

**FY 2021 Budget Questions - Group 5**  
**March 5, 2020**

1. What will the \$4 million be used for with digital equity? (Jessie)

**Response:** Currently, our limited access to high-quality, authentic resources is negatively impacting our students, hindering their opportunities to develop and apply twenty-first century skills, including communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Currently more than 40,000 devices in PWCS are older than 5 years and the current funding levels only slow the total number of devices aging but does not help schools get adequate numbers of modern tools. To continue with our annual computer, refresh and ensure all PWCS students have equitable access to quality, authentic resources at home and school, implementing a four-year digital equity initiative would positively impact and prepare our students for their futures. The digital equity initiative goal is to move toward one-to-one devices in grades 3-12, and one device to three students in grades K-2 that schools could augment to get to 1:1. This initiative would not only positively impact our economically disadvantaged students, but will help bridge the digital inequities across the Division. Implementing equitable digital access to technology would also empower teachers to design authentic learning experiences that best serve all students, especially students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency. This funding will be used to purchase the maximum number of devices possible and provide some professional development support to move schools toward this vision. Its also important to note that having digital equity would allow instruction to continue virtually in a crisis that closed schools for an extended period of time.

2. Does there need to be a K-12 study on homework, standards based, etc.? (Jessie)

**Response:** This one-time funding would cover contracted work to conduct surveys with parents, staff, and students about the consistency of implementation of regulations across schools in the areas of homework (both in general and assignments over breaks), standards-based grading, and testing/assessment. The Office of Accountability would be responsible for identifying and selecting the outside companies used to contract this work as well as to serve as a liaison with the selected company to provide information and context for survey development. The funds would be used to pay for the surveys as well as reports/presentations of the findings.

3. What will \$665,000 be used for with special education audit recommendations? (Jessie)

**Response:**

Funding request from the Comprehensive Review for Special Education PreK-12 (April 2018) These items were requested as part of the Critical Needs process:

- Multi-tiered Systems of Supports 5 FTE Psychologists \$535,219
- Additional funding for Hearing and Vision programs \$100,000 (recurring cost) for necessary equipment and devices

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4. Increase support for pool? Pool is supposed to be self-sufficient (Jessie)

**Response:**

a. Breakdown of Aquatics Center revenue from FY19:

<b>FY2019 Aquatics Center Revenue</b>			
<b>Rev Name</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>General Fund Support</b>	<b>Aquatics Center Generated</b>
AQUATICS ADMISSION	43,309.03		43,309.03
AQUATICS LESSONS	285,395.25	174,272.00	111,123.25
AQUATICS MEMBERSHIP	14,908.32		14,908.32
CONCESSIONS REVENUE	2,798.37		2,798.37
FACILITIES USE RENT	385,906.67	59,145.00	326,761.67
GASB31 ADJ	779.09		779.09
INTEREST INCOME	2,043.65		2,043.65
LIFE GUARD CLASS REVENUE	15,729.00		15,729.00
MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT	(2,970.74)		(2,970.74)
MERCHANDISE SALES	3,089.00		3,089.00
OTHER MISC REVENUE	8,418.93		8,418.93
TRANSFER FROM GENERAL FUND	400,000.00	400,000.00	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,159,406.57</b>	<b>633,417.00</b>	<b>525,989.57</b>

b. The percentage of our revenue from the General Fund was 54.6%.

c. The \$450K is in part to support the costs associated with the use of the Aquatics Center for School Division supported activities including (1) operating the Water Safety Program (where elementary school students learn basic water safety to prevent drowning and promote a healthy respect for and confidence in the water) and (2) the use of the Aquatics Center by high school swim and dive teams. The use of the facility for these two programs takes the Aquatics Center “off-line” for other uses for many hours throughout the day for which other types of self-supporting revenue could be generated. A portion of the funds being allocated are appropriated in the General Fund to cover the costs associated for the use of the pool by the elementary schools and swim teams. These costs are charged to the schools at year-end. As well, budget authority is provided to the schools to offset the costs. Hence, there is no reduction of funding provided to the schools for other programs.

