



Business Management Services  
Lisa Howell  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Shavonne Smith, Director  
*Budget & Management Services*

## *FY 2026 Superintendent's PROPOSED Budget Q & A*

### *Questions from the Board of Education*

*Budget Work Session – January 23, 2025*

*Divisions:*

*Academics*

*Business & Management Services*

*Communications*

*Operations*

*School Support and Leadership*

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## Academics

1. **Boozer-Strother:** What is the anticipated \$ gap between IDEA mandates and Federal funding? I believe we were told in the past it is about 75% that we have to cover due to Congress' inability to pass a full funding of IDEA bill. (Pg. 27)

To fully meet the funding requirements mandated by IDEA, the federal government is supposed to contribute 40% of the total cost of educating students with disabilities. However, for FY-24, Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is only receiving 9.60% of the total IDEA cost in federal funding. This leaves a 76.01% gap between the mandated level of funding and what is actually provided.

The federal government should be spending \$169,218,435 (40%), but they are only contributing \$40,603,472, resulting in a \$128,614,963 funding shortfall.

2. **Boozer-Strother:** Dr. White, I had submitted this budget priority early in the process but I don't know if you saw them. Can you please respond how these are being addressed -- (See School Support & Leadership for the 1st question) 2) I am concerned that we have MSDE approved PreK facilities closed two years ago at the same time we are asking State for Blueprint Pillar 1 facility funds. "Reopen Early Childhood Center at Northwestern HS & Bladensburg HS (is this similar to NHS?) for Adolescent Single Parent Program and CTE training program." (Page 95 section)

Currently, the Student Services team supports all pregnant teens and fathers. Northwestern and Bladensburg were not PreK they were day care programs. The CTE program located at Northwestern and Bladensburg that supported the daycare program is no longer there. This year we have not netted any new PreK seats due to the closure of Rose Valley and Concord ES. Those two programs were relocated to other schools.

3. **Brown:** Are you able to provide literacy data based on the curriculum that has been used in the last four years? Can you do it by district? (General)

Yes. Schools and central offices have access to real-time data through various dashboards and other reporting. The public can access the state assessment, MCAP, related data (along with other performance related data), on the district's Critical Success Indicator Dashboard which can be found within the PGCPS website or by clicking [here](#).

4. **Brown:** How are we on special education resources? There is an increase in private tuition, and I wondered if there was a correlation. (Pg. 119)

The budget is adequate to support the students who are currently placed in nonpublic (private placements). However, due to the HB 448 Teacher Pay Parity Act, an increase in the PGCPS budget for nonpublic placements may need to be increased. The budget for FY2026 Non-Public Tuition is \$67 million which is an increase of \$131,707 over last year.

5. **Brown:** What are the benefits of PGCPS students going to private school? (General)

Each public agency is required to ensure, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated in their least restrictive environment. A student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) determines the least restrictive environment where an IEP can be implemented including placements in general education, separate classrooms or nonpublic (private separate day school). The removal from general education only occurs when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of accommodations and supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Each public agency is required to ensure that there is a continuum of special education placement options for students with disabilities. Alternative placements in a nonpublic (private separate day school) may be required to implement a student's IEP in order for the student to demonstrate progress. Students attending nonpublic (private separate day school)

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placements are provided with academic support in a small, highly structured, therapeutic learning environment using clinical and behavioral interventions, which may include psychiatric treatment options and related services.

6. **Briggs:** What does “Nonpublic Schools - Students with Disabilities” mean? (Pg. 14)

Nonpublic schools are considered private separate day schools which are a component of the continuum of special education services that may be provided to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) when their needs cannot be adequately met in a public-school setting. The Nonpublic School Approval Branch at the Maryland State Department of Education is responsible for the regulatory oversight of nonpublic schools located throughout Maryland. Nonpublic placements are publicly funded under the Code of Maryland Regulations 13A.09.10. Placements in nonpublic schools provide special education services to some of the most challenging students with disabilities, including students who present with aggression, elopement, and other extreme behaviors. These schools provide academic support in a small, highly structured, therapeutic learning environment using clinical and behavioral interventions, which may include psychiatric treatment options and related services. Some students require a high level of structure and support which may not be available within the public educational system; therefore, students with disabilities may be placed in a private (nonpublic) special education school to give them access to a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE).

7. **Briggs:** If possible, can enrollment and academic outcome information be shared for the summer enrichment program?

Please see the linked Summer Brief attachment [here](#).

8. **Moss:** What is the purpose of the officer position in the Chief Academic Officer’s budget?(Not indicated)

The Innovation Officer is responsible for the research, creation, design and monitoring of innovative projects and programs that support the strategic priorities and initiatives of the CAO and Academic Teams. The Officer strategically facilitates organizational management and development in order to enhance organization coherence, the instructional skills of school and district leaders, and ensure alignment and equity of resources to schools for system success.

9. **Moss:** Why was an additional administrative support specialist added to the Chief Academic Officer’s budget? (Not indicated)

The original position was put in as a financial analyst but was changed to a program manager. Under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer, the Program Manager will be responsible for the overall coordination, support and monitoring of operations in the Division of Academics related to fiscal management, grant management, program management and strategic plan projects impacting the work across the Division of Academics. The incumbent will champion the compliance and fidelity of work that reflects collaboration across internal departments and external divisions within the system. The Program Manager will also provide a high level of project awareness and tracking to inform the Chief of trends and issues in overall performance and progression as well as support seamless communications internally and effective communications with external stakeholders. Lastly, this position was self-funded through the division of academics.

10. **Moss:** What is driving the increase in FTEs for a director in the Office of Instructional and Operational Support? (Not Indicated)

This position is currently an Instructional Supervisor, but this position touches every part of the system and organizes work across system workstreams. The position supports the operational side of the division that intersects with every other director. The work being done matches the other director’s positions under the Chief Academics Officer (CAO). Currently, this is the only direct report out of six under the CAO that is not a Director.

