



School Board Meeting  
January 23, 2025

FISCAL YEAR  
**2026**  
PROPOSED  
BUDGET



**#InvestInExcellence**



## SERVING FAIRFAX COUNTY BY...

- Meeting the expectations of our families
- Meeting the changing needs of today's students
- Understanding taxpayer fatigue
- Acknowledging chronic underfunding







# INVESTING IN FAIRFAX COUNTY'S FUTURE



## 693

NATIONAL MERIT  
COMMENDED SCHOLARS



## 1178

AVERAGE SAT SCORE  
Students performed above  
state and global averages.



## 75%

OF HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS COMPLETED  
AT LEAST ONE COLLEGE  
EQUIVALENT COURSE



## 94.6%

4-YEAR ON-TIME  
GRADUATION RATE  
exceeding the state average





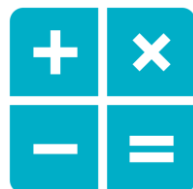
# SUCCESS ADDS UP

FCPS students outperform Virginia state averages in math, science, and reading, with improvements in math and science.



## 9.5%

INCREASE IN 8TH GRADERS TAKING ALGEBRA I OR HIGHER



## 6.8%

INCREASE IN 5TH GRADERS TAKING ADVANCED MATH

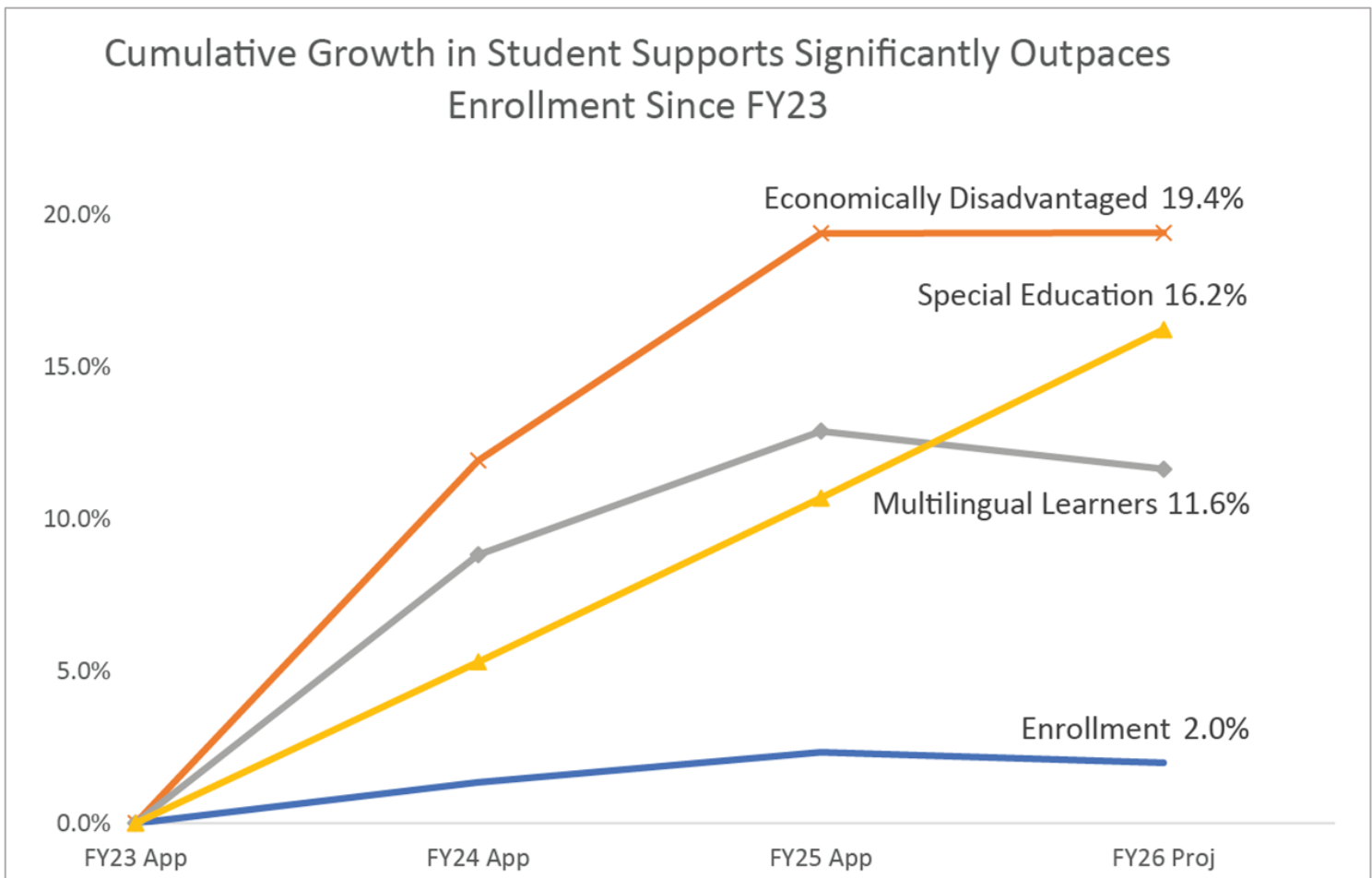


**A SIGNIFICANT RISE IN MATH PASS RATES**  
even with more students taking accelerated courses





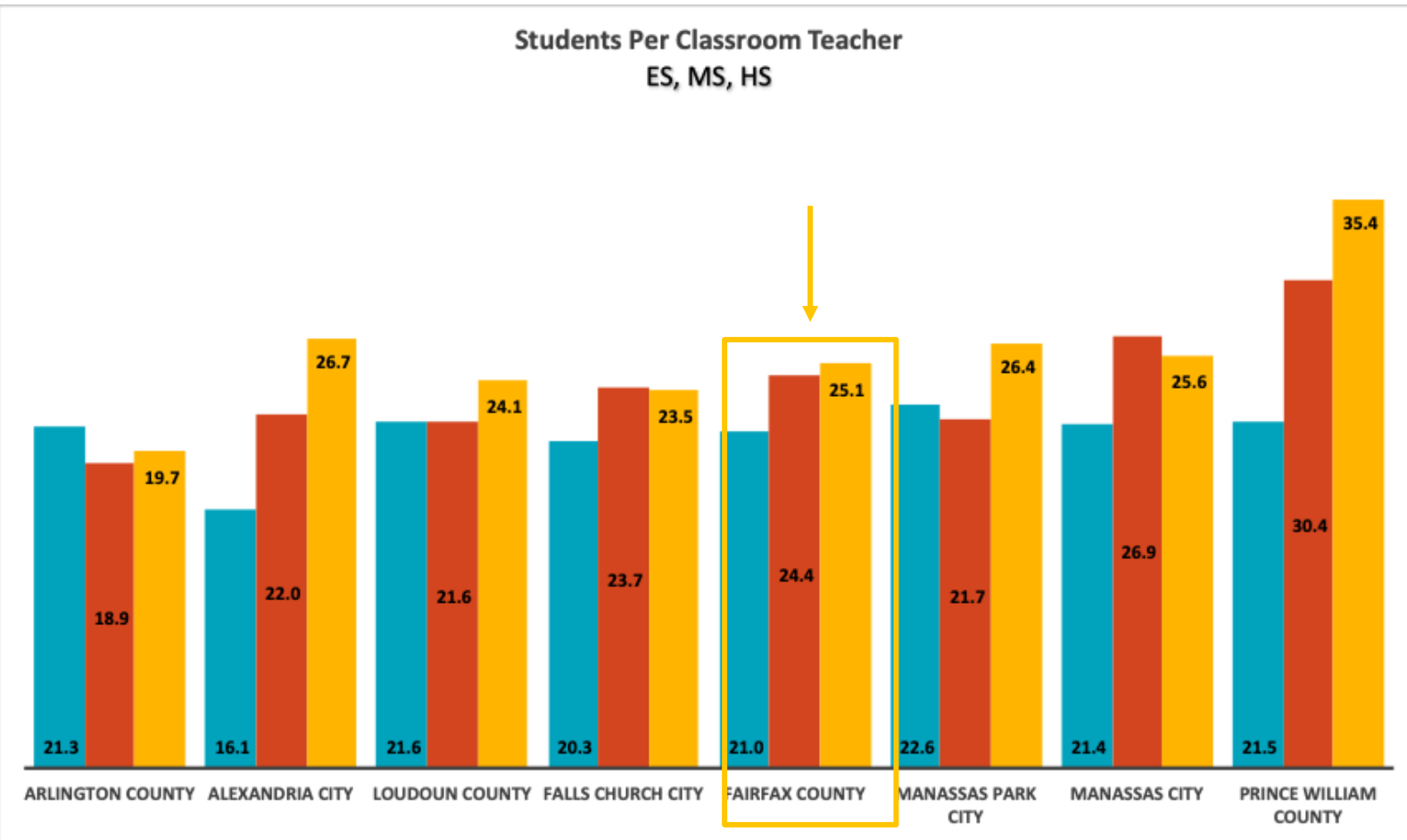
# STUDENTS' NEEDS ARE CHANGING



- As our students' needs change, so do our funding needs
- Special education is the primary enrollment-based budget driver in FY26



# HOW OUR CLASS SIZES COMPARE

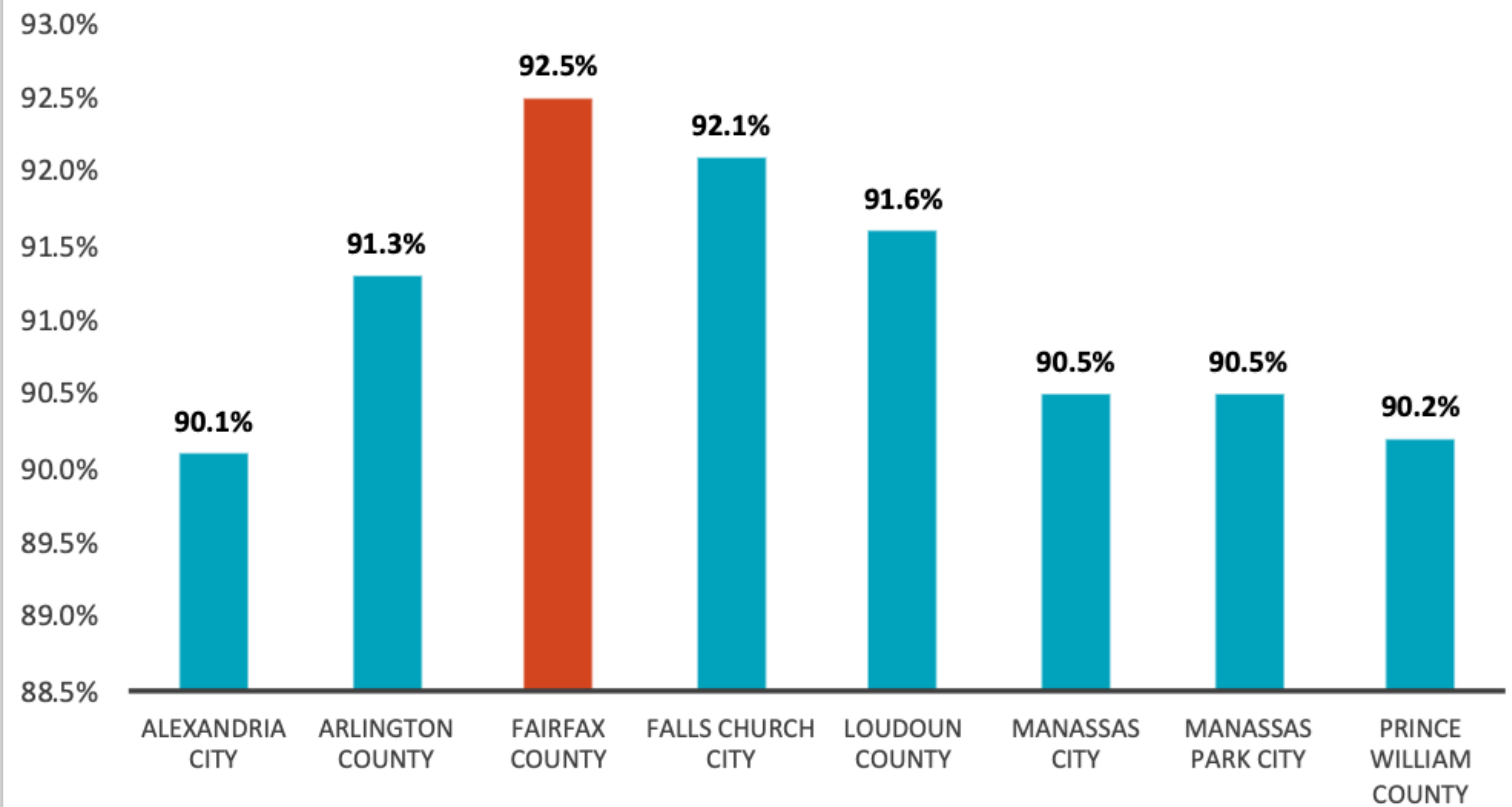


- FCPS ranks 5<sup>th</sup> of 8 when students per classroom teacher at all school levels are considered
- However, when school levels are considered individually:
  - ES - 3<sup>rd</sup> of 8
  - MS - 6<sup>th</sup> of 8
  - HS - 4<sup>th</sup> of 8