d. Efforts to make the Aquatics Center to be more self-sufficient and generate more of its own revenue

Self-sufficiency of the Aquatics Center was always intended for the public use of the facility and not School Division activities. We are exploring many avenues to generate more revenue from public use of the facility. In addition to the traditional revenue sources of admissions, memberships, facility rentals, and swim lessons, we also do the following:

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- 1) Sell advertising space for banners on the walls of the facility, our scoreboard, and our website
- 2) Sell merchandise (goggles, nose clips, shampoo/conditioner) at our front desk
- 3) Sell concessions during swim meets

Generating more revenue is a challenge. We commit the largest share of our time and space at the Aquatics Center to support our core mission to meet the needs of our students and student athletes first, followed by the broader needs of our community. To be specific, our resources prioritize the second-grade learn-to-swim program (Water Safety School) and the high school swim and dive teams. We have worked hard to develop a good programming mix that provides as much access to as many of our end users as possible, but we simply cannot satisfy the demand for more pool space. Our rates for rentals, admissions, and swim lessons are commiserate with other facilities in the area, so a large increase in those fees would certainly reduce demand.

The two most profitable areas of our operations are facility rentals (particularly private swim meets) and community swim lessons. Increasing private rentals is constrained by our commitment to the high school swim & dive teams. Our community swim lesson program space is limited, once we have allocated space to the swim team rentals for practice and space for the general public.

5. One-time finding for CTE computers, a lot of money, needed, but can they look elsewhere for cost savings. (Jessie)

**Response:** The CTE computer funding in the proposed budget is the amount of funding that is necessary to shift the cost of replacing CTE business lab computer refreshes from the Perkins grant account that we have historically used to fund these refreshes to the Technology Improvement Plan. This shift places the funding responsibility on the Division while allowing the Division to utilize the Perkins funds to improve our existing CTE programs with replacement/modernized equipment and to support our efforts to fund the development and launch of new programs.

6. [Provide] justification for another attorney and legal assistant? Really needed? (Jessie)

**Response** See below, excerpted from the Office's Five-Year Plan as requested by the School Board.

**Objective:** To create a multi-level legal team within the Office of Division Counsel capable of meeting the diverse and growing legal needs of a growing "world-class" school division in the most cost-efficient manner possible.

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**Rationale:** It remains a challenge for the Office of Division Counsel, which transitioned in 2018 from one attorney and executive assistant, to two attorneys and two executive assistants, to meet the significant legal needs of PWCS. (In contrast, the Office of the County Attorney has over 16 attorneys, multiple paralegals, and extensive secretarial/executive assistant support, although PWCS is the largest employer in the County with over 11,000 employees, 100 schools/sites, and 90,000 students). As the second largest school division in Virginia, the Division's legal needs continue to increase in complexity and volume over time. In order to reduce reliance on outside counsel and related legal fees, and to expedite legal services and minimize liability, it is imperative that the Office of Division Counsel evolve over the next five years to:

- (1) Employ in-house attorneys with the requisite expertise to handle one or more of the following specialties:
  - (a) contracts, finance, procurement, copyright, technology and business matters;
  - (b) the increasing variety and volume of issues in the area of employment law; and
  - (c) property, real estate, and construction law; and
- (2) Utilize support staff more effectively in a paralegal and management role, in addition to administrative/clerical functions.

