

# **Minutes of Budget Workshop Meeting The Board of Trustees Duncanville ISD**

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A Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Duncanville ISD was held Monday, April 28, 2025, at 6:30 PM in the Duncanville ISD Education Plaza, 710 S. Cedar Ridge Drive, Duncanville, TX 75137.

## **1. CALL TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM**

President Dr. Flowers LaSonja called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was called under the Texas Government Code 551.045.

Let the record show that a quorum of the Board of Trustees is present, that the meeting has been duly called and that the notice of this meeting has been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

The following trustees were in attendance: Jacqueline Culton, Carla Fahey, Dr. LaSonja Flowers, Phil McNeely, Cassandra Phillips, and Janet Veracruz.

Our mission at Duncanville ISD is to engage, equip, and empower all scholars to achieve their unique potential.

## **2. OPENING CEREMONIES**

### **A. INVOCATION**

President Dr. Flowers

### **B. PLEDGE TO US FLAG AND TEXAS FLAG**

All Members

## **3. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS TO DISCUSS PENDING AGENDA ITEMS BEFORE THE BOARD**

There was no communication from citizens to discuss pending agenda items before the board.

## **4. BUDGET WORKSHOP**

Dr. Goree started the budget workshop presentation. Thank you very much, Dr. Flowers, and good evening all trustees. Thank you so much for assembling for our second budget workshop. Thank you, trustees, for also bringing your budget notebooks back tonight. I will invite our CFO to the podium, and Ms. Mayo will come, and she will do a presentation. Trustees, the PowerPoint is in your binders and the pages are numbered. I do ask that you jot those questions down as we go through the presentation, and we will take an opportunity at the end of the presentation to answer any questions. You also may have questions about other documents that are in the binder. I would ask that after the presentation questions have been answered, we will then look at any other questions that you have from the binder. Please note that we have given you a replacement page for page eight and that's located at your

stations. This time I will turn the program over to our CFO. Thank you.

Ms. Brandy Mayo continued the presentation. Good evening, Dr. Flowers, Board of Trustees and Dr. Goree. As the 89th legislative session moves forward, we're carefully tracking developments that will shape our funding outlook, including proposed adjustments to the basic allotment in evolving state accountability measures. Our focus this evening is to ensure our budget process reflects effective cost management, strategic priorities and unwavering commitment to student achievement. Together we'll build a budget that sustains and advances the missions of Duncanville ISD.

Our budget priorities that we have been focusing on throughout the entire budget development cycle is listed here. Fiscal stewardship and operational excellence, ensure budget alignment with the district's strategic priorities and a focus on student achievement, implement a competitive and market-aligned salary structure and maintain a healthy fund balance.

These are the topics that we'll be focusing on today. Legislative updates as we move through the legislative process, budget assumptions and unknowns, competitive compensation and then our proposed '25-'26 budgets.

So, the update right now, there are many, and I have about five pages of bills that are going for committee this week, but we're going to focus on three today. Senate Bill 2 - Education Savings Account vouchers. After much fanfare and heated debate in the Texas House, it was voted out of the House and back to the Senate. The Senate did vote last Thursday to accept all the amendments from the House and send the legislation to Governor Greg Abbott's desk to be signed into law. So, Senate Bill 2 is on the way to the governor with the amendments from the House to be signed into law.

House Bill 19 is still in the Ways and Means Committee, but it is something that might directly affect us if it is passed. This is legislation that was discussed in the 88th legislation as well. It did not pass then, so we don't know, but it does affect us directly. It creates new I&S debt limits. So right now, about 80% of school districts across the state do sometimes choose to adopt an I&S rate or keep their consistent I&S rate. Any additional tax revenue received from that rate, they are utilizing that to defease bonds, basically paying them off early. That is a very fiscally sound and economically responsible opportunity. It creates debt capacity for future bond needs and so if this is passed, it could limit that opportunity.