11. **Moss:** How are autism specialists coded in the budget, and what is the difference between the number of autism specialists in FY 2024, FY 2025, and FY 2026 allocations? (Not Indicated)

Autism specialists are coded as Instructional Specialists in the budget book. The number of autism specialists allocated for FY 2024, FY 2025, and FY 2026 is 6.0 FTE each year. There is no difference in the number of autism specialists across these fiscal years.

12. **Moss:** The FY 2026 budget includes funding for two new instructional specialists in the arts. Can you describe their roles, where they will be housed, and how they will function? (Not Indicated)

The request is to convert the current two TAG PGCEA Program Specialist positions to two ASAP Instructional Specialist positions. The current classification for the TAG Program Specialist position is unique within our district. It is the only specialist role in the division of academics that remains classified under PGCEA, while all other specialists in the division of academics are instructional specialists in ASAP. This discrepancy places the TAG Specialist in the distinct in an inequitable position, particularly when considering the scope and impact of their responsibilities. The TAG Specialists oversee programs that directly influence the educational trajectory of our district's most advanced learners. They play a critical role in ensuring that our gifted and talented students receive the high-quality instruction and resources they need to excel. This is cost neutral for the division of academics as we used another position to fund.

13. **Moss:** The FY 2026 budget reflects an increase of over 20 elementary special education teachers. Can you share where these new educators will go and how the decision to expand was made? (Pg. 117)

In FY25, 24 additional FTEs were added as a program enhancement to staff the Pointer Ridge Autism Program and the new Glenridge MS.

## Business Management

14. **Boozer-Strother:** Narrative overview by the Superintendent 1) highlighting the critical issues facing PGCPs going into this budget cycle and what can and cannot be accomplished depending on the State and County contributions, 2) what the "ESSER cliff" means to specifics such as status as a 1:1 Chromebook district, etc. 3) and that the budget priorities are driven by Blueprint for Maryland's Future, Transformation 2026 Equity Strategic Plan, Climate Change Action Plan and other guiding reports such as the Transportation Audit & Plan. This is the opportunity to drive the narrative that State and County contribution stagnation will have consequences to teacher salary increases and Blueprint programs that we have already been put in place and that PGCPs will have to fund with foundational funds if the funding escalations don't happen. We cannot give in that just because some Blueprint elements may be stalled that PGCPs needs less funds. The demands are greater than ever, and inflation has not even been factored into the projections. We are still going off pre-pandemic funding projections (which is a critical point to make.). Sugar coating this to appease the Governor, General Assembly and County Council, and not make them make them face it is their job to make decisions about revenue and tax reform, is going to have measurable negative outcomes for students. PGCPs has always had to be vocal on funding equity and it is clear this year we must go into the legislative session with this voice? (Missing Section 1-2)

The Budget and Management Services Office is streamlining the Budget Book to be more intelligible for public consumption and better informs our stakeholders of resource allocation decisions. Changes with the book are phased in over time with the goal of providing clearer connections between the executive summary pages and narrative in the front of the book with the detailed organization pages towards the back. In addition to the budget book, the Superintendent's presentation to the Board for FY26 Proposed Budget highlighted key focus areas, budget priorities and impacts for the coming year. Due to significant budget constraints, there are considerably fewer enhancements with many of the proposed changes being self-funded through reprioritization of spending within the existing base budget. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer continues to integrate Blueprint requirements in the budgeting process to ensure compliance.

15. **Boozer-Strother:** The column for FY25 estimate for County Source should reflect the original amount requested. The sidebar on the County Source is misleading that there is an increase in funding. The County Source is \$30M less than the \$976,7M that was projected for FY26 to fully fund the Blueprint at this point in implementation. (Local fiscal impact report January



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2022). This report did not account for inflation and the full reality of increased needs post-pandemic, so the gap is actually much bigger. The County source at \$945,500,079 may be \$35M over the final FY25 County Source, however, it is LESS THAN the \$958.7 proposed by PGCPs BEFORE the County and State stripped away the \$63M dedicated revenue sources during the 2024 Legislative session. To not be honest about this, is disingenuous to the stakeholders. Bottom line, the County Source is STAGGNATED at FY24 actual (\$943M) after a major drop in funding to \$909M in FY25. How I add it up over two years, it is about \$65M that PGCPs is covering for the essential Blueprint and foundation programs? (Pg. 20 and 21)

The FY 2025 proposed and requested County Contribution was higher than the amount ultimately approved by the County Council. This is due to the change in the law, which legally allows the County to meet their minimum funding requirement for Blueprint with the additional revenue sources such as the energy and telecommunications tax. The FY 2026 Proposed Budget Book reports final FY25 Approved Budget amounts in comparison to the FY 2026 Proposed Budget to demonstrate changes in the budget year over year. The FY25 Requested Budget is not referenced as it does not align to the final budget that was approved for FY 2025. However, the impact of the permanent reduction in the County Contribution was highlighted in the FY 2026 Proposed Budget Presentation. Furthermore, this impact will continue to be emphasized in future budget discussions, work sessions and public board meetings.

16. **Boozer-Strother:** Would be approx. Pages 17-21 - Capital Projects Funds section? (Missing Section)

See link at the bottom of page 18 of the FY26 Proposed Operating Budget Book which redirects to the FY26 Requested Capital Budget Book.