**FY 2020-21 Recommendations:**

**As part of the annual budget process, it is recommended that the School Board:**

- Retain a third attorney, preferably with expertise in contracts, finance, procurement, technology and related business matters
- Initiate a reclassification of the Office's most experienced executive assistant to that of an administrative coordinator/paralegal in order to perform paralegal tasks currently provided by outside legal firms (at significantly higher hourly rates), and to reflect the management and supervisory role which this assistant currently plays, and which continues to expand (i.e., support of outside counsel; training of executive assistants; supervision and training of law clerks and legal interns; financial record-keeping, which includes budget management and preparation; assistance in the preparation of legal training and presentations for PWCS staff, i.e. Title IX, FERPA, FLSA, Non-discrimination and harassment laws, FOIA, etc.).
- Assuming the reclassification of the executive assistant to Division Counsel to an administrative coordinator/paralegal, retain another clerical assistant to perform the clerical duties previously performed by the executive assistant to Division Counsel and to support a third attorney and outside counsel. This position would also provide clerical support for all three attorneys and manage and coordinate their calendars and work responsibilities.

7. Does the new proposed budget continue the current usage [of the tracks] at Colgan and Forest Park for the 2020-21 school year? (Jessie)

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**Response:** The pilot has no end date.

8. [Please describe] "how to rectify the number of concerns about Stonewall's unique needs and/or budget inequities"? (Jackson)

**Response:**

The current budget process considers several factors related to any given student body to address equity of funding. Some examples of this would be economically disadvantaged funding, English language learners, students with special needs, and gifted students. Each of these categories of students generate additional funding streams to the school they attend.

From September 2016 through December 2018, the School Board-appointed "Infrastructure Task Force" (ITF) reviewed older schools to identify inequities compared to newer schools. The ITF made several recommendations on specific areas that require attention to resolve some of those differences. The School Division has utilized these recommendations as guidance for how to best address inequitable needs at Stonewall Jackson High School, and other older schools as well.

Since the ITF made their recommendations, the following projects have been completed or are in progress at Stonewall Jackson HS as part of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP):

- Secure entrance \$111k;
- Press Box Steps Replacement \$36k;
- Shed Repairs \$3.5k;
- Press Box Repairs \$6k;
- Concession repairs \$8k;
- Exterior Gym Door x16 \$56k;
- School Front Doors \$100k;
- Library carpeting;
- Landscaping \$2.7k;
- Turf field, track, scoreboard, storage building, stadium lighting (LED), 2019, \$1.5M;

Additionally, there are a number of planned projects that are upcoming at SJHS:

- Stage Floor replacement \$60k,
- Ticket booth Roof Replacement \$5k,
- Various interior door replacements \$100k;
- Replace kitchen sewer line \$25k;
- Office Admin Renovation, 2021, \$1.0M;
- Concession Building, 2019-20;
- 14Yr Renewal - 2021, \$196k;

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- Tennis court lights, 2022, \$300k;
- Fenestration Improvements (windows), 2022, \$12.8M;

Students at Stonewall Jackson HS will also benefit from increases in economically disadvantaged funding in FY 2021 as well as additional funding for CTE programs. The FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan includes fenestration at Stonewall Jackson HS and three other older high schools which proposes to add better natural lighting to the older school buildings creating a more productive and positive learning environment.

The School Division is committed to reducing the inequities between older schools and newer schools in Prince William County. We have designed, executed, and planned many projects at older schools to work towards that goal, and will continue to do so.

9. There are 40 elementary schools, 9 middle schools, and 6 high schools that have 35% or higher economically disadvantaged population. But there are 27 elementary, 3 middle, and 1 high schools enrolled in Title 1. If we enrolled more schools, wouldn't we receive more federal funding? (Citizen)

**Response:** Title I is a formula grant awarded to the Division. Title I funds are awarded by the state using PWCS census numbers taken from the annual September 30 counts of students who are identified as receiving free and reduced lunch. Our Division is charged with developing a formula for allocating Title I funds by considering the rank order of schools by level of poverty and relative size of the student body served. We concentrate funding at the elementary level as is commonly done to intensify the effects of early intervention in supporting students in poverty. We are required to provide Title I support and serve any and all schools that reach the 75% economically disadvantaged level. Funding all schools above the 35% economically disadvantaged threshold based on our current grant allocation, would mean that schools at higher poverty percentages would get less Title I funding, making it extremely difficult to implement high quality programs that effectively support the learning needs of the students in poverty. Serving more schools would not result in an increase in federal funding.