The other is the November-only bond elections. We've heard this before. Many times, we take our bonds to May because oftentimes November is very busy and so it gives us more of an opportunity to focus on school district needs if we are able to take it to May, and so that could change some of the future outlooks for school districts. So, we are watching that one very closely and our financial advisors are also watching those very closely.

House Bill 2 is one we've been closely following. It came out of the House education committee and into the full House. The House did amend this, and it passed House Bill 2 back to the Senate, and so now House Bill 2 sits in the Senate to be approved or with amendments. I don't know the schedule for that yet, but it is going to be coming up. Right now, that Bill talks about an increase in basic allotment. So, it's increased. It started out a little bit lower, now it's up to 395, which would make the basic allotment \$6,555, and what that means is the allotment that we get per ADA in our state revenue funding template. So that would be an increase. The way the law reads right now is that 40% of any year-over-year increase would go to salaries for all staff except administration. There was amendment to the

current state of the bill in the house that said 75% of that 40 would go to teachers, nurses, librarians and counselors, and that's consistent with the current law.

The current law is 30% and then 75% of the 30. So that's consistent to what we did in 2019 with House Bill 3. The current estimates, we've received estimates from three different sources, and they all are around \$6.781 million year-over-year for Duncanville ISD. Keep in mind this is not just an increase to basic allotment. There's also some special population increases that do also attribute to this number, and so this is the total impact that we could see the way the bill is now. And just for your frame of reference, 40% of that is 2.7, 60% is \$4 million. So, 40% would go to staff. If the amendment for 75% of the 40 goes through, it's listed there as \$2.034 million. And then 60% could be used for further raises, could be used for operational expenses to reduce the deficit, but there would be more flexibility in that area.

One, I was listening to some legislative updates today and some of the bills that were in the Senate were focused on the tenure of teachers and giving some specific allocations to different tenures in our pay scale. This bill doesn't currently have that, but that could happen when it starts to be reviewed in the Senate, but just to give y'all a heads-up, that could be coming.

These are the budget assumptions, and these have maintained consistent throughout the whole process. The fiscal year is July 1st through June 30th. We're still looking at a taxable assessed value growth of 3%, enrollment 11,232, and average daily attendance 9,987. This budget is based on current legislation. It does not include any of the estimates we might see in House Bill 2.

These are kind of the unknowns. So, as you know, a lot of times, we're a June 30th district and we don't know our tax rates since there's some things that we don't know. So, we're forecasting that out. We do have a lot of support from DCAD, and so we are looking at tax rates to be finalized in July. We will be submitting documentation to publish our tax rates to the Dallas Morning News according to law. When we do that, we will be basing it on the estimates. And so, when we come back in September to adopt the rate, of course, then we'll have the actual rate for adoption after certified values are delivered.

Property values are estimated based on DCAD analysis. I had a preliminary conversation with DCAD as I mentioned before, and they felt like 3% was a good number to be using now. We will get our preliminary values on May 12th. So, our first preliminary values will come on May 12th and our second preliminary values will come on May 27th. We are continuing to work through staffing for budget impacts, any required teacher raises approved as legislature or the board are not currently in this budget. Any changes to the basic allotment... So, as I said, it's based on current legislation.

And then property insurance increase, so I do have good news. We met with our property insurance agent, and they do believe we're going to see a decrease, which felt wonderful, I was not expecting that, in our overall property premiums. We, of course, will not know that until we bring that to the board in September, but he was going to let us know mid-May hopefully before our next budget workshop. If he felt like that on that date in May, then it's probably going to be. That would save us about \$200,000. So, we're hopeful for that. And then any further cost containment strategies as we go through the process, and as we go through the year. So, the budget can always be amended. I think as we're always looking through the budget, reviewing positions, doing all that deep detail analysis as we go through settle up and we really start to understand the effects of our temporary campus closures and some of those changes, I think we'll still continue and working closely with HR to make sure that

any of those additional things can just be always coming out of the budget, always reviewing cost containment to make sure that we are being fiscally and efficiently responsible.