17. **Boozer-Strother:** Please detail the funding decrease reasons. (Page 29)

The decreases are mainly due to the reduction of grants within the Restricted budget resulting from the expiration of grant funding. For unrestricted, the decreases are mainly due to cuts applied to salaries, wages, and benefits across all functions that were needed to close the deficit and balance the proposed budget. Budget reductions are still being evaluated and will be adjusted later in the budget cycle in order to maintain an executable budget. See FY26\_Breakdown of Expenditures by Category [here](#).

18. **Boozer-Strother:** Are there other expenses added into the Board Salary line? It looks like the Board Members are receiving raises, which is not the case until Dec 2026 post election. It should still be \$163,000. Are you otherwise expecting the General Assembly to change the Board structure/salaries during the 2025 session? Please detail all legal fees paid on behalf of Board Members for the FY2024 and FY2025 and the anticipated fees on reserve for FY2026. (Page 51)

The board salary was added as a reserve for new board members starting mid-year to ensure funding is available to be moved to the proper cost centers once they are assigned. These will be moved into a separate reserve at that time. [List of Legal Fees](#)

19. **Boozer-Strother:** Please provide the Board the details of all aspects of this budget. There are major line item increases that need explaining as they look like waste to the system. Why would this Organization expand when there is stagnation in the entire system? Should it not follow the apparent guiding principle for FY26 of no new staff positions? Why would this Board expend \$260,000 more on top of the \$1.3M unfunded mandate for this redundant division when facing cuts to academics and student serving programs? (Page 59 section)

The Office of Integrity and Compliance is a mandate from the County. The current budget primarily consists of 4 FTEs, as well as contracted services. For FY 2026, there is also a program enhancement for 1 additional FTE. PGCPs also included the entire OIC base budget into our request for additional funding from the County. House Bill 370 - Prince George's County Public Schools - Office of Integrity and Compliance - Alterations PG 504-25 includes verbiage that the projected budget for this office shall be included in the County's operating budget upon approval by County Council. If this is passed, this budget will no longer lie in PGCPs starting with FY 2026. [House Bill 370](#)

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20. **Boozer-Strother:** This is a really important section of data to make public and have prepared for Board response. (Missing Section-School Based Budgeting)

The Blueprint for Maryland's future requires substantial changes to our school budgeting process to ensure the funding is following the student. This will be outlined in detail in the Board of Education Requested Budget Book.

21. **Boozer-Strother:** Overall question, What happened with the budget process this year? Why were the details not ready on time for the budget presentation and why are sections still missing? Why was the Board told that administration was not planning to provide the Organization detailed sections until we demanded them and conveyed this is unacceptable? Was Superintendent House aware that message was sent to an inquiry about when we could expect a detailed budget? I can totally understand if the Governor, State and County are sending messaging that makes preparing the FY26 budget harder than recent years, but that should have been communicated upfront and a memo sent to the Board explaining why the budget book was bare and why the updated book is still missing sections. The Board/Superintendent partnership must be solid going into the State Legislative session or we will fail the children and staff of PGCPs. We will return to the days before July 2018, which I definitely do not want to repeat as a parent and Board Member. (General)

The Budget and Management Services Office is streamlining the Budget Book to be more intelligible for public consumption and better informs our stakeholders of resource allocation decisions. Changes with the book are being phased in over time with the goal of providing clearer connections between the executive summary pages and narrative in the front of the book with the detailed organization pages towards the back. In addition to the budget book, the Superintendent's presentation to the Board for FY26 Proposed Budget highlighted key focus areas, budget priorities and impacts for the coming year. Due to significant budget constraints, there are considerably fewer enhancements with many of the proposed changes being self-funded through reprioritization of spending within the existing base budget. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer continues to integrate Blueprint requirements in the budgeting process to ensure compliance.

22. **Boozer-Strother:** Overall question -- how are the Strategic Plan metrics utilized in budget planning? I think the narrative could be clearer at the top of each Organization section to state how the budget moves the needle on specific strategic plan goals/Critical Success Indicators. I have expressed this concern for a few years that this is not presented clearly in a narrative how the dollars align to the PGCPs strategy and Blueprint mandates programs expansion. Only two divisions refer to the "Critical Success Indicators" in their narratives - Interpreting and Translation and Media Relations and Strategic Communications. Given 2026 is the year we are to provide a report on the success of this 2021-2026 Plan, I would have expected a lot more in this particular budget. We still need a data visualization of what a fully funded school system, that meets the Legislature's academic outcomes expectations, will look like as we grow to 2032. Something that shows by year and \$ amount the new mandates and budget expansion (stagnation) since the 2019 downpayment on the Blueprint, separated on top of the foundation funding. I ask this because there are many indicators that PGCPs has, or will begin, to see significant reduction in foundational programs due to an assumption that the Blueprint is now enough. This relates back to ESSER cliff and that moment in time that public schools actually received significant Federal funding to achieve long term demands from stakeholders, such as 1:1 Chromebook and air quality improvements through maintenance projects. We will watch these erode, if we don't keep up the truthful narrative that we are still far from fully funded just because the Blueprint Law has filled so many important gaps and is incredibly important.? (General)



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The strategic plan is the framework for what we do. Each Division develops a budget, including program enhancements which align with our Strategic Imperatives and Outcome Goals.

The Budget and Management Services Office is streamlining the Budget Book to be more intelligible for public consumption and better informs our stakeholders of resource allocation decisions that do align with our strategic plan. Changes with the book are being phased in over time with the goal of providing clearer connections between the executive summary pages and narrative in the front of the book with the detailed organization pages towards the back. In addition to the budget book, the Superintendent's presentation to the Board for FY26 Proposed Budget highlighted key focus areas, budget priorities and impacts for the coming year. Due to significant budget constraints, there are considerably fewer enhancements with many of the proposed changes being self-funded through reprioritization of spending within the existing base budget. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer continues to integrate Blueprint requirements in the budgeting process to ensure compliance.