# OUR HEART BEATS STRONGEST IN SCHOOLS

FY 2025 Percent School-based Employees



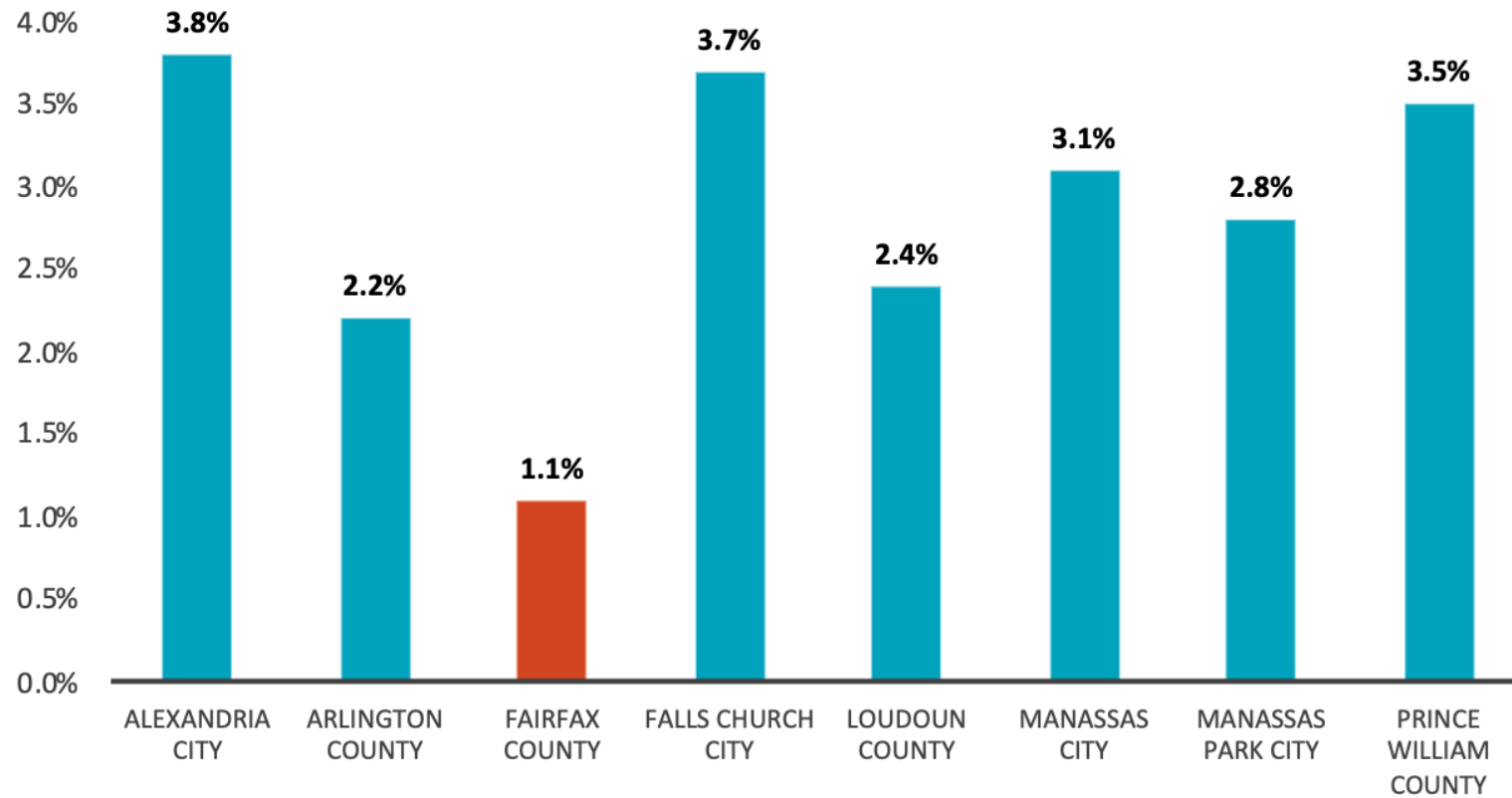
- Most of FCPS’ funding is directly allocated to instruction with 92.5% of employees designated as school-based—the highest among WABE participants





# LOWEST RATIO OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT

FCPS - Lowest Ratio of Management Positions

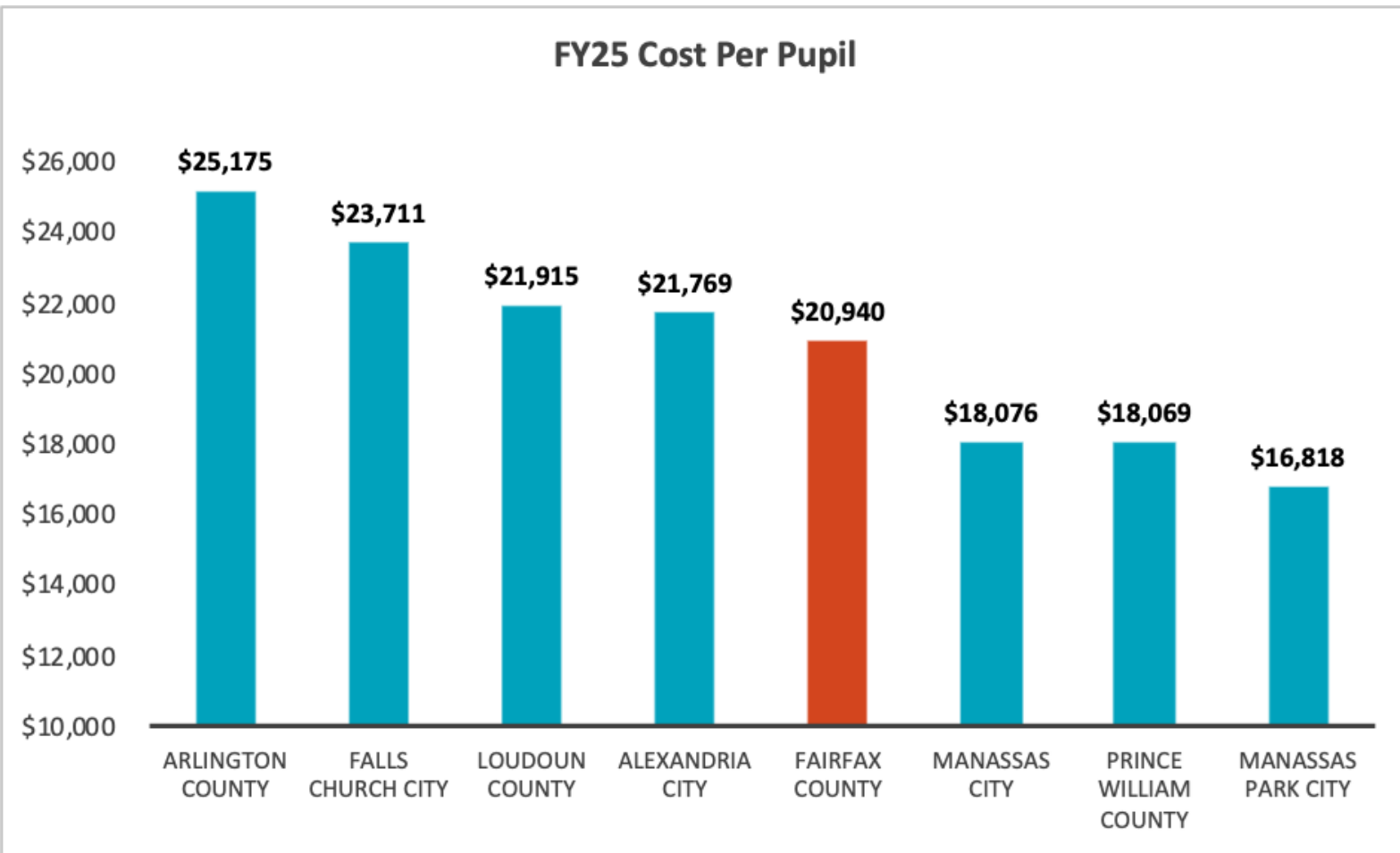


- Our ratio of central management staff is 1.1% compared to 2-4% at surrounding jurisdictions