Questions #10-22 were asked by School Board members at the Budget Work Session on February 26, 2020.

10. What would the cost be to give Special Education TAs a 12% raise versus a 2% raise? (Wilk)

**Response:** A 12% increase in pay for Temporary Teaching Assistants (TAs) assigned to deliver special education services to our students would increase the rate of pay from \$13.00 to \$14.56 per hour. The increase in cost (based on FY19 hours worked) would be an additional \$278,100 over and above FY19 costs.

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11. What's the impact of special education TAs going to same rate as certified teacher subs.?  
(Wilk)

**Response:** "Impact":

- Given the number of absences and shortage of subs, PWCS (like other divisions) is having a hard time filling both teacher and teacher assistant absences. If Temporary Teaching Assistants (TAs) assigned to deliver special education services were paid the same amount as Substitute Teachers, substitutes may be less inclined to accept a substitute teacher position.
- The teacher position requires more responsibility, instructing students, managing the classroom, etc. If the substitute teacher pay was the same as that of the teacher assistant, we would anticipate fewer substitutes would want to accept a Special Education "Teacher" assignment (which are more critical).
- Some of our centrally funded TAs assigned to deliver special education services to our students (which is the majority of our TAs) are limited by the amount of funding in our grants. The more we pay each TA, means the less TAs our Division can employ from this funding source.

12. What is the cost to hire five additional reading specialists? (Wilk)

**Response:** The cost (salary and benefits) to hire five additional reading specialists is \$468,055 (5 x \$93,611= \$468,055).

13. What are the findings about booster club revenue from the annual financial reports they submit? (Williams)

**Response:** Using Hylton High School as an average high school, over \$40,000 was raised.

14. Where did Arena Stage funds come from before Destination Dance? (Williams)

**Response:** For the past three years, the Division has supported schools with attendance at Arena Stage with an allocation provided to Student Learning specifically for dance. Absent that funding, the cost would be paid by schools through their per pupil allocations or other funding sources.

15. What would be the cost of increasing the pay rate for substitutes - consider 4.8% pay increase? (Lateef)

**Response:** If all substitute and TA positions were to be increased by 4.8% over current pay rates the cost would be **\$622,160** with FICA (based on FY19 hours worked).

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16. Digital equity is identified as one-time funding. What is the funding obligation moving forward with digital equity? (Wilk)(Lateef)

**Response:** Currently, our limited access to high-quality, authentic resources is negatively impacting our students, hindering their opportunities to develop and apply twenty-first century skills, including communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Currently more than 40,000 devices in PWCS are older than 5 years and the current funding levels only slow the total number of devices aging but does not help schools get adequate numbers of modern tools. To ensure all PWCS students have equitable access to quality, authentic resources at home and school, implementing a four-year digital equity initiative would positively impact and prepare our students for their futures. The digital equity initiative goal is to move toward one-to-one devices in grades 3-12, and one device to three students in grades K-2 that schools could augment to get to 1:1. This initiative would not only positively impact our economically disadvantaged students, but will help bridge the digital inequities across the Division. Implementing equitable digital access to technology would also empower teachers to design authentic learning experiences that best serve all students, especially students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency. This funding will be used to purchase the maximum number of devices possible and provide some professional development support to move schools toward this vision. The funding chart from the Technology Improvement Plan presented to the School Board and shown on page 8 outlines the funding strategy to achieve this plan as efficiently and effectively as possible, the second chart on page 8 shows what will occur with no additional funding beyond the state funding received annually. Its also important to note that having digital equity would allow instruction to continue virtually in a crisis that closed schools for an extended period of time.

Additional Questions on Digital Equity from School Board members.

