, School Board Chair. called the closed session meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2.1 Roll Call of Board Members:**

The following Board Members were present:

Ms. Amanda Burns	Ms. Shymora Cooper
Ms. Emily Dooley	Mr. Dom Morse
Mr. Chris Meyer	Ms. Nicole Richardson
Ms. Lisa Larson-Torres	

The following Board Members were absent: None

The following Staff Members were present:

Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr.	Dr. Katina Otey
Mr. Pat Cuomo	Ms. Kim Powell
Dr. T. Denise Johnson	Ms. Maria Lewis
Ms. Rachel Rasnake	Ms. Beth Cheuk
Ms. Renee Hoover	Ms. Leslie Thacker
Ms. Julia Green	

The following Staff Members were absent: Ms. Carolyn Swift

**3.1 Approval of Proposed Agenda:** Ms. Dooley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Meyer, to approve the proposed agenda. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried with Ms. Burns, Ms. Cooper, Ms. Dooley, Mr. Morse, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Richardson, and Ms. Larson-Torres, voting aye. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

**4.1 February 15, 2024 Budget Work Session Presentation:** Dr. Royal A. Gurley, Jr., Ed.D., Division Superintendent; Renee Hoover, Director of Finance; members of the Executive Leadership Team; and G. Gray Hooker, Vice President of Consulting Services for Pierce Group Benefits, presented information on health benefit costs and implications to the Proposed 2024-2025 Budget as well as information on the Monthly Financial Projection Report, Drawdown of ESSER Funds, ALL In Funds, and a Breakdown of Open Positions.

Dr. Gurley provided an update on the process around the Charlottesville City Schools self-insured health coverage noting that the carrier's process usually occurs in March so Staff doesn't have all of the information to present at this time.

G. Gray Hooker, Vice President of Consulting Services for Pierce Group Benefits, provided an update on Pierce Group Benefits Group history and details on % of Spend Comparison, YTD Health Plan Expenses, and Q1 2023 Health Plan Expenses.

Information presented included:

- Agenda
  - Health Insurance
    - Common Terms
    - Self Insured vs. Fully Insured
  - CCS Health Insurance Self-Insured
    - Benefits Roles
    - Health Insurance Reserves
    - Cost Factors Affecting The Setting Health Insurance Premium Rates
    - Summary of CCS Self Insured
  - Pierce Group Benefits
    - % of Spend Comparison
    - YTD Health Plan Expenses
    - Q1 2023 Health Plan Expenses
  - Understanding Financial Projection Report
    - Monthly Financial Projection Report
      - [January Report](#)
      - Provided November through June under the School Board Agenda Item - Business, Financial, Routine Reports.
      - Prepared from the General (Operating) fund.
      - Projected expenses for each cost center are forecasted to be 100% expend at the end of fiscal year.
      - Positions are projected to be filled during the year unless the position was filled with less than 1 FTE for the year.
      - Revenues are projected to be received as budgeted.
  - Staffing
  - Drawdown of ESSER Funds

ESSER Grants	Spend Down Deadline	Grant Awarded	Total Spent through 6/30/2023	Grant Remaining
ARPA ESSER	9/30/2024	\$10,073,068	\$6,739,276	\$3,333,792
CSLFRF Ventilation Improvement	12/31/2024	\$808,685	\$638,145	\$170,540
ESSER III State Set-Aside Funds	9/30/2024	\$2,456,525	\$978,164	\$1,478,361
CCS drew down \$6,739,276 in fiscal year 2023 for Substitute Teachers, Primary Instructional Assistants, Extra Duty Stipends, Care & Safety Assistants, and Custodians & Division Social Workers				

- Management of ALL In Grant Funds
  - Background information
    - Funds provided to VA school divisions to provide tutoring (70%), support literacy (20%), and combat chronic absenteeism (10%)
    - CCS has received \$946,637 (can be used over three years)
    - Principals shared proposals for “Better Together Boost”
    - Initial allocations were made based on principal estimations of need; adjustments have occurred as needed
  - ALL In Funds (Tutoring)
    - Current status