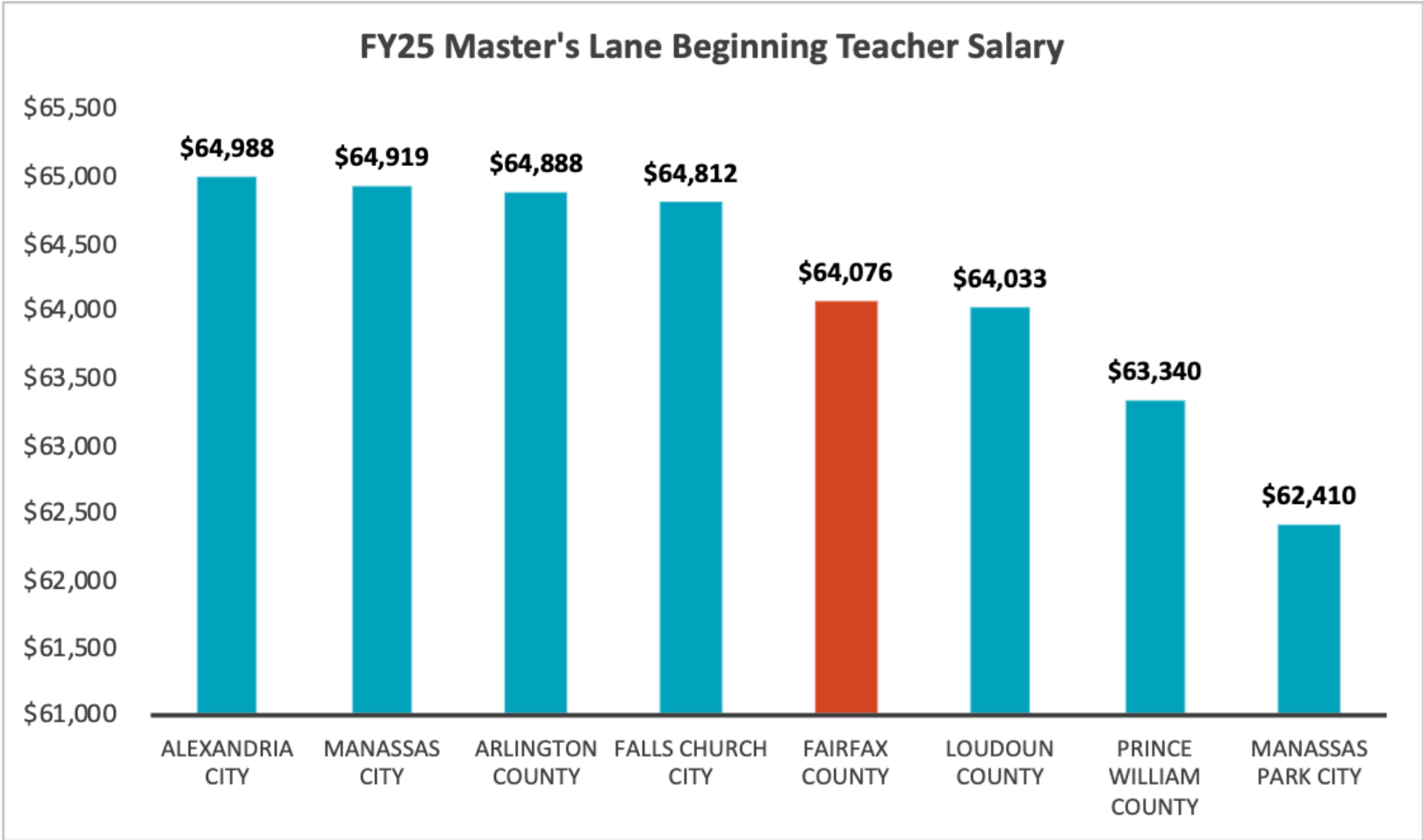
# INVESTING IN EACH AND EVERY STUDENT



- **Additional funding to FCPS based on cost per pupil of:**  
 Arlington – \$769.5m  
 Falls Church – \$503.5m  
 Loudoun – \$177.2m  
 Alexandria – \$150.6m



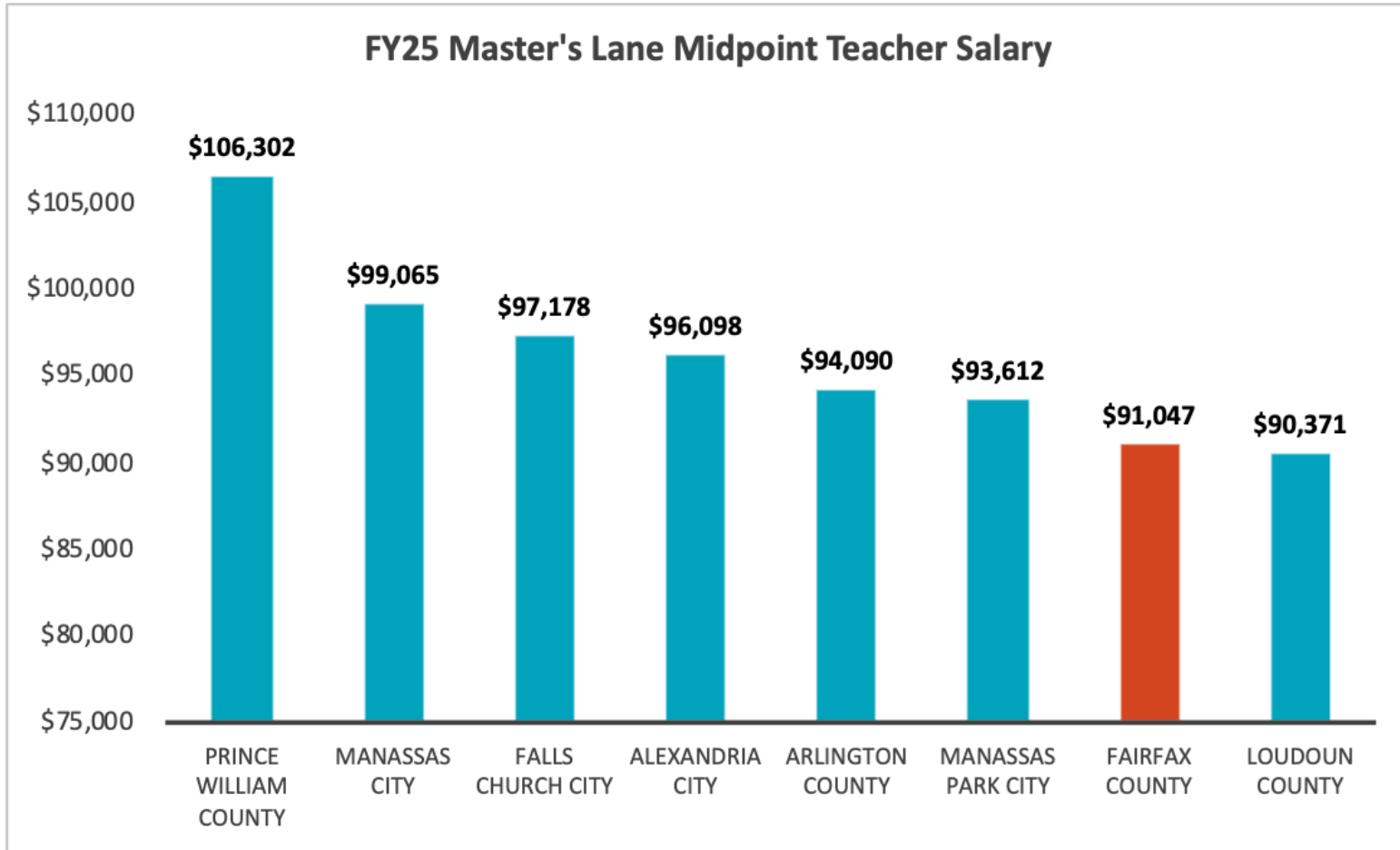
# COMPARING BEGINNING TEACHER SALARIES



- In FY25, FCPS ranks 5<sup>th</sup> of 8 with starting teacher salary on the Masters Lane
- After compensation increases included in the FY26 Proposed Budget, FCPS would likely rank 1<sup>st</sup> in starting teacher salary