And so, raise consideration. Well, these could be two things. So, considerations independent of House Bill 2, and I'm just going to jump over to the next slide for a second and then I'll go back to it. But just to remind you when we reviewed this at our last budget workshop, just to give you an idea of where Duncanville ISD is with our neighboring districts. And so, when we're looking at that, just to kind of think through any raise considerations independent of House Bill 2. I know that there was some brief discussion about working on some teacher changes and then furthering that discussion once we received the final information from House Bill 2.

So right now, the teacher salary increases for \$2,000 is a budget impact of about 1.751, and keep in mind these figures are the general fund only. We may have more teachers in our district, but they're federally funded, and so while they would still obviously receive the raise, we're more focused on the general fund because that's the adopted budget. This does include benefits. And so, the new teacher starting salary with a \$2,000 increase to the pay scale would be 60,500; 3,000 would be 61,500; and 4,000 would be 62,500. As you'll see from the white box where the two, three and 4,000 are, there are also percentages and brackets next to those. Those are estimated percentage increases just to maintain continuity when we look at the percentage increases for other staff. It's to give you a frame of reference for what this would mean for teachers.

As we move onto this slide, we were back to having the discussion about where we were and maintaining a competitive market rate is one of our district budget strategy priorities. Thinking through, I think the conversation before was if every district has an opportunity to give a raise, where do we fall in competitive comparison after that? Are there reviews and ideas that we would like to consider prior to legislation and maybe some ideas to review after that legislation? This is just a reminder of where we are in relation to our peers. And then I wanted to point out that we have starting pay for our certified bilingual and SPED self-contained teachers is 62,500. We are trying to be competitive there so that we can attract those highly qualified bilingual and SPED self-contained teachers to Duncanville ISD. Other districts in our area don't offer this additional pay scale. We are proud of that and hopeful of being able to encourage increases in those areas as well.

These are compensation scenarios for staff other than teachers. We wanted to list them individually here so that you could kind of see how they would affect each pay group. In your binder, there is a list of who falls into these categories if you would like to see position by position. Keep in mind you might see one custodian. That doesn't mean we have one, I just consolidated those since they were the same. And so here you can kind of review what percentage goes with each area. So one thing we've really been talking about kind of in my world is when we're starting to consider raises in the midst of this legislative session, depending on the language of the law, and we don't know that now, but we know from history, the language of the law then was such that if a raise was adopted before the law was into effect, that that raise that was adopted did not meet the requirements of the new law and districts had to give the raise twice.

And so, in thoughtful consideration, I just want to make sure that the board has all the tools necessary to make the decision that while communication can be had of the board's expectations, that adoption and implementation might be best preserved till after the law is in place. And the budget can be

amended. So, we are legally required to adopt a budget by June 30th, but we can know and as you approve amendments all throughout the year, that's certainly something that can be done, and then the compensation manual can be adopted at that time as well and we can make the appropriate raise impacts in September.

This is the '25-'26 general fund estimates. This is really just high level and we're going to get into the details much like we did in the last presentation, but I do have more details as requested. As you know, right now we have a \$19 million deficit and for next year \$18 million, but as we go through the details of this, and this is what we have been talking about, we expect to have estimated historical vacancy savings of 6 million. That's what I am expecting this year based on forecasts and analysis month to month. We did an ESSER III reclass before the end of the ESSER III financing period of \$400,000. We have historically saved about \$2 million on non-payroll and it does appear to be that we're going to be in line for that. Many purchasing deadlines have already ended, and so I think that's probably going to be a solid number.

Then we have position reductions through attrition, and you do have a list there of some '24-'25. And while all those decisions to reduce those positions were made at the end of the last fiscal year, they were made through attrition. As the people left the position, we captured the savings back. So, while the decision was made to reduce them in the prior fiscal year, they were still in the budget. And so, when we're talking about numbers to numbers, that's how we get there by pulling those out. Right now, it's expected to have a net impact on the fund balance of about \$9.4 million. We are still working with the support and really being driven by Dr. Nix's department, the federal programs department. We're doing a concentrated review of all funding sources, and we are likely to have some savings from the general fund because we're able to utilize federal funds in a more efficient way. We're grateful for that work. So, we're just whittling down at that negative 9 million.

