

Response to Questions on the FY 2017 Budget

Request By: Supervisor McKay

Question: According to “FY 2017 Preliminary Forecast Projections Estimates as of April 27, 2015” handout given to the Budget Task Force, FCPS was projecting a \$22.1 million increase in funding required for “enrollment and demographic changes.” New projections indicate \$2.9 million in savings. Is this a \$25 million position swing in funding because of new enrollment/ demographic changes? If not, please explain.

Response: The following response was prepared by Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS):

When the fiscal forecast was presented in April of 2015, FCPS stated that the projection for the cost of enrollment growth and changes to student demographics was held level with the prior year for planning purposes. The prior year’s cost was used as an estimate because FCPS had not yet completed the enrollment projections and calculation of staffing for the proposed budget.

The cost of enrollment growth and demographic changes is the end result of applying each of the individual staffing formulas to the number of students and the student demographics projected at each individual school. Staffing is calculated for each school at both the proposed and approved stages of the budget process. This allows FCPS to calculate the number of school-based resources required to meet the needs of students at each individual school. The cost of growth is determined by calculating the difference between the current budget’s allocated staffing and the staffing generated when the formulas are recalculated using the new enrollment and demographic projections for the next school year’s budget.

In the fall, after FCPS completed the projections for the upcoming school year, the cost of enrollment growth and student demographics was calculated for the proposed budget. Although the overall population of Fairfax County is projected to continue to grow in the future, FCPS is facing new indicators that differ from historical trends. From FY 2009 to FY 2015, FCPS’ student enrollment grew by an average of 2,700 students per year. Enrollment growth has moderated in FY 2016 due to a lowering birth to kindergarten yield ratio and a rapidly declining in-migration of students. These factors indicate that student enrollment growth is projected to slow in future years.

The FY 2017 Proposed Budget enrollment is projected to decrease by 1,334 students, as compared to the FY 2016 Approved Budget projection, after excluding students served outside FCPS and at the Fairfax Adult High School. This decrease in students resulting in fewer positions, is offset by an increase in positions supporting students receiving English for Speakers of Other Languages services (particularly at the secondary level), and changes in projected special education services due to an increase in the most intensive services. Based on enrollment and demographic changes, there is a net reduction of \$2.9 million, including 38.6 positions, from the FY 2016 Approved Budget.

Following is the detailed chart that shows the details for the net reduction of \$2.9 million.

School Position Growth Based on Enrollment Projections *
FY 2016 Approved to FY 2017 Proposed

	Elementary Positions	Middle Positions	High Positions	Total Positions	Dollars (in millions)
General Education					
Assistant Principal Positions	(9.0)	0.0	1.0	(8.0)	\$ (0.9)
Teacher Scale Positions	(98.5)	4.9	14.0	(79.6)	(6.3)
Instructional Assistant Positions	(56.0)	0.0	0.0	(56.0)	(1.9)
Office Personnel/US Scale Positions	(11.5)	0.5	2.0	(9.0)	(0.5)
Custodial Positions	<u>(3.5)</u>	<u>(1.0)</u>	<u>0.5</u>	<u>(4.0)</u>	<u>(0.2)</u>
Subtotal General Education	(178.5)	4.4	17.5	(156.6)	\$ (9.8)
English for Speakers of Other Languages	12.0	3.0	24.2	39.2	\$ 3.1
Special Education					
Teacher Scale Positions				24.9	\$ 2.0
Instructional Assistant/Attendant Positions				<u>54.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>
Subtotal Special Education				78.9	\$ 4.0
Psychologists / Social Workers				0.0	\$ -
Subtotal				(38.6)	\$ (2.7)
Hourly, Substitutes, and Per-Pupil Allocations					\$ (0.1)
Total Enrollment and Demographic Adjustments				(38.6)	\$ (2.9)

* Does not add due to rounding