BOARD AGENDA ITEM

May 28, 2024

SUBJECT:

2024 – 2025 Budget – Second/Final Reading

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In its 2024 – 2025 budget calendar, the Board scheduled presentations of the First Reading of the budget for April 23, 2024, and the Second & Final Reading for May 28, 2024.

In advance of the First Reading, a budget work study was conducted on April 16, 2024. A budget hearing was held during the May 14, 2024, Board meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The Second/Final Reading of the Superintendent's proposed budget is presented for Board discussion and consideration. Many estimates are based on the Senate version of the 2024 – 2025 general appropriations bill, the most up-to-date information available from the SC Department of Education. The State is not expected to finalize its budget until mid-to-late June; we will not have final State projections prior to our final 2023 – 2024 School Board meeting. As result, the Administration could possibly bring forth budget amendments sometime after the State of the new year, if necessary.

Key components of the District's proposed General Fund budget include:

- step increase for all eligible employees,
- a teacher scale COLA with teacher cell amounts varying by degree: $3,250 for Bachelors, $2,500 for Bachelors + 18, $2,250 for Masters, $2,000 for Masters + 30, and $1,750 for Doctorate. Teacher-like positions' COLA is based on the Masters amount in proportion to 190 days for the full amount,
- bus driver pay scale increases in accordance with State requirements for 2024 – 2025 (based on the Senate Finance version of the budget),
- State health and retirement increases,
- increased utilities budgets for energy, water, and sewer,
- increased budget for school resource officers,
- increased budget for custodial supplies,
- budget increase for the new website,
- absorption of CERDEP and literacy/instructional coach funding shortfalls,
- the shift of 9 ESSER-funded positions to the General Fund,
- funding for the SOAR program,
- increased debt service related to the ABM project,

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- the shift of Areas 1 and 3 lawn maintenance from a contracted service to newly-employed lawn crew in the maintenance department,
- no COLA for non-teachers,
- a non-recurring bonus to offset the lack of a non-teacher COLA, equal to $1,000 for employees making less than $50,000 in base salary or 2% (on an employee's base salary) for employees making greater than $50,000; individuals in teacher and teacher-like positions who were topped out going into 2024 – 2025 are also beneficiaries,
- no funding for 2024 – 2025 intersession,
- no additional step on the teacher scale,
- restoration of the $265,000 budgeted for contracted athletic trainers, the same about budgeted in FY 24,
- increased State revenue for State Aid to Classrooms, Retiree Insurance, and Tier 3/Act 388, and
- increased property tax revenue results from growth only with no tax increase.

The proposed General Fund budget totals $262,569,824 and includes $1,864,744 in use of fund balance to cover the cost of the non-recurring bonus for non-teachers. Budgets for the Special Revenue Fund, EIA Fund, Debt Service Fund, and Capital Projects Fund are also presented for Board review.

This budget packet includes the proposed 2024 – 2025 salary schedule. The regular bus driver and special education bus driver salary scales reflect the State required amounts based on the Senate version of the budget (the higher of the two versions). These amounts may be adjusted if the State's final budget includes differing increases.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Second/Final Reading of the 2024 – 2025 budget and the 2024 – 2025 Salary Schedule with any changes resulting from Board discussion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2024 – 2025 Proposed Budget – Second/Final Reading (summary)
2. 2024 – 2025 Proposed General Fund Expenditures Budget – by Object
3. 2024 – 2025 Proposed General Fund Expenditures Budget – by Location & Object
4. 2024 – 2025 Proposed General Fund Budget – Revenue
5. 2024 – 2025 Staffing Formulas
6. 2024 – 2025 Salary Schedule

PREPARED BY:

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