So '25-'26 end of year projections. Again, we started with total net impact of 18 million. The current expected adjustments of one time in total are ongoing, on the next slide, I'll really dig into those details, but before we go, I just wanted to talk about those expected savings. Now, please know they're expected. If everybody takes a position with our great new pay scale and we have no vacancies, which I don't know if that's possible, then certainly the 6 million vacancies could go down, but I think that's something we might all celebrate. Historical non-payroll saves, the same. If everyone spent all their money, that's just something we look at throughout the year, but when you see that for five years back, you expect that to occur. And then we do expect, working again with Dr. Nix's awesome team, a federal evaluation and reclass that could affect next year's general fund budget by about a million dollars, and so that's going to be great work to get us down to negative seven. I know that it's still not balanced, but it is great work. We are getting in the right direction.

Also, please consider if we do receive state revenue from House Bill 2 and it is \$4 million, and the board decides to use some of that state revenue, it will offset that \$7 million and we'll be in an even better place. And then as we go through settle-up for next year, looking at all the positions and continuing to evaluate salaries, we may even become closer to that.

The next slide kind of identifies that one area, current expected adjustments, total one time total ongoing. This is to give you an idea of the details that are being reduced and requested. The top boxes will only affect '25-'26 only. So that means like the 25,000 for salary study for TASB, that'll only be given

in one year. It'll be taken out of the budget for year two because it's only needed once. Now that is something HR might request to do every couple of years, but it's only one time.

The ongoing '25 and '26 future years, when we change the middle school PLCs, those will come now forever unless something is added back. The same with the instructional support specialists, that goes out forever unless the board approves to add something back. And then the recruitment budget and then you'll see all the line items there. So those are items that were requested and reviewed with great detail and analysis by the SLT team and then reviewed by Dr. Goree and the budget team. Even with some of the adds there, you'll see it's still a reduction to the total overall budget of a little over \$2 million.

The fund balance estimates are listed here, so we are still in a very favorable place. So even if we end '24-'25 at negative 9.4 million, we will still have... It's a little over five months. I think it's like 5.14 months. We'll still have a little over five months of fund balance. Even though it's possible we could end '25-'26 with a deficit, as long as we continue to do the work to bring that down, we are going to be in a much better position. Another bit of positive news is in the legislation there's discussion for declining ADA districts, there may be some additional funding associated with that, would additionally help support Duncanville ISD, and then there is some retro... Or not retro. That's that way. Some continuing increases to the basic allotment.

Now it's a little offset by some of the changes to the golden penny, but I think all in all, it'll have a positive impact to have that basic allotment be triggered for growth every two years versus it sitting. I think the first time was like 40 years and now it's been since 2019. I think that'll be a positive change for school districts. So that'll further support the initiatives.

A nutrition services fund is listed here. You'll see for '24 and '25, and '25-'26, there was a negative listed there. Those were the spend-down plans as required by TDA. So, it's not truly negative. It doesn't mean a negative thing; it means an investment in the student nutrition program as required by law.

This is the debt services fund. We do expect to have a balanced budget as of now, and that's largely because we increased our tax rate with the bond, and so we're celebrating that, but we are generating tax revenue to sustain our current debt service. As we pay down that debt service, then we will have some opportunities to keep the rate the same or review that for the future.

Our next step is to discuss any changes or impacts to local, state, and federal funding. That's a requirement for our FIRST ratings, so we'll do that at the May 12th board budget workshop. May 19th, we'll have our regular board meeting. May 28th is an internal request. June 3rd, I'll be submitting the notice of public meeting to discuss budget and proposed tax rate to the Dallas Morning News as required by law. Then on the 16th, we will discuss the adoption and discuss the proposed tax rate.