23. **Brown:** I didn't see anything regarding the loan "payments" for the buses/books/additional equipment. How does that impact the budget? (Loans for Buses and Equipment)

We refer to those loan payments as "lease purchase" in the budget book. The \$15,655,915 lease purchase payment includes buses, non-buses, technology, and textbooks. That payment is factored in the budget as a "Cost of Doing Business". See Fiscal Highlights on page 11 of the budget book. [Superintendent's PROPOSED FY 2026 Annual Operating Budget](#).

24. **Walker:** The budget book says, "The FY 2026 proposed operating budget for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) totals \$2,938,396,320. This represents an overall increase of \$34,766,851 or 1.2% from the FY 2025 estimated budget of \$2,903,629,469." I will attempt to explain this in words (thus lengthy) but I am happy to talk in person because I think I may not do it justice without a conversation.

This, to me, remains confusing, when attempting to explain the decrease we see in funds. While I understand it, the notion of "increased" dollars from the county continues to be confusing. I would like to please see us tell the story of what 62% of the budget entails, why we ask for more, what was reduced on the journey, and what that specifically means for an optimally functioning school system. Our legislators and constituents continue to ask to see the pie chart of what 62% of the budget looks like for spending in buckets, and where we are falling short.

A) I am wondering if we can help explain this to our constituents and board who recall that just last year, a bit over \$64MM (if I recall that correctly) was reduced from our previously guaranteed telecommunications taxes to help with the overall county deficit. We did our part, as other entities, to give back to support the overall county. I use this as an example to ask how we highlight the continued decline in dollars received to fund the school system. Whether it is a chart of money requested, given, reduced, in words for an explanation, or another form, it will be helpful to create the narrative for a full understanding of county dollars dedicated to education.

B) If the school system was fully budgeted, optimally, what does that number look like? If we had the teachers, staff, aids, behavioral specialists, special needs dollars, programming, etc. that we needed for our 134K scholars, what is that number? Then what are we estimating to be frugal and respectful of the county, state, federal, and local dollars? (\$37MM Deficit)

The FY26 Proposed Budget includes a multitude of factors and assumptions during formulation. Two of the most important factors regarding our revenue estimate are eligible enrollment counts by program and the per pupil amounts (PPA) prescribed for each Blueprint program. The increase in revenue outlined in the budget is mostly due to the increased PPA from FY25 to FY26. With our enrollments remaining relatively flat, we are expecting higher state and county revenue shares this coming fiscal year.

However, this increase does not negate the fact that legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly last fiscal year had a negative impact in total county revenue the district would receive every year going forward. Now that the county is able to use the energy and telecom tax revenue to meet their minimum contribution to PGCPS instead of having to pay that revenue in addition to the minimum contribution, that is a permanent loss of funding. As a result, we are right sizing the budgeted expenditure to account for that revenue loss. For example, in the proposed budget, the county's minimum contribution is

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\$940.9M. Before the law changed, we would have expected revenue of approximately \$1B (\$940.9 minimum contribution + \$63.2M energy & telecom tax). Since the change in law, \$63.2M is included in the \$940.9M minimum contribution.

To further exacerbate the gap between costs and revenue, ESSER funded programs that were deemed essential to meet the schools' goals are being absorbed by the district's unrestricted budget.

Finally, the increase in estimated revenue from FY25 to FY26 is not enough to cover the increase in mandatory costs and costs of doing business such as negotiated commitments, Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB), lease purchase agreements, and utilities. These items alone outpace the unrestricted revenue increase of \$100M by \$21M, before we even factored in program enhancements and other organizational improvements. Hence the \$42M deficit that we must account for before finalizing the budget.

25. **Walker:** In paying this year's consolidated tax bill for PGC, I noticed a tax/fee called "PGC - Supplemental Education," which you have explained (thank you) goes directly to the County, versus PGCPs, where the county in turn uses the revenue towards the annual county contributions to PGCPs.

Can you share:

- a) does PGCPs receive the full or a portion of the revenue from this line item?
- b) how much of the county contributions does this specific fee/tax make up, please?? (General Revenue Question)

PGCPs is not directly involved in the development of the Prince Georges County Government Budget. For additional insight, please refer to the County's FY25 Budget Book.

- [See excerpt from FY25 Prince Georges County Government EWD Overview \(pages 5 & 6\)](#)
- [See also FY25 Prince Georges Count Proposed Budget Book \(starting at page 66\)](#)

26. **Walker:** In prior budgets, under the School-Based Resources Section, we had additional data that is missing this year. These breakdowns included the i) school-based budgeting overview, ii) student-based budgeting timeline, iii) per pupil weights, iv) weighted student formulas, v) student level flexibility, vi) position status unlocked, locked, and locked +, vii) Alternative school staffing, and charter school per-pupil allocation. This was alongside the two categories you have provided (school-based staffing per position and school-based expenditures by object.)

- a) Is there a reason that these were not provided for visibility this year?
- b) As a background, I leveraged these important sections to learn how we are allocating funds to different categories of students and provide perspective for the different schools focus areas.? (Table of Contents - Missing Information & Page 40 (for School-Based Resources))

The Blueprint for Maryland's future requires substantial changes to our school budgeting process to ensure the funding is following the student. This will be outlined in detail in the Board of Education Requested Budget Book.

27. **Walker:** Please update the photos on page 50 (Board of Education) to reflect a vacant space for Former BM Adams Stafford.? (Page 50)

This will be updated in the Requested Cycle's Budget Book.

