2022-23 Budget Update

At the School Board meeting on January 11, we adopted our annual Capital Improvement Program budget. Notable new additions in the CIP this year include much-needed 5-classroom additions for Banneker and Waterford elementary schools as well as an addition to Park View High School to accommodate the recently opened alternative school located on the same campus.

On February 2, the School Board adopted its 2022-23 school year operating budget. There were many amendments proposed by board members over the course of the six hour meeting, some successful and some not.

All but one of my amendments passed successfully – the Board supported restoration of a school counselor position at Loudoun Valley High School that was slated to be cut, as well as reducing funding for hardware for our eSports teams to only those schools which have teams (it’s a VHSL pilot program and roughly half of our high schools are currently participating). The one that didn’t pass – implementing an intramural sports program in middle schools – unfortunately failed by a single vote.

Other noteworthy changes to the budget during adoption night were:

- $2.4M added to support fine arts staff stipends
• Athletic fees, which were slated to be eliminated, were restored to the current amount of $75 per sport.
• Support positions for collective bargaining were removed, cutting $3M
• Creation of an Auditor General office to audit LCPS’ compliance with its policies and procedures
• Creation/restoration of 6 Elementary School Dean positions by enhancing the staffing standard to 1:600 from 1:675

Additionally, I am ecstatic that several new initiatives I’ve championed in committees I’ve served on over the past year – the International Baccalaureate and Elementary World Language programs in particular - remain in the budget for the upcoming year despite efforts to cut them during budget adoption.

On February 10, we will present our adopted budget to the Board of Supervisors, and then the ball will be in their court throughout the Spring for deciding whether to fully fund the School Board's budget request.

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**School Board Members Attend Virginia School Board Capital Conference**

On January 24 and 25, members of the School Board attended the Virginia School Board Association Capital Conference in Richmond. Chair Morse, Ms. Reaser, Mr. Hoyler, Dr. Ziegler and I were able to meet with many of Loudoun's State Senators (Bell, Boysko, Favola) and Delegates (Subramanyam, Gooditis, Reid, Delaney, Murphy) to discuss our legislative priorities for this year.
We were also heard remarks during the conference from Lieutenant Governor Winsome Sears and Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera.

Harmony Middle School Students Help Fund Local Food Pantry
Harmony Middle School’s eighth-graders made an incredible $4,500 donation to the Empty Bowl Project in January, benefitting the Western Loudoun Food Pantry. Art students made and sold soup bowls and koozies and served up a selection of donated soups from local restaurants as well as a soup prepared by Harmony's Family and Consumer Science classes.

The donation was a one-year record for the Empty Bowl Project, which was started by Harmony art teacher Lori DeMark in 2009. DeMark, who has overseen the art-meets-meal, project-based-learning charitable endeavor since its inception, said the Empty Bowl Project has now raised a total of $27,500 for the Western Loudoun Food Pantry.

Blue Ridge Spectrum Class Places 3rd in International STEM Competition
Congratulations to Blue Ridge Middle School's 8th grade block 8 Spectrum class, who won 3rd place in the Future City competition! Future City is an international middle school STEM competition that focuses on engineering through the concept of city planning. The theme this year was a "Waste-Free Future" teaching students about a circular economy to improve the way we design products, keep them in circulation longer and give back to nature to help save our environment.

Led by Spectrum teacher Lisa Sharp, both Blue Ridge teams submitted a project plan, wrote a 1500 word essay, built a scale city model from recyclable materials with at least one moving part, created a 7-minute presentation video, and participated in a Q&A session with a panel of judges. Congratulations, Bulldogs!

LCPS Receives Department of Justice Grant
LCPS has been awarded a $923,050 grant in the competitive STOP School Violence Program sponsored by the United States Department of Justice. The grant, which will be administered over a three year period, will enable the school division to implement two technology programs to support the threat assessment process. The grant is being implemented by the Department of Student Services.

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services Dr. Asia Jones said, "Our aim in pursuing this grant opportunity is to offer professional learning from leaders in the field that will
strengthen staff knowledge and skills. We believe implementing this software solution will improve our ability to prevent acts of violence so that we maintain a positive and safe school climate.”

February Dates to Remember

**Tuesday, 2/8, 4:00 pm:** Second Tuesday School Board Meeting

**Thursday 2/10 6:00 pm:** School Board and Board of Supervisors Joint Work Session on the FY23 Budget

**Tuesday, 2/15 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm:** Virtual Office Hours (sign up below)

**Monday, 2/21:** Student and Staff Holiday

**Tuesday, 2/22, 5:00 pm:** Fourth Tuesday School Board Meeting

February Virtual Office Hours

Office hours for constituents will be held on Tuesday, February 15th from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm. I look forward to hearing your questions and concerns. Sign up here: [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4CACA823A7F4C34-february](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4CACA823A7F4C34-february).

Parents/guardians who do not wish to receive future issues of School Board member newsletters should follow the instructions found in the [Blackboard Mass Notifications FAQs](#) to opt-out of receiving email messages.

Stay in Touch

email: [ian.serotkin@lcps.org](mailto:ian.serotkin@lcps.org)

phone: 571-252-2411

facebook: [Ian Serotkin, Vice Chair, Loudoun County School Board | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/IanSerotkinLCPS/)

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Ian Serotkin