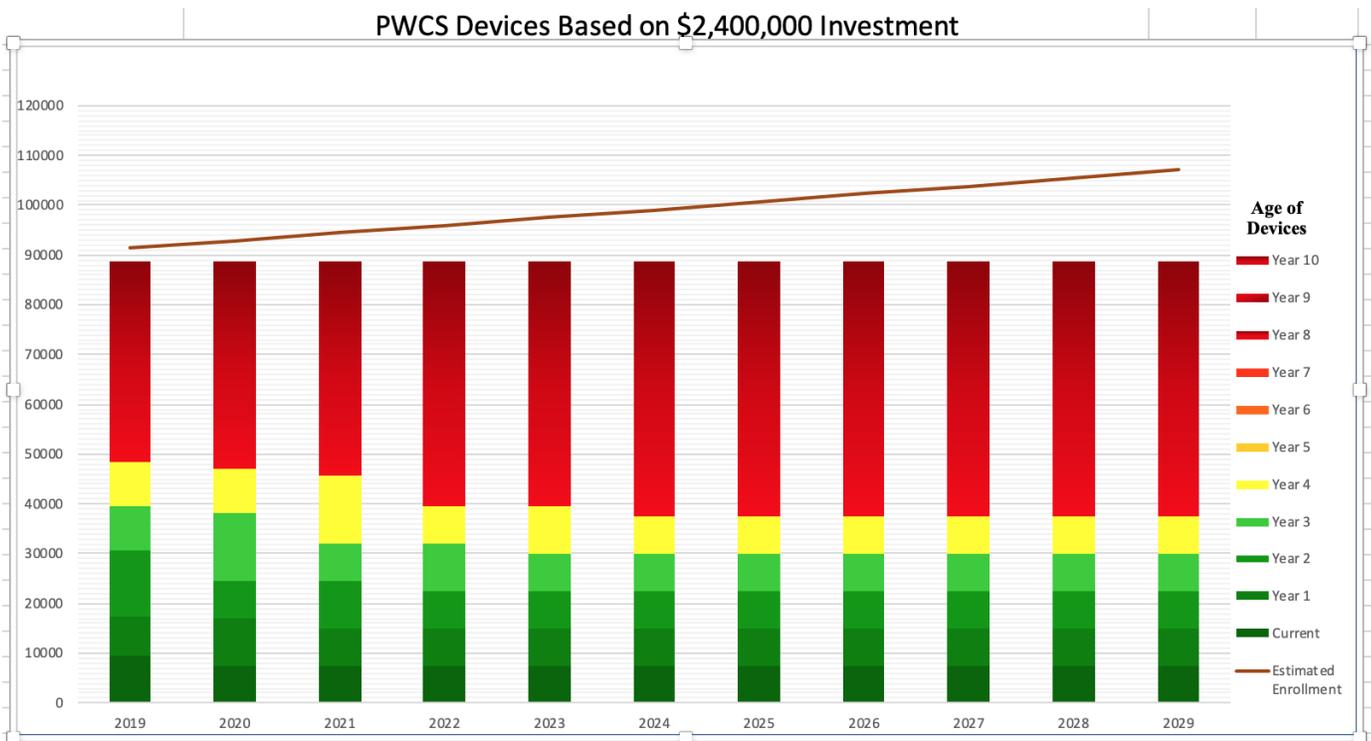
17. How much savings would occur if we opted to start scaling it into the middle schools with 6th grade only? (Wilk)

**Response:** If Digital Equity funding is reduced, the cost savings comes from deferring refresh or reducing computer numbers over time; however, the plan as outlined could not be achieved. If this funding is re-appropriated, then the cost is pushed back to the schools to cover from their allocation to either replace dying equipment and/or fewer devices will be available for student use (as the enrollment will go up and devices will continue to age). The primary usefulness of devices is four years, they become difficult to support, slower and less reliable beyond that. (see chart page 8 if only funding used is the state VPSA annual grant). The funding plan outlined in the Technology Improvement Plan is the minimum support necessary to achieve Digital Equity and achieve a refresh every four years (1:1 for grades 3-12 and 3:1 for grades K-2).

