

Charlottesville City Council and Charlottesville City Schools
Joint Budget Work Session
February 8, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC), 1000 East Rio Road

The Charlottesville City Council and staff met in a joint budget work session with the Charlottesville City School Board and Central Office staff to discuss the Schools proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2024.

School Board Chair James Bryant called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. Clerk Leslie Thacker called the roll for the School Board. Clerk of Council Kyna Thomas called roll for City Council, recording Mayor Lloyd Snook and Councilor Brian Pinkston present. Mayor Snook noted a lack of quorum with Mr. Payne and Mr. Wade absent and stated that quorum was not required for moving forward with the work session. Mr. Wade provided advance notice of his absence.

Superintendent Royal Gurley began the presentation of a needs-based FY2024 budget proposal for City Schools. Councilor Payne joined the meeting at 5:10 p.m., establishing quorum for City Council.

Dr. Gurley answered questions from City Council throughout the presentation. Topics of particular interest were the increase in students speaking English as a second language (ESL) and the larger than usual cohort of 9th graders enrolled at Charlottesville High School.

Garland Williams, Director of Transit, shared information to indicate a positive outlook for the hiring of Transit drivers.

Krisy Hammill, City Budget Director, answered funding questions regarding vacancy savings.

Emily Dooley, School Board Member, suggested collaboration between the City and City Schools to address behavioral issues with students and adults. City Manager Michael Rogers agreed. Dr. Gurley stated that addressing the issues will require funding and resources. The public bodies and staff engaged in discussion about the need to bring a variety of voices and stakeholders together to build solutions. School Board Member Lashundra Bryson Morsberger emphasized the importance of access to extracurricular activities for students, particularly at the middle school level.

Councilor Payne asked about the possibility of Schools utilizing the City's labor relations personnel as they look to implement collective bargaining. Mr. Rogers stated that he and Schools staff would discuss further.

Jennifer McKeever, School Board Member, acknowledged City support for crossing guards and children in school walking zones.

Chair Bryant opened the floor to comments from the public.

- Sandra Aviles-Poe, Charlottesville United for Public Education, highlighted three needs expressed in the community: 1) moving forward with reconfiguration for Buford Middle School and Walker Upper Elementary School; 2) safety in schools related to student behavior and finding ways to collaborate to find solutions for students; and 3) school transportation.
- Kristin Szakos suggested a community forum for City Council, School Board and city staff to listen to the community, using the results as a basis for solutions to issues facing the schools. She asked whether the proposed Data Specialist would be able to work with neighborhood-based organizations to look at aggregated data and track progress. Dr. Gurley advised that Schools has an Office of Strategic Initiatives, so community-based initiatives would fall under equity and community engagement.

With no additional speakers, Mr. Bryant adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council