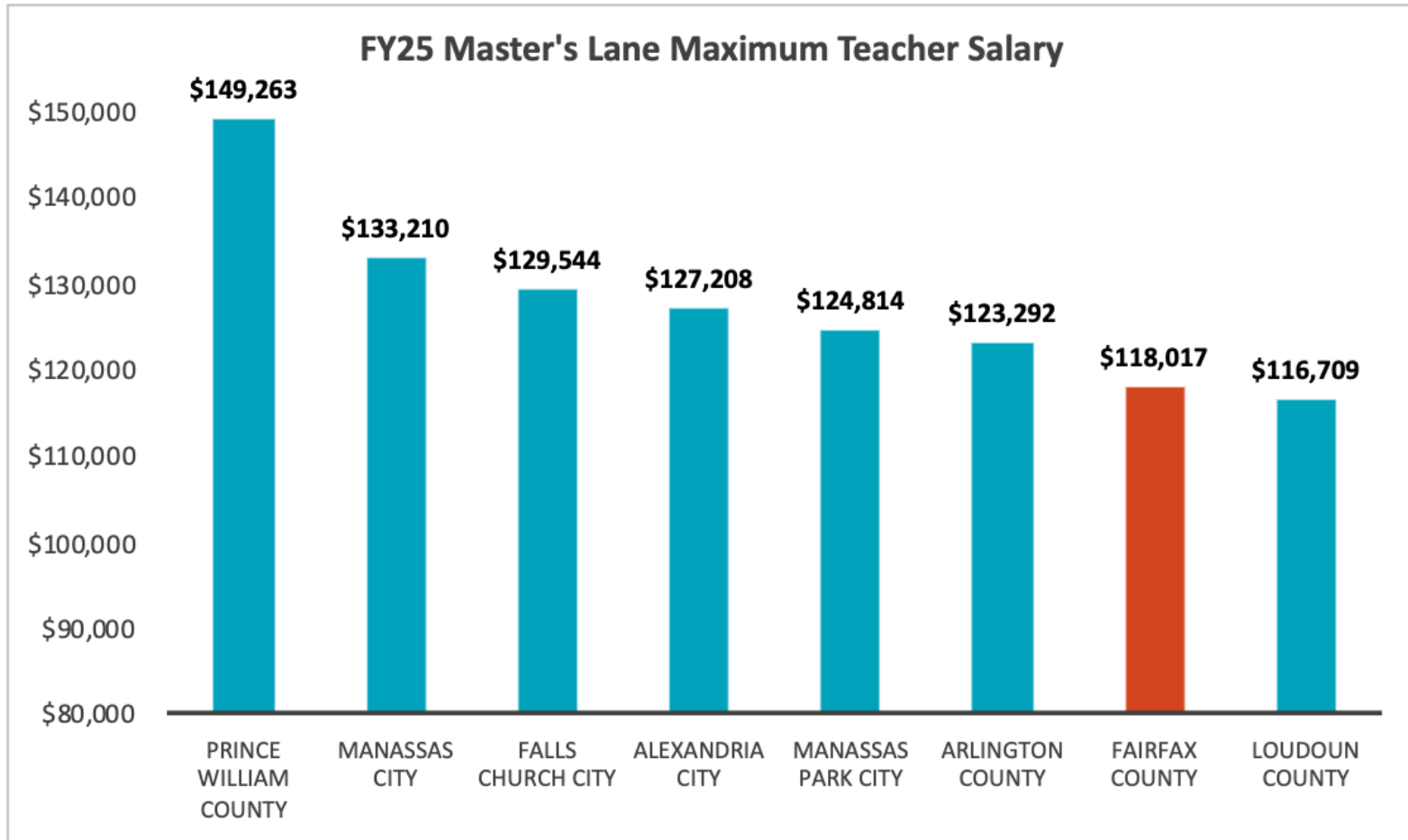
# COMPARING MIDPOINT TEACHER SALARIES



- In FY25, FCPS ranks 7<sup>th</sup> of 8 at midpoint for the Master's Lane
- After compensation increases included in the FY26 Proposed Budget, FCPS would likely rank 5<sup>th</sup> in teacher salaries at the midpoint



# COMPARING MAXIMUM TEACHER SALARIES



- FCPS ranks 7<sup>th</sup> of 8 at the maximum for the Master's Lane
- After compensation increases included in the FY26 Proposed Budget, FCPS would remain at rank 7<sup>th</sup> largely due to a lesser number of steps on the FCPS teacher salary scale when compared to other divisions.





## STRIVING FOR SMART SAVINGS

- Reductions would have a significant impact on student learning:
  - 93% of positions are school-based
  - Majority of ESSER III-funded initiatives totaling \$51.3 million in FY24 were cut or absorbed while post-pandemic needs persist
  - No new initiatives considered
  - The need for high quality instructional resources continues
  - Future savings in training and professional development will be realized due to our improvements in retention
- Baldrige Efficiency Review



# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2030



## GOALS

1. Strong Start: PreK-12
2. Safe, Supported, Included, and Empowered
3. Academic Growth and Excellence
4. Equitable Access and Opportunity
5. Leading for Tomorrow's Innovation

The Four Pillars identify what FCPS must do well to be able to reach our goals for all students.

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Differentiated &amp; Culturally Responsive Learning Environments</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>B</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vibrant Home, School, &amp; Community Partnerships</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>C</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Diverse, Adaptive, &amp; Supported Workforce</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>D</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Culture of Equity, Excellence, &amp; Accountability</b></p> |
|--|--|--|---|



## BUDGET PRIORITIES

- Providing competitive compensation for all employees
- Meeting the changing needs of Fairfax County's young people
- Empowering educators to provide differentiated services to students
- Continuing multiyear initiatives for students and staff