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<b>Digital Equity</b>					
	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24</b>
*August 2020 Pilot School Rollout	\$2,429,500				
*Fall 2020 Pilot School Rollout		\$2,125,800			
*August 2021 Middle School Rollout		\$2,125,800			
*August 2022 Rollout			\$6,216,400		
*August 2023 Rollout				\$5,823,550	
*August 2024 Rollout					\$2,936,199
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,429,500</b>	<b>\$4,251,601</b>	<b>\$6,216,400</b>	<b>\$5,823,550</b>	<b>\$2,936,199</b>

*\*Notes: Includes refresh for staff computers.*



18. Baseline adjustments to the budget must include computer refresh efforts. Are there no monies dedicated for this already? If not? Why not? (Lateef)

**Response:** The dedicated funding for student technology comes primarily via approximately \$2.4 million annual funding from Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA). This has been typically supplemented with year-end funds that have varied over time, in the past three years they were approximately \$3-4 million each year. The year-end

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funds, when available, were especially used during a decade of tight budgets as one-time funding is best used when it can purchase a specific need (computer) vs. a need that must be funded annually on an ongoing basis (staff). Most funding for technology has come from site-based decisions where principals have made the decision to prioritize funding for technology for students from within their allocations, this capacity varies by school allocation.

19. Can we see the breakdown of need by school to get to 1:1? (Williams)

**Response:** The charts in Attachment I show the percentage of new devices needed, as a percentage of the student enrollment, in order to provide a PWCS supported laptop or tablet less than five years old to each student for their individual use. For example, Chris Yung Elementary requires new devices (laptop or tablet) equal to 86.18% of their enrollment to achieve the 1:1 vision and Gar-Field High School requires new devices equal to 89% of their enrollment to get to 1:1. Those schools listed with negative percentages already have beyond 1:1 in grades 3-5 (some have 1:1 in all grades K-5 for example).

20. I have spoken to a number of teachers who already have class sets for their classrooms. The issue I'm hearing is the class set is capped at 30, but many high school teachers have 33-35 kids. Will this budget item help increase what we define as a class set of 1:1 devices for existing teacher needs? (Wilk)

**Response:** The Digital Equity plan we have outlined will provide a device assigned specifically to each student for their individual use for the school year for grades 3-12, once fully implemented. Grades K-2 will be funded at a 1:3 ratio, that schools could augment to get to 1:1 if desired. There is no division cap on class sets of computers.

Questions #21-25 were submitted by School Board member Adele Jackson.

21. As of today, how many TAs are working as 'temp' hire? (Jackson)

**Response:** 261 Temp TAs have been employed this year:

- Special Education TAs - School funded – 43
- Special Education TAs - Central funded – 148
- General Education TAs – 70

22. Currently, how many full-time TA positions does PWCS employ? (Jackson)

**Response:** We currently have 712 full time Teaching Assistants and 92 library media assistants.

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23. How do these numbers compare to other counties, specifically Loudoun and Fairfax?  
(Jackson)

**Response:**

Loudoun County reports employing 1,514.3 FTE Teaching Assistants from operating and grant funds in FY20.

Fairfax County reports employing 2,782.7 FTE Teaching Assistants from operating and grant funds in FY20.

As a reminder, Loudoun and Fairfax counties have substantially higher cost per pupil amounts making the higher numbers possible.

24. For TAs who are hired full-time, what step do they start at if they have been working for the county as a temp TA? (Jackson)

**Response:** There is not a set entry step for employees. Each employee's work history is evaluated and each employee is placed on the salary scale based upon full-time equivalent experience relevant to the respective position.