28. **Walker:** The Office of Integrity and Compliance is projecting to have +1 FTE in FY2026. Without a currently known ROI, and detailed workplan of projected direction and savings, please help with the rationale as to the approval for inclusion of an additional \$266,094 for this stand-alone office. To aid in reducing the foreseen \$37MM deficit, this ask is under "optimization." I am wondering if it makes more fiscal sense to first see the fiscal wins of this office over this FY26 (to truly see if this is optimization), deferring the upfront decision for any additional \$\$

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(beyond optimization reductions) to reassess at that time. This office currently has a staff of 4 that are funded PGCPs resources. Thanks for your assistance in why this increase would be included in our projected budget, particularly given the deficit at this time. (Page 61)

The Office of Integrity and Compliance is a mandate from the County. The current budget primarily consists of 4 FTEs, as well as contracted services. For FY 2026, there is also a program enhancement for 1 additional FTE. PGCPs also included the entire OIC base budget into our request for additional funding from the County. House Bill 370 - Prince George's County Public Schools - Office of Integrity and Compliance - Alterations PG 504-25 includes verbiage that the projected budget for this office shall be included in the County's operating budget upon approval by County Council. If this is passed, this budget will no longer lie in PGCPs starting with FY 2026. [House Bill 370](#)

29. **Walker:** CIP: The school system's capital facility and infrastructure needs are critical and imperative for our scholars. As such, in prior budgets, under Introduction, specifically for Capital Project Funds, we had visibility to: i) CIP budget process, ii) Capital Improvement Program, iii) CIP FY Funding, iv) List of Capital Improvement projects, and v) CIP budget development process.

a) Is there a reason that these were not provided for visibility this year?

b) As a background, I leveraged these important sections to learn about the priorities for this year, the equity and focus across districts, and the dollars allotted, to name a few, to add perspective and highlight importance to and in support of the budget? (Table of Contents - Missing Information & Page 40 (for School-Based Resources))

See link at the bottom of page 18 of the FY26 Proposed Operating Budget Book which redirects to the FY26 Requested Capital Budget Book.

30. **Walker:** Office supplies increased from estimated \$610,300 to \$2,335,028. What is driving this significant increase, please? (Page 43)

Approximately \$1.7M was added to office supplies as a placeholder to align the mid-level administration category for FY 2026 School Based Budget to prior year level.

31. **Walker:** a) As an overview, we are reducing teachers, yet increasing other staff and directors, coordinators, supervisors, and specialists. Please help with understanding, as a teacher shortage exists throughout the district.

b) This is interesting because on page 42, the increase in \$\$ for classroom teachers is ~\$28K

c) On page 42, who is within "other teachers?"

d) Do "teaching aide's include Rosaryville, who has requested filling specific aids in the classroom last year?? (Page 36)

The reduction of 4.0 Classroom Teacher positions represents the reclassification of the of 3.0 10 month transition teachers to 3.0 11 month Transition Coordinators which support student transition to and from the Non Traditional Programs. In addition, the reclassification of 1.0 Special Education Instructional Lead Teacher to:

- a. 1.0 Special Education Coordinator to support the Regional Program.
- b. The salary increase that is shown on Page 42 reflects an adjustment to align the FY 2026 School Based Budget to prior year salaries and wages.
- c. The linked attachment reflects a listing of the positions that are included in "Other Teachers".
- d. The sub-object for Teaching Aides includes all Child Care Assistant, Hearing Interpreter, Instructional Media Aide, and Paraprofessional Educator positions that are allocated to school organizations. [Other Teacher Breakdown](#)

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32. **Walker:** Student Health Services is also projecting a -18% change. Please help with understanding the decrease? (Page 29)

This decrease is mainly due to the reduction of grants within the Restricted budget resulting from the expiration of grant funding. For unrestricted, the decrease is are mainly due to cuts applied to salaries, wages, and benefits across all functions that were needed to close the deficit and balance the proposed budget. Further cuts will be evaluated and applied as needed in order to maintain an executable budget. [See FY26 Breakdown of Expenditures by Category](#)

33. **Walker:** Board of Education Office, I am a HUGE supporter of a communications specialist in the office, particularly seeing the work as a previous chair and vice chair. That is not the concern. In the spirit of locating funds to give back to a balanced budget, I am wondering if the Board director can determine the scope of work (already done) and match that with a revised focus to lower the salary for this additional FTE. This optimization has the potential to greatly reduce this line item. For instance, can the work be done on a part time basis (0.5 FTE vs 1 FTE) if we get extremely clear on the workload and expectations? I believe the answer is yes, however, would simply like to take a look for the expert office opinion based on the job description and optimization efforts.? (Missing Section)

The Director of the Board Office addressed this response directly with the inquiring Board Member. The discussion outlined the drawbacks of a part time position or contractor as well as the need but also the ideas behind how a part time would be better than a contractor.

34. **Walker:** Textbooks and Instructional supplies are decreasing. I imagine it is because we have more online learning versus textbook learning, however, want to be sure with your confirmation, please.? (Page 20)

This decrease is mainly due to the reduction of grants within the Restricted budget. There is a slight decrease of \$179K in unrestricted funding from FY25 primarily due to decreasing the sensory room supply line based on actual costs. [See FY26 Breakdown of Expenditures by Category](#)

35. **Briggs:** What is the maximum amount for the Community Services category since it isn't explicitly outlined in the law? (Page 20)

There is no maximum amount for any of the State Mandated Categories. Per statute 5-101 section (A)(1), each county board shall prepare an annual budget according to major categories listed in this statute as well as any other major category required by the state board. Although Community Services is not a mandated category across all agencies, the Maryland State Department of Education requires every LEA to report on expenditures related to community activities. Please refer to the financial reporting manual for more details. [See Article - Education Statute 5-101 Section A.1](#) [See Financial Reporting Manual for Maryland Public Schools page 74](#)

36. **Briggs:** What is the transition grant used for in the Blueprint law? (Page 24)

The Blueprint Transition Grant is unrestricted and therefore provides each LEA discretion of use. PGCPs does not align specific unrestricted revenue sources with expenditures. Instead, we budget expenditures based on total unrestricted revenue projections.