# BUDGET SUMMARY

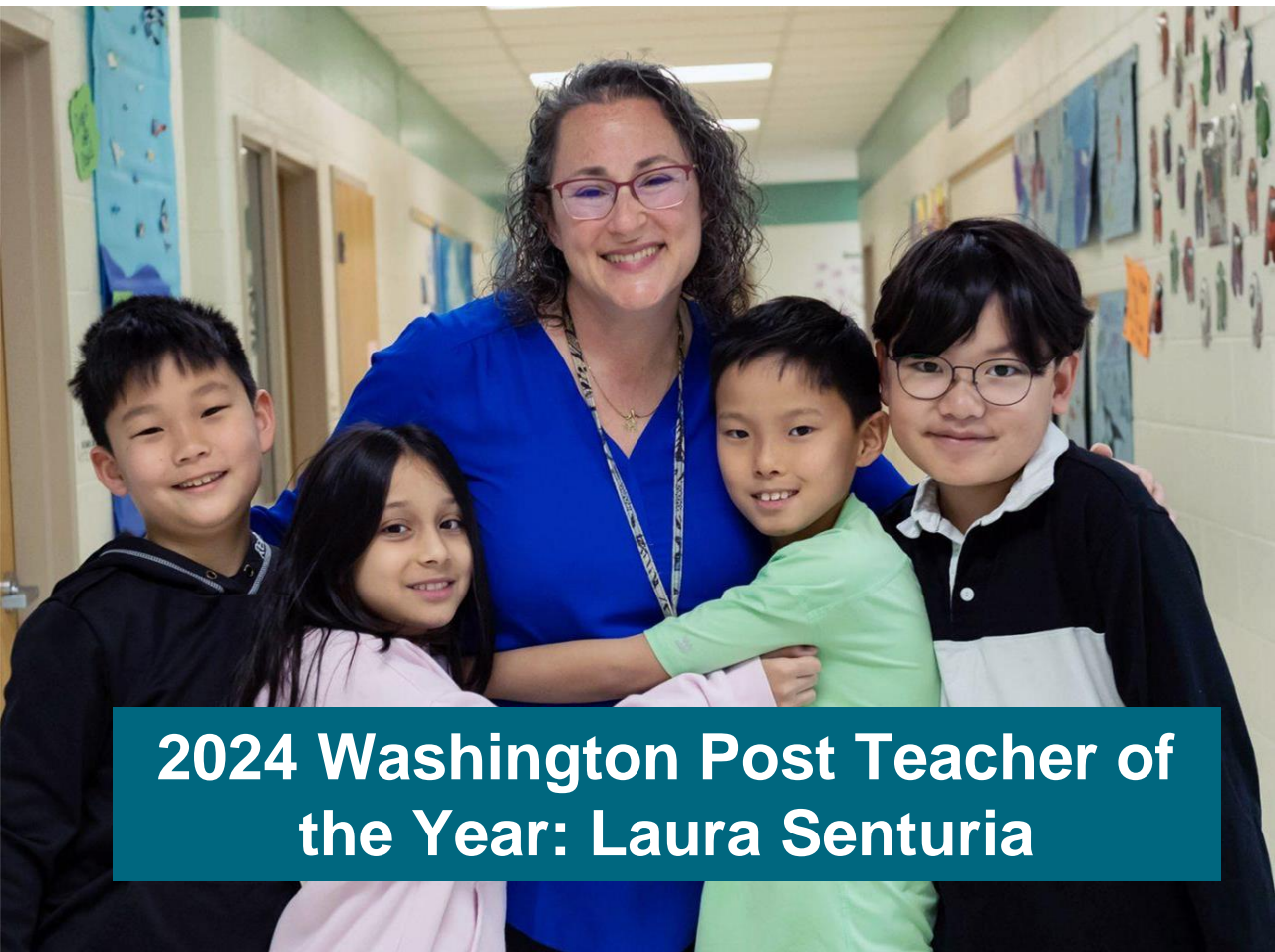
| FY26 SUMMARY                                 | CHANGE FROM FY25<br>(\$ in millions) |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| State Revenue                                | \$23.2                               |
| Federal Revenue                              | (\$1.0)                              |
| Beginning Balance and Other Revenue          | \$6.7                                |
| County Transfer Request                      | \$268.3                              |
| <b>Total FY26 Projected Revenue Increase</b> | <b>\$297.1</b>                       |
| Compensation                                 | \$213.7                              |
| Baseline Adjustments                         | \$65.2                               |
| Identified Investments                       | \$14.2                               |
| Multiyear Investments                        | \$4.0                                |
| <b>Total FY26 Expenditure Adjustments</b>    | <b>\$297.1</b>                       |

- The FY26 School Operating Fund budget totals \$4.0 billion, a net increase of \$297.1 million, or 7.9%, over the FY25 Approved Budget
- The county transfer request is an increase of \$268.3 million, or 10.4%, a slight decrease from last years requested percentage.





# PROVIDING COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION



| COMPENSATION ADJUSTMENTS*   | CHANGE FROM FY 2025 APPROVED |
|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Collective Bargaining (salaries and benefits)</b> - 7% compensation increase, transportation and food service salary enhancements, health rate changes | \$240.8 million              |
| <b>Retirement Rate Changes-</b><br>Retirement for FCERS and ERFC  | \$5.5 million                |
| <b>Base Savings</b> - Savings from turnover   | (\$32.6 million)             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$213.7 million</b>       |

*\*Based on the collective bargaining agreement, funding for Special Education Teacher Extended Day contracts will be prioritized at year-end*



## MEETING OUR COMMUNITY'S CHANGING NEEDS

| BASELINE ADJUSTMENTS   | CHANGE FROM FY25 APPROVED |
|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Baseline Adjustments</b> – Recurring baseline adjustments for substitute teacher incentive, middle school late buses, esports stipends, legal services, online campus, AP/IB test fees, workers compensation, and grant adjustments | \$23.6 million            |
| <b>Enrollment and Student Need</b> – Net impact of enrollment and changing student needs   | \$20.0 million            |
| <b>Transfers to Other Funds</b> – Funding for major infrastructure maintenance, continue support for enhanced summer school, and debt service  | \$12.9 million            |
| <b>Contractual Rate Increases</b> – Cost escalations, contracts, renewals, and leases  | \$8.6 million             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$65.2 million</b>     |