Upcoming budget workshop agenda. And of course, by request this could change, but this is just an idea for now. A presentation of the final budget. So, anything that comes out of today will be added and reviewed and presented on May 12th. Just discuss the requirement for the FIRST rating and discussion of final estimates for the legislative agenda. So hopefully by May 12th, we are going to know a lot more about where House Bill 2 is going to be. And while we won't be adopting that at the time, it will give the board an opportunity to make some more solid and sound decisions at that time.

And now, we've arrived at questions.

Trustee Fahey asked. Page eight I think we were talking about, but that's when you mentioned the ESL, the \$62,500. Is that for a two-year contract?

Ms. Mayo replied. For the certified bilingual and SPED self-contained?

Trustee Fahey replied. Right.

Ms. Mayo replied. I'm going to have to defer to Ms. Brown. I'm not familiar with the contracts.

Trustee Fahey commented. Well, that's what page we were on. I mean, it wasn't listed. You told us about it.

Ms. Mayo replied. It's the note at the bottom.

Ms. Pamela Brown replied. Good evening, Board President Flowers, Board of Trustees, Dr. Goree. No, the \$62,500 is the annual salary for SPED self-contained and certified bilingual teachers, but it is not a two-year contract. They receive one-year contracts annually, like all other teachers.

Trustee Fahey asked. But haven't we had some of the contracts in the past where they had to commit to staying two years?

Ms. Brown replied. The sign-on bonus. Yes. So, they continue to receive the sign-on bonus, which is \$7,000. They get half the first year and then the second year they get half, and they also have a bilingual teacher stipend in addition to that.

Trustee McNeely asked. These raises right here, on this one you gave us. How does that affect our bottom line?

Ms. Mayo replied. Thank you. So, for example, for the \$2,000, so if the board elected to move forward with the \$2,000 scenario of 1.751, then it would further increase the deficit by 1.71. So that would be 8.9, 8.8, 8.9 deficit. So that is just on top of these figures.

Trustee McNeely asked. Would all of these in the next one would be 2.6 and 3.5?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

Trustee McNeely asked. And is this without any money coming from the state?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, sir.

Trustee McNeely asked. If we pick one of these, then what comes from the state will be on top of this?

Ms. Mayo replied. If you pick one of these prior to the signing of the law, yes.

Trustee McNeely asked. When's the signing of the law?

Ms. Mayo replied. Well, it gets signed like the mid of June. I want to say the 21st, but I think it might be a little before that. But it really depends on what is the language of the law when it's final. So, if the language of the law says anything adopted, or if it says start July 1st or September 1st... I think the old law says start September 1st of next year, so raises that were adopted prior to that didn't count, I guess, for lack of better words.

President Dr. Flowers asked. Assuming we wait until the adoption of the law, then how would you answer Coach McNeely's question?

Ms. Mayo replied. If no raises were considered until the adoption of the law, then that 1.7 could go to the \$2.0 million listed as the 75% in this slide.

President Dr. Flowers: I'm sorry, will you say that one more time?

Trustee McNeely commented. Please, say it slower.

Ms. Mayo replied. It's very complicated. If nothing is adopted, then the current budget doesn't assume any additional obligations. Once the law is passed, based on current amendments, we would be required to spend an estimated \$2 million for teachers, nurses, librarians, and counselors. If the decision was made to wait, then the funds from House Bill 2 could theoretically be used to pay for that \$2,000 increase.

Dr. Goree added. Can I add one thing to that please, Ms. Mayo? And what I would say, though, is, in that scenario, we would not be catching up with other districts. If you look at the slide, the one that Coach McNeely is referencing, this slide catches us up with other districts; and then we would use those other funds to keep up, because everyone's going to receive those additional funds. So, if we adopted something, like if we did adopt a \$2,000, or let's just say \$2,000, we would just know that that would catch up with where other districts currently are, and that additional revenue would give us the opportunity to stay caught up, for lack of a better word.