37. **Briggs:** Are we factoring the development of the FBI center in Greenbelt into future Federal impact aid contributions to offset costs? (Page 24)

Not at this time. There is an application process to determine eligibility with construction to commence potentially in 2026. If the new FBI HQs qualifies for PGCPs to receive additional federal impact aid funding, we will factor it in revenue projections at that time.

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38. **Briggs:** What do fixed charges entail in the expenditures by category section of the budget? (Page 29)

The category of Fixed Charges includes all benefit items such as FICA, Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Retirement, Workers Compensation, as well as Liability Insurance and Tuition Reimbursement.

39. **Briggs:** Where do the Board Sources fit into the overall expenditures by category pie? (Page 29)

PGCPS does not align unrestricted operating expenditures with specific unrestricted revenue sources. Instead, we budget expenditures based on total unrestricted revenue projections. Restricted revenue from Board Sources in the amount of \$1.9M is designated from Use of PY Fund Balance for funding received from the county in FY24 to update our astro turfs and fields. Those funds were not used in FY24 and therefore fell to the fund balance for future use.

40. **Briggs:** Can you provide more information on the breakdown of salaries and wages by object? In expenditures by category, instructional salaries and wages made up approximately 33% of the budget; however, in expenditures by object, salaries and wages jumped to 61.6% of the pie. I would love to know more about what other salaries and wages are included in the breakdown of salaries and wages by object outside of instructional salaries and wages. (Page 30)

Salaries and wages are included in 12 of the 15 categories identified on the expenditure by category page. The category by which the salaries & wages reside is dictated by the Maryland State Department of Education Reporting Manual. The table linked herein provides a breakdown of the costs in each category. [FY 2026 Proposed Operating Budget Salaries & Wages Breakdown](#)

41. **Briggs:** How many employees do we have overall? I'd like to know the median salary for administration, mid-level administration, instructional salaries and wages, special education, student personnel services, student health services, student transportation services, operation of plant services, and maintenance of plant services.? (Page 30)

As of 1/17/2025, our full-time Operating employee headcount is 18,229; the categories specified account for a total of 18,219 full-time Operating employees. The median salary for each is: \$136,497 for Administration, \$116,643 for Mid-level Administration, \$87,154 for Instructional, \$66,356 for Special Education, \$82,330 for Student Personnel Services, \$101,536 for Student Health Services, \$44,768 for Student Transportation Services, \$52,317 for Operation of Plant Services, \$96,278 for Maintenance of Plant Services.

42. **Briggs:** It seems to be missing the state's process for a comprehensive overview of the complete budget process, can that be added to future versions?? (Not Indicated)

See link at the bottom of page 18 of the FY26 Proposed Operating Budget Book which redirects to the FY26 Requested Capital Budget Book.

43. **Walker:** Student Transportation is seeing a -8.8% change. With a focus on transportation, may you please help us understand the decrease in projected dollars? (Page 29)

This will be updated in the Requested Cycle's Budget Book.

## Communications

44. **Boozer-Strother:** What is the current assessment of Family & Community Partnerships now being in this division for about 2 school years? It always made more sense to me that it was in School Support & Leadership due the critical issue of Principal and Parent partnerships. (Page 79)

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In the current assessment of the second year of the realignment of the Department of Family and Community Partnerships into the Division of Communications and Community Engagement, training session, collaborative meeting attendance and evaluation data all show improvement in participation and interest in the critical work of this Department for:

- providing multitudinous and diverse opportunities and resources for educating and building the capacity of parents/families to become effective partners;
- providing opportunities and resources for educating and coaching PGCPs administrators and all staff towards learning best practices for embracing parents and families as partners;
- providing greater strategic business and community partnerships that are developed and implemented across schools in expressed need of resources and support

The Department's work is being more strategically highlighted, spotlighted, more vigorously and broadly amplified within the Division of Communications and Community Engagement. The Department has immediate access opportunities for communication of its information, strategies and learning opportunities from this Division's myriad approaches to supporting and amplifying this work. The Division is committed to also diversifying the department's outreach and amplification capacity through the creation of additional multimodal means of information and strategy sharing through the production of toolkits, videos, podcasts, etc.

The departments collaborate to support and amplify each other's work more organically. It also allows for the Department of Family and Community Engagement to deliver firsthand feedback from parents and community members while more directly serving as thought partners to enhance communications strategy for our schools and communities.

45. **Walker:** Please help explain the increase in contracted services, particularly technical services that have an increase of \$260K? (Page 81)

The increase of \$260,000 is a result of a realignment of funds previously approved by the BOE in FY25 for survey software based on feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

The funds have been realigned to support stronger internal and external communication tools, events and strategies as outlined in the Communications Plan presented to the board in October of 2024. This will allow us to enhance our communications to students, family and community members in a way that reflects the feedback we have heard. Funds were realigned to the following:

- Website AI Chatbot
- Telephonic Employee Town Halls
- Multimedia Equipment
- Professional Development for staff at all levels
- Project Management Software
- Media Reporting Tools
- Media Management Tools

PGCPS has successfully utilized Google Forms to collect feedback and survey internal and external stakeholders for years. We are still seeing high levels of engagement as evidenced by the Climate and Culture Survey participation most recently.

46. **Walker:** Can the FTE in the "family and Community Partnerships" office be reassigned to federal programs budget (restricted funds)? (Not Indicated)

The Department of Family and Community Partnerships currently engages 35,000 trained and screened volunteers, 114 business partners, supports 102 Parent Engagement Assistants at 99 schools, directly supports Family and Community Engagement training and activities at any of the 207 PGCPs schools, and provides bi-weekly Family Institute parent/family capacity building workshops for 100 participants per month. This request would not align with department and district needs.