- Principals have secured tutors and students who would benefit from tutoring
- Tutoring has begun in most schools, with our final school starting on 3/1/2024
- Most schools began tutoring in January, two started in February, and one will start in March
- Most schools are utilizing after school tutoring, one uses before and after school tutoring, and one uses during-the-day tutoring
- Next steps
  - Continue to recruit tutors as needed
  - Continue to add students as needed
- ALL In Funds (Literacy)
  - Current Status
    - Reading Specialists are being paid a stipend for their work on the VLA implementation
    - All of the elementary specialists (full time and part time) have attended the State Reading Institute and are completing the Canvas course being provided by the VA Literacy Partnership or VLP
    - Considering adding LETRS 2 facilitators
- ALL In Funds (Attendance)
  - Current Status
    - Currently, we have not utilized these funds, but we have earmarked them for attendance support positions in the second year of the grant
- Breakdown of Open Positions
  - 21 vacancies across the division - 3 positions filled in January/February 2024
    - Special Education IA - Burnley-Moran
    - Reading Specialist (.5) - Burnley-Moran
    - Instructional Compliance Specialist (SPED) - Buford
    - Special Education Teacher - Buford
    - Science Facilitator -Buford
    - Gifted Teacher - Buford
    - [School Support Liaison \(Social Worker\) - Buford/Walker \(recently hired\)](#)
    - Care & Safety Assistant - CHS
    - Custodian - CHS
    - Librarian - CHS
    - Nurse - CHS
    - Reading Specialist - CHS
    - [Special Education IA - CHS \(recently hired\)](#)
    - [Special Education IA - Johnson \(recently hired\)](#)
    - Reading Specialist (.5) - Venable
    - Special Education IA - Walker
    - Board Certified Behavioral Analyst - Division
  - 21 vacancies across the division - 7 Positions filled with long-term substitutes
    - Urban Farming Teacher - Buford
    - Music Teacher - Buford
    - Special Education Teacher - CHS/LMA
    - Health & PE Teacher - CHS
    - 2nd Grade Teacher - Clark
    - Custodian - Johnson
  - An estimated total vacancies savings of \$636,959.00

- This calculation includes budgeted allocations for vacant positions minus the allocations for positions filled with long-term substitutes or newly hired staff.
- Budget Change Document

<b>FEBRUARY 1, 2024 SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGETMs.MM FY 2024-2025 Funding Request (Changes to FY 2024)</b>			
<b>STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY</b>	<b>SALARY &amp; BENEFIT ACTIONS</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>FTE</b>
3	Teachers and Staff: 2% Mid-Year Raise implemented 1/1/2024	1,231,977	
	Teachers: Step increase	564,525	
	Administration & General: Implementation of Evergreen Plan	323,197	
	<i>Total Salary &amp; Benefit Actions</i>	2,119,699	
	<b>RECURRING &amp; NON-DISCRETIONARY CONTRACTS</b>		
4	City Contract: Pupil Transportation (Estimate 25%)	975,708	
4	City Contract: Maintenance (Estimate 6%)	272,172	
4	CATEC: Sustain Academic and Operation Services	290,518	
	<i>Total Recurring &amp; Non-Discretionary Contracts</i>	1,538,398	
<b>STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY</b>	<b>SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM SUPPORTS &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</b>		
1	Teachers: Enrollment Growth - Elementary and/or English Second Language	189,762	2
	<i>Total School Based Program Supports &amp; Improvements</i>	189,762	
	<b>Total Increase Expenditures</b>	<b>3,847,859</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>REVENUES</b>		
	Decrease: State	-2,999,801	
	Increase: State Revenue 1% "One-Time" Bonus	74,828	
	Use of Fund Balance	772,832	
	<b>City (Estimated Request)</b>	<b>6,000,000</b>	
	<b>Total Increase Revenues</b>	<b>3,847,859</b>	

- Proposal Budget Summary - ALL Funds

<b>Funds</b>	<b>Amended Budget FY 2023 - 2024</b>	<b>Proposed Budget FY 2024 - 2025</b>	<b>Change From 2024 to 2025 Budgets</b>	<b>% Change From 2024 to 2025 Budgets</b>
General (Operating)	\$86,626,337	\$91,720,289	\$5,093,952	5.88%
Special Revenue	\$21,331,565	\$24,678,680	\$3,347,115	15.69%
Total Funds	\$107,957,902	\$116,398,969	\$8,441,067	7.82%