25. What is the class size, student-teacher ratio, student-TA ratio in other counties in self-contained classrooms, specifically Loudoun and Fairfax? I am inquiring for a comparison of staffing ratio both in a special education classroom, and, if possible, a general education classroom with special education support. (Jackson)

**Response:** Please refer to chart on page 12. Add cost per pupil to page 12

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<b>Number of Teaching Assistants/Paraprofessionals/ Instructional Assistants in Small Group/Self Contained Classes in Region 4 Divisions</b>		
<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>Per Pupil Amount*</b>	<b>STAFFING/COMMENTS</b>
Prince William	\$11,875	1 Teaching Assistant (8 students in autism and ID Severe/ 10 students in all others)  Use of temporary hourly special education teaching assistants (314 small classes, 192.5 temps approved but not all positions able to fill)
Alexandria	\$18,136	2 paraprofessionals (6 students maximum in autism/ 8 in others)
Arlington	\$19,921	2 paraprofessionals (6 students maximum)
Culpeper		3 paraeducators (MD/Autism) 2 paraeducators (ED classes)
Fairfax	\$16,043	3 Instructional Assistants (6 students maximum autism)  2 Instructional Assistants (Non-cat and ID)
Falls Church City	\$19,482	2-3 Instructional Assistants
Loudoun County	\$15,241	Information Requested – Not Available at This Time
Manassas Park	\$11,663	3 Teaching Assistants
Manassas City	\$13,581	2 Instructional Assistants (Autism and Multiple Disabilities) 1 Instructional Assistant (Multi Categorical)
Shenandoah		4 paraprofessionals (Autism and MD classes) 3 paraprofessionals:3 Students (in particularly challenging classes) 3 paraprofessionals:8 students (MD classes)
Stafford		Up to 4 paraprofessionals (MD classes) 3 paraprofessionals (autism and behavioral support classrooms) 2 paraprofessionals (all other classes)

\*Source The Washington Area Boards of Education, FY 2020 WABE Guide

Questions #26 and #27 were submitted by School Board member Lisa Zargarpur.

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26. What kind of interest rate does PWCS pay for the bonds? Can those be renegotiated when interest rates go down? (Zargarpur)

**Response:** Bond refinancings or “refundings” are used by state and local governments to achieve debt service savings on outstanding bonds by reducing interest rates. Prince William County refunds bonds to achieve reduced interest costs when, with the collaboration of their financial advisors, the present value of savings achieves the levels that make the refunding a logical action to take.

The County has refunded debt frequently in the last several years. As we prepare for the next debt sales in the coming spring, we will be assessing the opportunities to refund outstanding debt.

27. Does PWCS have a plan for if this virus shuts us down or the falling stock market plunges further? How might it affect the budget for next year? (Zargarpur)

**Response:** A team of staff members representing every area in the PWCS organization has developed an action plan related to the coronavirus. The financial impacts of this period of uncertainty are no different than any other period of uncertainty. The markets may become volatile but the markets (DJIA, NYSE, NASDAQ, S&P 500, others) are only one measure of economic health. Revenues to the Division are primarily a function of County revenue that is made up of real property tax, and state revenues. These revenue streams are not directly impacted by market volatility.

Questions #28-30 were submitted by School Board member Justin Wilk.

28. How much would it cost the school division to turn the parent resource center position into a full-time position? (Wilk)

**Response:** The parent resource position is a .67 FTE grade 4, 200-day employee. The cost to turn this position into a 1.0 FTE is \$ 13,589.66

29. How much would it cost the school division to turn the .5 military support specialist into a full-time position? (Wilk)

**Response:** The Military Connected Specialist position is funded by a Department of Defense Education Association (DODEA) grant. The current grant cycle funds a .5 position. We are looking to pursue another grant opportunity which may lead to this becoming a full time grant funded position. This position is a grade 13 250-day position. The cost of .5 FTE is \$68,196

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30. How would the school division determine how the 50 additional TAs are distributed throughout the school system? Would a priority be self-contained ED classrooms? Autism classrooms? Please describe. (Wilk)

**Response:** The Office of Special Education will be responsible for allocating these positions in much the same way they do currently for temporary TAs. That is, they will allocate positions (not dollars) to the schools that have the most need. This allocation will be determined by the Director of Special Education in consultation with the Associate Superintendent.