47. **Moss:** Can you explain the roles of the 22 FTEs assigned to Media Relations and Strategic Communications? (Not Indicated)

Currently, this office encompasses media relations, graphic design, administrative secretaries, multimedia, web services and more.



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I am working with the Finance division to separate these areas out for more transparent reporting and public understanding. This will ensure a more accurate, distinguishable breakdown of financials for the division. As an example, when you see the large number for Technical Contracted Services, a significant portion of this includes \$510,000 which is the cost to host the website and all of its corresponding pages.

48. **Moss:** Can you clarify the \$500,000 allocated for technical contracted services under the Interpreting and Translation Office? (Not Indicated)

The Office of Interpreting and Translation facilitates federally mandated language access resources for school-based and systemic communication with linguistically diverse families across the district. Technical contracted services funding supports telephonic interpreting services for immediate communicative needs, a multifaceted interpreter scheduling platform, and a translation leverage and management system.

49. **Moss:** What is the purpose of the \$38,952 allocated for building rentals under Family and School Partnerships? (Not Indicated)

The \$38,952 allocated for building rentals are Restricted Funds for the Employee Recognition Dinner and Teacher of the Year.

50. **Moss:** Can you explain the request for an additional FTE for an administrative support specialist in the Office of Media Relations and Strategic Communications for FY 2026?? (Not Indicated)

There is no increase for Admin Support Specialists between the FY 2025 Approved Budget and FY 2026 Proposed Budget. The increase is between the FY 2024 Actual and the FY 2026 Proposed due to a vacancy in the office.

## Operations

51. **Boozer-Strother:** Given the recent update to the Board on the maintenance program and that the department is not fully funded/staffed to keep up with the backlog and negative impacts of decades of disinvestment in PGCPs buildings, how will the department meet the goals without any increase in staffing? This is one of my annual budget priority requests and I am concerned that as we move forward the backlog will get worse because the building is older and in worse condition with each passing year. We have returned to parents organizing that they should get maintenance first over other schools! This is an unacceptable position to return to and takes the focus off the real issue. The State withheld the maintenance funds for decades, along with the overall disinvestment, and owes PGCPs payback for these decisions. We should not hold back demanding the State make good. We saved the State money on the backs of children and employees and when we stagnate a budget/staffing plan, we are saying we are OK. We are not. The State and Delegation should not get to balance a budget on disinvestment in PGCPs buildings multiple times over (and also simultaneously promote a false narrative that the maintenance department is not competent.) (Page 228 section)

Building Services has steadily increased its ability to complete work orders over the last five fiscal years due to the increased Operating budget provided by the Board, leveraging our Capital budget, and increased efficiencies. Our challenge moving into FY26 is the lack of capital resource for Building Services projects.

52. **Boozer-Strother:** Will a local hub stop system be implemented for specialty programs to improve on time service and encourage parents to drive locally, rather than all the way to the school building? We have been told we need safe stop locations such as church parking lots. Is planning underway?? (Page 243 section)

We are exploring hub stops. We are working with community partners to help establish safe community stops.

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53. **Boozer-Strother:** What aspects of the Transportation Audit & Plan are the focus for FY26? Are the bus driver pay scales the primary driver of vacancies and should we be budgeting more for compensation opportunities rather than this big cut to the entire Transportation program?? (Page 243 section)

We will be refining the first five priorities while expanding on Recommendation 6: Diversify Modal and Vendor Mix. Recommendation 7: Strengthen Organizational Capabilities Through Strategic Staffing and Recommendation 12: Revise Operational Processes for Efficiency and Clarity. Please see the linked January 16, 2025 BOE meeting presentation for additional details. [1-16-25 - BOE meeting - Transportation presentation](#)

54. **Boozer-Strother:** Building Services or where the implementation of SB0427 2021 resides (possibly maintenance?), are the required 2 women's rooms (State law uses term women exclusively, not aligned to PGCPs gender neutral facilities) in each MS & HS equipped with the menstrual project dispensers and funded to be fully stocked all school year? Once funding is confirmed, the process needs improvement as stock is not there in reality for all schools. Are funds and plan in place to the 100% coverage by August 1, 2025? I will move this if confirmed which division monitors this part of the budget.? (Not Indicated)

The grant funding used for phase I is no longer available and the estimated cost to comply with phase 2 of the mandate is over \$500,000 for the purchase of the equipment. The funding is not a part of our FY 25 approved budget and would have to be included as part of our FY26 budget request.

55. **Boozer-Strother:** What are the reasons for the vacancy rate and is a budget solution needed, such as increase in pay scales?? (Page 233)

This vacancy rate is in relation to the Non-Operating Budget under the Capital Projects Fund. There is only one FTE for Capital Programs that is in the operating budget that is currently filled. The verbiage in this narrative will be updated for subsequent budget book publications to reflect data points relevant to the operating budget.

56. **Walker:** Capital Projects that incur inflation: Dr. Coleman, for instance, such as Camp Schmidt, who priced a project, we secured the funding, and the build has started, we see that from the time of design and funding, inflation has occurred on materials, labor, etc. How and where do we i) project, then ii) make up the funding so that projects can be completed?

