

2025-26 BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, January 14, 2026
Virtual Meeting

The meeting started at 7:00 PM.

Attendees Present:

1. Sianni Cabello
2. Melanie Bowen
3. Jonathan Hui
4. Bob Ramsey
5. Marty Swaim
6. Theresa Flynn
7. Peter Strack
8. Mary Rice
9. Dan Maloney
10. Chen Ling
11. Jen Cannon
12. **County Board Liaison:** Miranda Turner
13. **APS Superintendent's Cabinet, Business Officer:** Andy Hawkins
14. **FAC Liaison:** Cynthia Hilton
15. **Public:** Josh Folb

Comment from Public (Josh Folb):

16. Provided a salary comparison document.

Comment from Business Officer (Andy Hawkins):

17. Discussed past and future income provided from the state and county.
18. FY27 will have much less from the state and county than in previous years.
19. Would like the BAC to recommend items to delete from the budget to reduce costs.

Comment from County Board Liaison (Miranda Turner):

20. One-time use vs. recurring use funding — must think hard about future needs and expected state and county income.
21. Would like support from the BAC to understand how we might be able to find money to fund all requirements.

22. Would like specific suggestions on how to make the budget easier to read and more accessible to non-experts.

General Discussion:

23. Chen asked about interpreter positions and cost-saving measures rather than contractor positions. Interpreter salaries are shifting to the special education budget.
24. Theresa noted a significant increase in administrative FTE since 2018. She worked in the main office and said it is easy to understand what each office does. Asked for P, G, and T scale positions.
25. Peter highlighted inefficiencies in classroom size across the county by leveraging real-time data.
26. Dan raised ongoing concerns from other APS parents about the addition of non-instructional positions, and asked whether there can be more transparency.
27. More discussion about personnel at Syphax and a disconnect with parents and students not understanding what they are doing and how they are supporting the children.
28. Bob noted that perception management/public relations are key, especially when discussing the increase of staff at the central office.
29. Chen noted that the budget documents for the Fairfax and Alexandria districts are identical to ours. We need to make a bigger effort to make central office positions transparent.
30. Dan raised the question of how to address the recurring issues that have been coming up year after year.
31. Mary suggested sending out a roster to the BAC for Syphax positions.
32. More discussions about position transparency and starting over from the beginning instead of only adds and deletes each year.
33. Another idea raised was to start from scratch on the budget to create what the public wants.
34. Josh expressed a desire to see a description of each personnel position.
35. Theresa mentioned there is no data to prove what people do at the central office.
36. Bus drivers are now 7-hour-a-day workers. We don't make money off our children's field trips.
37. How can the BAC better communicate to the community? This is one of the BAC's charter functions. We may need to improve how we present the budget to the community.
38. We discussed facilities investments and the debt required for those facility updates. Debt ratio won't increase in the FY27 budget.