# CONTINUING MULTIYEAR INITIATIVES

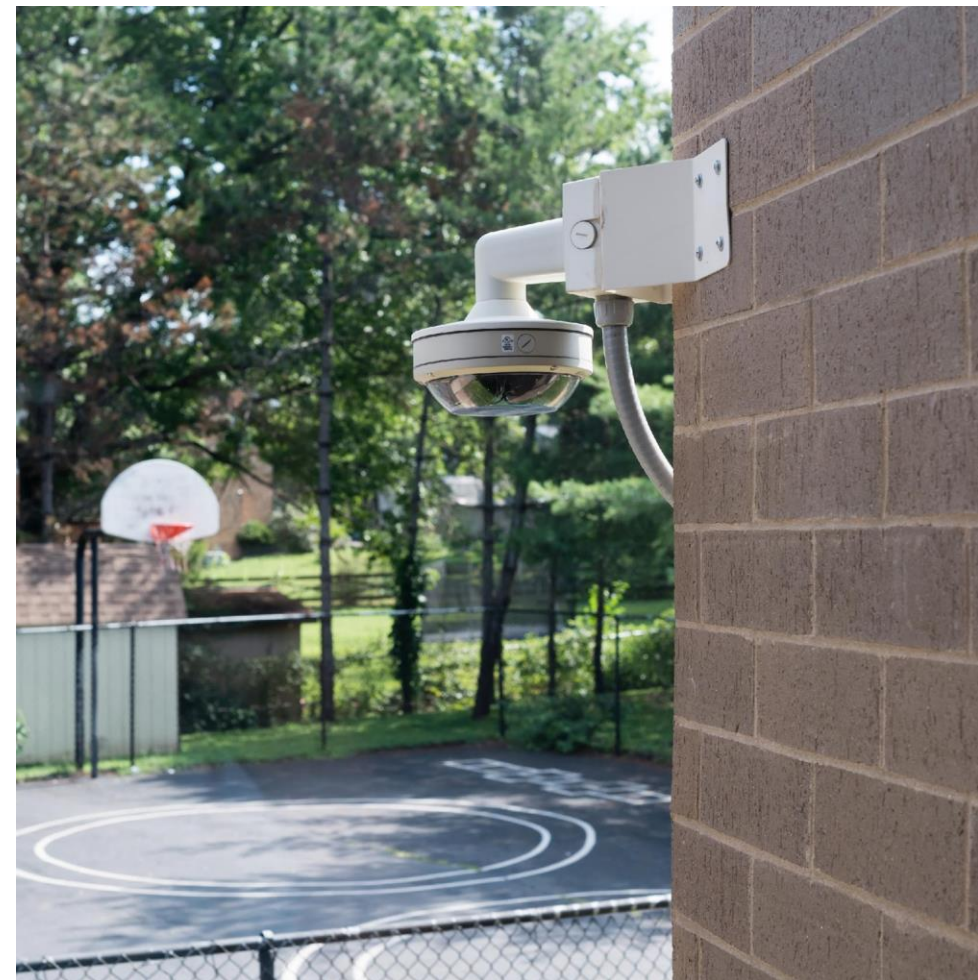


| MULTIYEAR INVESTMENTS   | CHANGE FROM FY25 APPROVED |
|---|---------------------------|
| <b>Inclusive Preschool Expansion</b> – Inclusive preschool initiative   | \$2.0 million             |
| <b>Human Capital Management (HCM) Project Year 4</b> – Ongoing subscription and support services of the Human Capital Management (HCM) project  | \$0.7 million             |
| <b>Fine and Performing Arts Stipends Year 3</b> – Expand fine and performing arts stipends for middle school theatre and musicals, high school one act plays, indoor drumline, and indoor color guard | \$0.7 million             |
| <b>Certified Athletic Trainers Year 3</b> – Funding to address the third year of a five-year plan to provide one additional certified athletic trainer at each of the 25 high schools                 | \$0.7 million             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$4.0 million</b>      |



# TARGETED INVESTMENTS

| IDENTIFIED INVESTMENTS  | CHANGE FROM FY25 APPROVED    |
|---|------------------------------|
| <p><b>Safety and Security</b> – Enhance safety and security in schools to include additional security cameras, Rap Back program, panic alert system, and security vestibules</p>    | <p>\$9.3 million</p>         |
| <p><b>Differentiated Learning Credentials</b> – Help better prepare teachers by providing credentials in the Universal Design for Learning and Multilingual Learner Initiatives</p> | <p>\$4.9 million</p>         |
| <p><b>TOTAL</b></p>   | <p><b>\$14.2 million</b></p> |







## FUNDING NEEDS NOT ADDRESSED

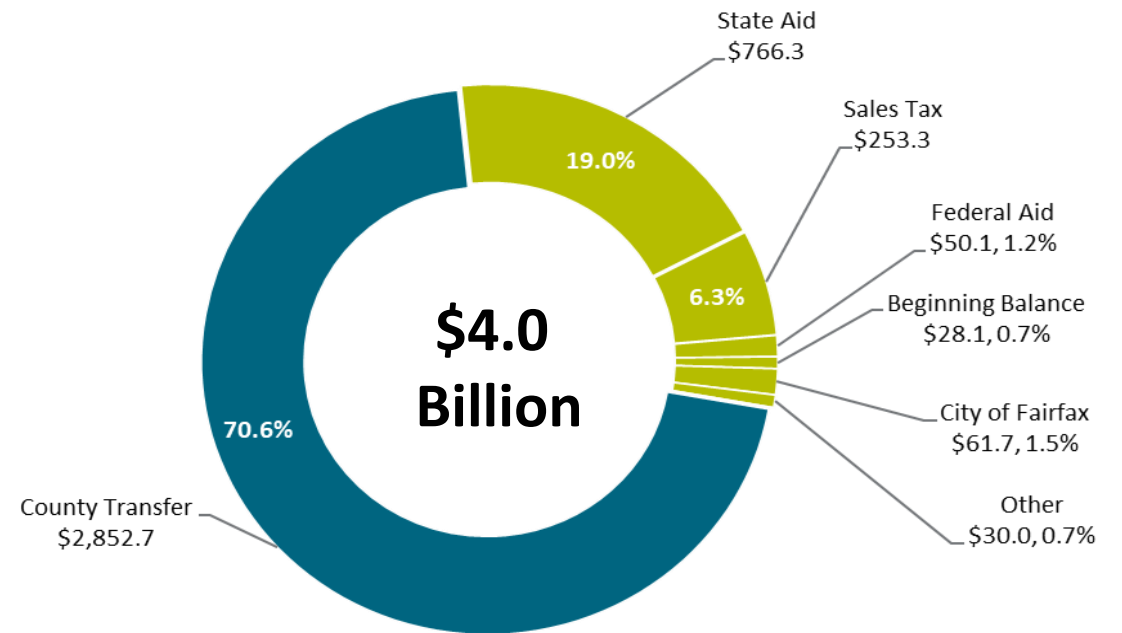
- Expansion of middle school sports
- Additional funding to accelerate addressing maintenance backlog
- Lower class sizes
- Middle school start times
- Electric buses



# REVENUE OVERVIEW

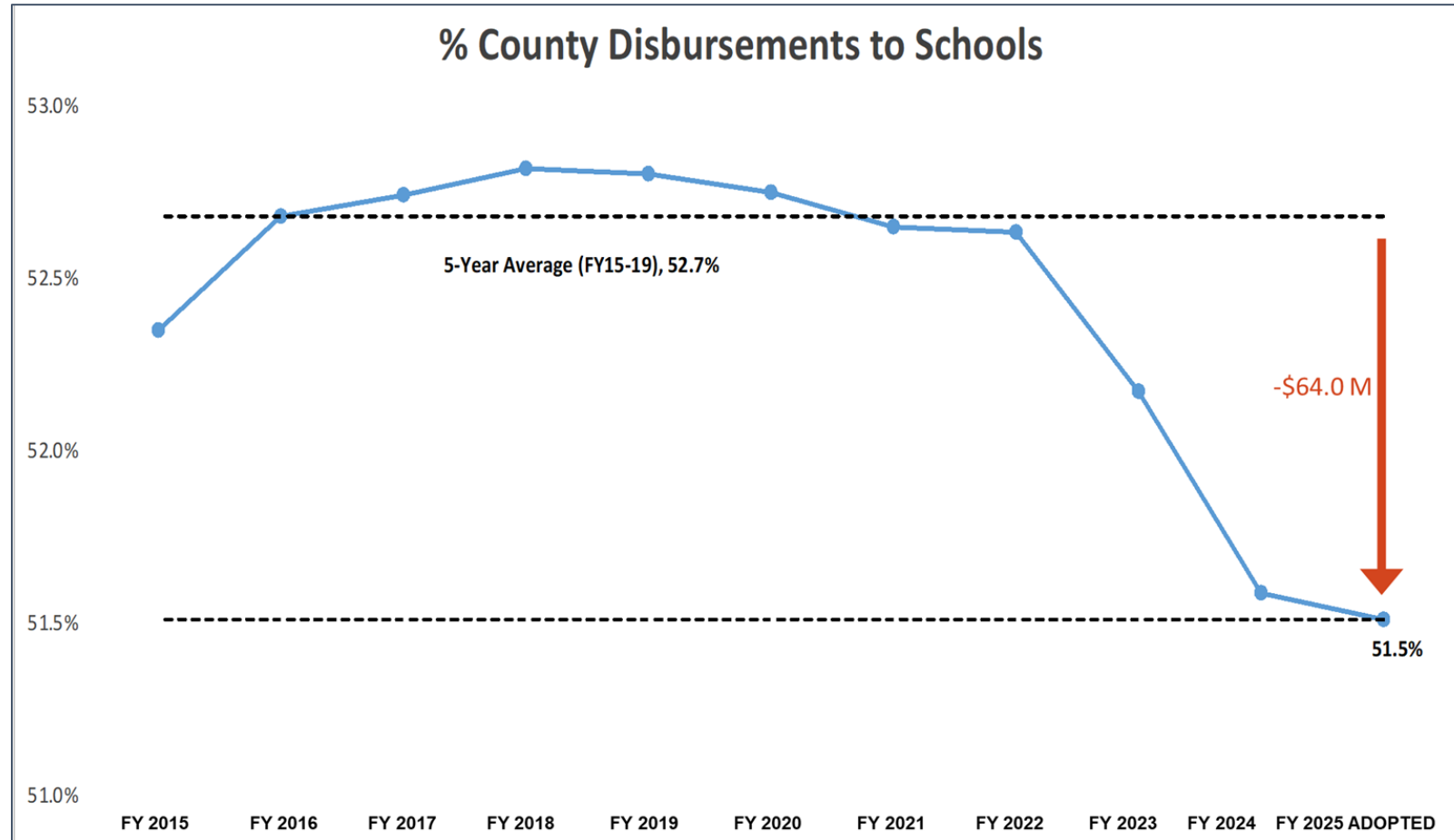
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**FY 2026 Proposed School Operating Fund**  
(\$ in millions)