For instance, I understand that Camp Schmidt, though initially funded years ago for a complete project scope, has a \$15MM deficit to complete the originally designed and approved build due to the inflation, thus will have to lower the scope of a project that was a) approved and b) that fuels the 5th and 7th graders of the entire PGCPs population.? (Not Indicated)

[Capital Programs Response.](#)

57. **Walker:** Food & Nutritional Services: This section seems incomplete by way of estimated actuals for FY25 and projected for FY26. I would love a confirmation on: 1) are we fully staffed with the director of nutrition, as I know we previously had a vacancy, 2) are we in a financial position to be able to support the test of non-dairy milk alternatives that we began chatting last fiscal year? (and btw, thanks for your help on this last year in talking possibilities)? (Page 235)

Director of Nutrition Position: We are pleased to confirm that the Director of Nutrition position has been filled. Mary Kirkland joined us as the new Director Staffing Updates: While the Director role is now filled, we are still in the process of hiring for other vacant positions within the Division. Specifically, the Nutrition Specialist 1 and Nutrition Specialist 2 roles remain open.

Initiative: Once the Nutrition Specialist positions are filled, FNS will be better positioned to support and implement the non-dairy milk alternative initiative discussed last fiscal year. We remain committed to this effort and appreciate your ongoing support in exploring these possibilities.

58. **Walker:** Re: Building Services. Please correct me if my memory does not recall correctly. In 2024, there was a meeting where Building services talked of gaps in staffing to complete the necessary work orders within schools. With the FTE's request steady as we move into FY2026, please share the plan to ensure that we can maintain the pace of the need with the current staffing available, inclusive of the dollars allocated. I recall part of the discussion was also on the increase of funds needed to maintain the school needs in the short and medium term. (Page 229)

Building Services has steadily increased its ability to complete workers over the last five fiscal years due to the increased Operating budget provided by the Board, leveraging our Capital budget, and increased efficiencies. Our challenge moving into FY26 is the lack of Capital resources for Building Services projects.

## School Support & Leadership

59. **Boozer-Strother:** Will Blueprint funded schools, particularly the Pillar 4 Community Schools's Principals be given the much-needed flexibility to create the staffing plans for the funds? They must be able to spend the funds to provide solutions to issues, such as absenteeism and parent engagement, which requires increased social services expertise and programs. I am concerned the Principals were not allowed to expend the Blueprint funds on the proper staffing for FY25, which is allowable by law. (General)

Student Services (Dr. Faison) In conjunction with Community Schools (Dr. Horton-Williams) and working together on this request. They have met with several departments and are now in the process of preparing and RFP so that Social Workers can be hired through an agency, much like Mental Health Clinicians. There will need to be a supervisory position at central office that can support these positions and coordinate their work and lead things like role alike trainings etc. All of these things are currently being worked on, and we are preparing to have an RFP submitted in February.

[Social Workers for Community Schools](#)

60. **Boozer-Strother:** For Student Services, or where the implementation of SB0427 2021 resides (possibly maintenance?), are the required 2 women's rooms (State law uses term women exclusively, not aligned to PGCPs gender neutral facilities) in each MS & HS equipped with the menstrual project dispensers and funded to be fully stocked all school year? Once funding is confirmed, the process needs improvement as stock is not there in reality for all schools. Are funds and plan in place to the 100% coverage by August 1, 2025? I will move this if confirmed which division monitors this part of the budget. (Page 233)

Dr. Tracy Jones replied that this was something that came through operations in the past and was ordered and installed by maintenance. She is going to reach out to Jason Washington to ask this question. I will have a full answer after Dr. Jones speaks with Mr. Washington.

61. **Boozer-Strother:** Can you please respond to how these are being addressed --  
1) "Fully fund Evening High School as originally outlined in 2020 for an onsite program at every High School that engages the blended learning and wrap around supports model. Fully fund Community Schools/Parent Engagement Coordinator for all Evening High Schools. " (Page 95 section)

To discuss during the work session in order to seek clarity on the question and where the quoted verbiage comes from.

62. **Boozer-Strother:** Last year, a new superintendent-level position for Transformation was added. Can you elaborate on the necessity of this addition? (Page 233)

The department for Transformation, Leadership and Continuous Improvement was created this past year. The formation of this department was needed to address the areas in its title. To strengthen the work of the Office of Schools, this department does some of the following:

**Transformation:** T26 and Blueprint call for transformation and while the Critical Success Indicators are spread across different departments, there was no one leading the support of our highest need schools (CSI/ATSI identified by MSDE) and giving them the differentiated support that was needed. Much of this support starts with the leaders of these schools. The research shows that Leadership is the second biggest factor to student success, only second to classroom instruction. This is one of our efforts to ensure at a systems level that we are addressing the transformation that Blueprint and T26 calls for at a systems level. This office helps to bring coherence across the multiple departments working in conjunction to help schools in meeting their goals. This office is also a place for transformative ideas for the system to incubate before going directly to the area offices and schools.

**Leadership Development:** In the previous org, professional learning of principals and assistant principals sat within the HR org and happened for principals (4x) a year as a full systemic meeting along with a SLI (Summer Leadership Institute) a few days in July. We have expanded systemic meetings to monthly under this department, so we are able to meet the demands of principals growing as instructional leaders. There was not a strong coherence and throughline between what happened in terms of leadership development between these two departments. By bringing the leadership development arm of PL over the schools' office we are building coherence and strengthening the support being given to leaders by teams working together under the same Theory of Action (Strengthening Leadership Capacity to Support and Strengthen Teacher Capacity Through a Dedicated Focus on The Teaching and Learning Cycle). My office continues to collaborate and align with the office of academics for delivery of all content knowledge to leaders and we will also continue to work with HR and align and collaborate around teacher development and the Diversity, Equity and Belonging development they provide in schools. This department is also revamping the principal pipeline through the development of assistant principals who they now meet with monthly systemically.

**Continuous Improvement:** This office now has the Community School Office in its org, and they work through the Community Schools to provide continuous support to schools through the strategy of the grant. This team also looks at existing structures and practices we have in place and ask the question "Could this be improved or maximized?" and then works across all relevant teams to go through a cycle of continuous improvement.