<b>General Fund</b>		<b>Special Revenue Fund</b>	
City Appropriation	\$4,996,530	CATEC	\$3,270,711
State Revenue	(\$2,924,973)	VPI	41,474

Fund Balance Change	\$3,022,395	WALK	34,930
Total Changes	\$5,093,952	Total Changes	\$3,347,115

- Next Steps

**Budget Discussion:**

Mr. Meyer asked what the projected reserve amount will likely be at the end of the year. Ms. Hoover responded that the expected reserve amount will be approximately \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 below.

Mr. Meyer asked if the Division is being conservative with reserves. Ms. Hoover responded yes. Dr. Gurley added that the Division will need to stay on the same path since it uses the self-insured model.

Ms. Burns inquired about the Division's tenure with Pierce Group Benefits, to which Ms. Hoover estimated a duration of roughly ten years.

Ms. Burns raised concerns about rising pharmacy costs and high dollar pharmacy items. Mr. Hooker assured the board that "everything is being exhausted" to manage those costs. He also shared that there will be several new gene therapies becoming available in 2024 and noted the high cost of those. Mr. Burns also shared that he expects health care costs to even out over the coming years given new AI tools that more accurately track procedures and efficiencies.

Ms. Larson-Torres asked when Staff will have more firm information on funding from the City. Dr. Gurley responded that he has a meeting with the City Manager Sam Sanders tomorrow, February 16, 2024.

Mr. Meyer stated that the proposed budget is not sufficient and hopes that the Board can work with City Council to meet the needs of Charlottesville City Schools students.

Ms. Larson-Torres acknowledged challenges City Council faces with competing priorities like Collective Bargaining.

Mr. Meyer asked if the budget approval might be delayed to hear back from the City regarding funding allocation. Dr. Gurley responded that the Division has to present a balanced budget to City Council on Tuesday, March 5. Ms. Hoover added that it is typical for budgets to be amended following the Board's initial approval.

There was consensus among the Board to submit a needs-based budget to Council instead of the reduced/cut budget presented.

**ALL In Plan Discussion:**

Concerns about the VDOE's ALL In Plan were raised during the meeting. Ms. Larson-Torres voiced frustration with its current structure, advocating for broader coverage in tutoring initiatives. Similarly, Ms. Burns echoed this sentiment, expressing a desire to extend support to more students than outlined in the plan. In response, Dr. Otey indicated that schools initially began with a smaller group but plan to gradually expand coverage. Dr. Gurley emphasized existing interventions for Tier 3 students and highlighted the plan's potential to address a wider population.

Ms. Dooley emphasized the need for metrics to track student progress in the tutoring program, particularly data on exit rates and score improvements. This aligns with the Board's focus on maximizing the program's impact and ensuring efficient use of funds.

Ms. Burns advocated for swift action on filling the vacant attendance positions before the year's end, Dr. Gurley cautioned for a thoughtful approach due to the position's collaborative nature with family engagement and the ESL team.

Dr. Gurley expressed gratitude for the allocated ALL In funding and acknowledged delays in its arrival and required program adjustments, leading to a slower launch in individual schools.

**5.1 Comments from Members of the Community:**

- Stacy Gearhart, Johnson Parent, shared comments of support for the Proposed Budget to help meet the needs of the most vulnerable students.
- Dan Zimmerman, CCS Parent, addressed the Board with comments of support for fully funding the original proposed budget.
- Nic McCarthy-Rivera, CHS Teacher, shared comments of support for a dedicated restorative justice position at Charlottesville High School.

**6.1 Upcoming Meetings:** Ms. Larson-Torres read a list of upcoming meetings.

**7.1 Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 6:54 P.M.

A video of the February 15, 2024 meeting can be located at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kskRxc\\_159D65dHExCDVWFdOml42sVmh/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kskRxc_159D65dHExCDVWFdOml42sVmh/view?usp=drive_link)

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Lisa Torres, School Board Chair

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Julia Green, School Board Clerk