Ms. Mayo replied. To be competitive and marketable. Yes, absolutely. Because every district will be required to give that same amount.

Trustee McNeely requested. Go through that again and go slower than that.

President Dr. Flowers commented. Here's the question. I think I misunderstood when you said if we adopt before the budget, then we must do it again. I mean, before the law.

Ms. Mayo replied. That is possible depending on... And that happened before, so I'm assuming that could happen again.



Trustee McNeely asked. How stupid would we be to adopt a raise before we know what we got?

Ms. Mayo replied. I think the idea would be, or could be, to say, "Regardless of if the legislature gives us anything, we might have an obligation to be marketable and competitive with the areas," because-

Trustee McNeely commented. If they didn't give us anything, if we decided on the \$4,000, that's all on us. That will make our general fund \$4 million less, or three, whatever.

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes. More, yes. Yes, less.

President Dr. Flowers asked. If we adopted \$2,000 and the law passed and we have an additional \$4 million, we could amend the budget and add to the \$2,000? Is that what you're saying?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, except for its \$6 million, not four.

Trustee McNeely commented. That we're getting.

Ms. Mayo replied. We would be required to spend an additional two; we would have an opportunity to spend up to six. I would imagine we would want to use some of that to reduce the deficit, but you certainly could do that.

President Dr. Flowers asked. And that's an option?

Ms. Mayo replied. That's an option, yeah, because you have flexibility with the 60%. Now, if I could add one thing is, due to the number of teacher vacancies that we have, we do a contract with Elevate. And so, when we're filling positions, if we're able to attract positions in more areas than just teachers, but in special ed, then we might could offset some contract costs, too, because the board approved the Elevate contract at \$1 million.

Dr. Goree asked. Brandy, would you go back through the current estimated..

Trustee McNeely asked. Who is Elevate? Is that a company?

Dr. Goree: replied. Right, it's our virtual learning platform that we use to fill vacancies at the high school, and that's a contract that the district had had for the last probably three years.

Trustee McNeely commented. When you're telling me stuff like that, don't assume I know it. Tell it to me.

Dr. Goree replied. Agree. Agree. Yes.

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, thank you.

Dr. Goree replied. That's what that is. Coach, let me get her to... Brandy, start with the current estimate,

where you got \$6.7 million, and would you talk the board through that again?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes. And so, with the items in House Bill 2, when some of our experts, like the Equity Center and the Texas Association of School Business Officials and actually TEA, gave to Senator West, we had three different scenarios. They took all the information from House Bill 2 as it currently stands and said, "If this passes, you could receive \$6.781 million." It's an estimate. So, with all the items that are in it.

Trustee McNeely asked. Then that must be used... Like you're talking about the 60% and the 40% and all that stuff for raises, is that part of that \$6 million, or we could use it all for raises if we wanted to?

Ms. Mayo replied. That's correct. We are required to use 40% for salaries other than administration, and then the 60% is flexible, the way the law states now.

Dr. T. Goree asked. And the 75% under there?

Ms. Mayo replied. The 75%. Of the 40% that is slated for salaries, 75% of that 40%, according to the amendment, must be used for teachers, nurses, librarians, and counselors.

Dr. Goree added commented. And what I would offer to the board is that the sheet where we do the scenario, the \$2,000, \$3,000, and \$4,000, is independent of this money. These are dollars that we believe we need to do even if the state does nothing. Even though it will certainly increase our deficit, we believe that these dollars will increase our opportunities to not only maintain but to attract teachers to the district. And that just raises our level of accountability with reducing in other areas of the budget as we move forward. And that's the advantage of us having over five months in our fund balance, is that we do have a little wiggle room so that we can attract teachers.

Trustee McNeely commented. As we're wiggling through this and doing the scenario, I want to use the \$4,000. I want to use as much as we can, as much as we can get out of this. From my estimates, from later on, I want to give at least \$4,000.

