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Superintendent Presents Proposed Budget for FY19

York County School Division Superintendent Victor Shandor presented his proposed Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) Operating Budget during the School Board special meeting on Monday, February 12.

Dr. Shandor's proposed \$139,911,758 budget is based on an anticipated \$3.7 million increase in state funding, a requested increase of \$1.5 million in local funding, and identified savings. It represents a \$4.9 million increase over the current adopted budget. The budget focuses on three strategic priorities – instruction and learning, retention and recruitment, and legal compliance and safety.

Development Process

The division initiated a new collaborative approach to the budget development process this fall which included community input sessions, school and department input opportunities and an online suggestion box. Over the course of two months, the division received 320 suggestions totaling over \$9 million in requests. After reviewing and evaluating all the feedback, the proposed budget directs funding to align with both the community's input and the division's long-term goals.

Instruction and Learning

"In order to achieve the division's goal to engage all students in rigorous experiences, we must provide a comprehensive educational system that meets the needs of the whole child so that each and every student can achieve academic, social-emotional, and personal success," stated the superintendent.

The budget includes 5.5 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) to strengthen school support services for students as well as an additional seven teaching positions to address a projected enrollment increase of 160 students. Providing funds directly to schools through a \$300,000 increase in the per pupil allocation, distributed among the 19 schools, is also included in the superintendent's recommendation. "It's important that we empower our principals and give schools the flexibility to make decisions for *their* student needs," said Dr. Shandor.

Continuing the emphasis on funding for instruction and learning, resources and services essential to student achievement, such as textbooks, materials, and professional development, would receive an increase of more than \$300,000 in the proposed budget.

Retention and Recruitment

"There is one common denominator in our school division's success, our people." Shandor said. "We know our number one resource is the dedicated, passionate and committed employees of YCSD. It's critical that we continue to provide competitive compensation to keep and attract the best of the best." He went on to share that the nation's teacher shortage is impacting Virginia and YCSD – the division hired full-time elementary teachers into September and still has vacancies in the critical shortage area of special education.



The Superintendent's FY19 Proposed Operating Budget would dedicate \$1.8 million to a salary step for all eligible employees (a 2% average pay increase), along with \$816,000 for a restored step for eligible employees. Additionally, salaries and supplements for targeted positions will be adjusted based on the comparator market.

Regarding supplements, Dr. Shandor added, "We have not raised compensation in this area in almost 25 years. We know the importance of connecting students with school, whether that's a club, a sport, the band or with a mentor in that building, we know how important that is. These staff members commit many hours - before school, after school, weekends, and through the summer - making a difference in the lives of our students. I value their commitment to developing the whole child."

Legal Compliance and Safety

Additional positions have been identified as necessary to comply with state mandates and safety standards. The division has experienced continued enrollment growth among students with disabilities resulting in the addition of 2.5 special education teachers and a speech language pathologist. Three teaching positions for English Learners are included in the budget proposal to comply with state requirements regarding licensure for staff in this area.

A health services coordinator would provide expertise at the division level to support 18 school nurses. Another new safety focus would expand the contract for athletic trainers, to include middle school events, at a cost of \$100,000 per year.

Next Steps

The School Board is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the Superintendent's Proposed FY19 Operating Budget at the regular monthly meeting at 7 p.m., Monday, February 26, at York Hall. The board will then adopt its own proposed budget on March 26. This budget may reflect revisions to the superintendent's proposal. The School Board proposed budget will then be forwarded to the County Board of Supervisors for their consideration during their budget process.