# COUNTY TRANSFER HISTORY

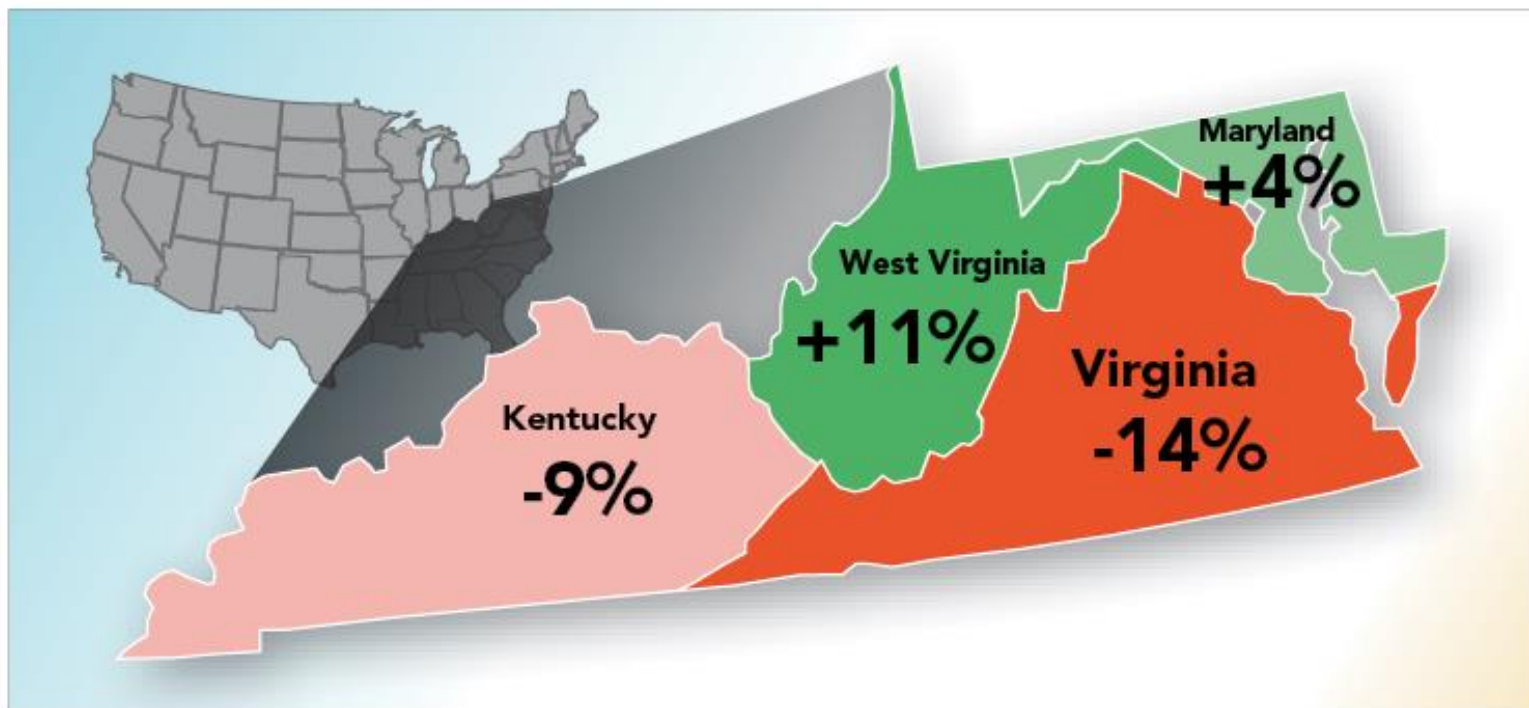


- If FCPS had been kept at the 5-year historical share (FY15-19) of 52.7 percent that would have resulted in \$64 million more in funding in FY25



## STATE FUNDING – JLARC

### State Funding per Student Compared to U.S. Average



- Virginia school divisions receive less funding per student than the 50-state average and the regional average
- Many of Virginia's neighboring states spend more per pupil, including West Virginia, Kentucky, and Maryland

Source: Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission's (JLARC) analysis of NCES data, adjusted for cost of labor





## STATE FUNDING – JLARC cont.

- The 2023 JLARC recommendations previously estimated FCPS is underfunded by \$568.7 million – approximately \$3,100 per student
- The Joint Subcommittee to Study Elementary and Secondary Education Funding held meetings on September 16, October 31, and December 9, 2024
- Recommendations from the December 9 meeting include:
  - Prioritize Near-Term JLARC Recommendations, specifically Recommendation 4 to eliminate or incrementally raise the support cap
  - Explore Options for Special Education — possibly a specified percent add-on to special education based on level of student need
  - Address Data and Infrastructure Needs for further work of the Joint Subcommittee in the 2025 Interim





## THRIVING SCHOOLS = ECONOMIC PROSPERITY



When FCPS thrives, so does Fairfax County.

High quality schools bring:

- New residents
- Better workforce development
- New businesses
- Increased opportunities for student upward mobility
- Increased property values
- Reduced social costs







## STAY INVOLVED

- Attend School Board meetings, watch meetings streamed via FCPS' website, or view archived videos of past meetings
- To speak at a School Board meeting, call 571-423-1075 or visit: [bit.ly/3PJz2fg](https://bit.ly/3PJz2fg)
- To speak at a Board of Supervisors public hearing, call 703-324-3151 or visit: [bit.ly/4hG0gzF](https://bit.ly/4hG0gzF)
- Testify on a bill – view the Virginia General Assembly guidelines: [bit.ly/4jrk4se](https://bit.ly/4jrk4se)
- For the latest budget information visit: [fcps.edu/budget](https://fcps.edu/budget)
- Find the latest information about the state budget: [bit.ly/40rRRIS](https://bit.ly/40rRRIS)



2024 Outstanding Principal  
Jamie Gadley



## NEXT STEPS

- School Board Work Session on February 4
- School Board will hold public hearings on:
  - February 4
  - February 5 (if needed)
- School Board Work Session on February 18
- School Board will hold budget work sessions throughout the budget development process
- School Board approves the FY 2026 Advertised Budget on February 20
- View the full budget calendar - <https://bit.ly/4gZ6lac>





TIME

Kid  
of the  
Year

2004  
WINNER

11-12 YEARS OLD  
1999-2003  
13-17 YEARS OLD  
2004-2008  
18 YEARS OLD  
2009-2013





Fairfax County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ENGAGE • INSPIRE • THRIVE®