Ms. Mayo asked. Of the estimated impact from House Bill 2?

Trustee McNeely replied. Yes, whatever.

Dr. Goree replied. I think I understand.

Ms. Mayo replied. I think I understand, yes.

Trustee McNeely commented. Well, see, I'm telling you, I'm talking about the \$4,000, and then we'll worry about the \$6 million. When it comes up, we may could give more than that.

President Dr. Flowers asked. Well, my question is, if we do the four million...the \$4,000. I'm trying to understand as far as the law is concerned. So, if we use the \$4,000... Which is 6.8%?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, ma'am.

President Dr. Flowers asked. And then the law is passed. Does any percentage of that count towards the 40% that have to give to teachers?

Ms. Mayo replied. If it reads the way it did in 2019, House Bill 3, then it would not. You would have to give an additional raise on top of that to satisfy the requirements of the law.

Trustee McNeely asked. How much would that be?

Ms. Mayo replied. It would depend on how much the board determines to elect of the-

Trustee McNeely asked. I'm saying. The \$4,000, how much would that be?

Ms. Mayo asked. That we'd have to add on top?

Trustee McNeely asked. How much of a raise would that be?

Ms. Mayo replied. Well, it'd be another \$2 million to go on top of that. I don't know the math. Six, seven, I don't know, getting close to almost 10%. But then when you look at our comparison districts, that would put us at \$62,500, and then another estimated 262. I mean, we would be more than... Well, we might be up there with Arlington or MISD.

Dr. Goree commented. But they would add more money too.

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, they would just be adding.

Dr. Goree commented. They would add on more, too. In essence, you would be taking yourself... If you look at this, you would be looking at \$62,500. So, you would put yourself in between, I guess that would be Midlothian and Irving. And we're going to assume that everyone's going to add on about the same amount, so I think that's a fair way to look at that.

Ms. Mayo commented. Yes, after legislation is signed.

Trustee McNeely commented. I understand that. I want to remain competitive on this and what it looks like, but I don't want to set our raises for what we do for our teachers and say, "Oh, well, we could get within \$3,000 of them and we can save this much money." I want to do as much for our teachers as we can do. I don't give a damn about this stuff. I'm talking about our teachers. So, this slide doesn't mean anything to me unless we're paying \$40,000 and somebody's paying \$60,000. I want the teachers to get as much as we can give them. And if that puts us up way up, fine. It puts us in the middle, fine. I don't give a damn about that. I just want to give what we can give to the teachers. Do you understand what I mean?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes.

Dr. Goree replied. I do.

Trustee McNeely commented. I mean... I want to be competitive, but I'm not going to look at this chart before I decide what kind of raise I want to give our teachers. That's not what I'm going to do.

Trustee Fahey asked. Could any of these funds be used like we have done in the past, and I don't know what we called them, bonuses or stipends, like right before Christmas, or does it have to be within a salary, or can we dish some out?

Ms. Mayo replied. It all depends on the way it's written, but in the past, it had to be a salary that was TRS-eligible, and it had to be adopted prior to September 1 and listed in the compensation manual. So, it was listed as it had to be salaries. Now, in the past, I think we used ESSER that we gave retention stipends and things like that.

Trustee Fahey asked. Okay, so that would've been all ESSER those year?

Ms. Mayo replied. If you had retention or those... But you probably paid them over the year in lump sums, yes.

Trustee Fahey commented and asked. I think we had a paycheck right before Christmas. Wasn't it one lump sum?

Ms. Mayo replied. Then that would've been an ESSER. That was trying to get us through the pandemic, yes.

Trustee Culton asked. Our school grades were released last week, and I want to know how we're prioritizing academic achievement in this budget.

Ms. Mayo replied. That's a great question. I can speak to it from a finance perspective. We may need to call on some of our academics' experts to do that. I think that's why one of the primary reasons is that we are looking at doing a raise before the law, so that we can be marketable and competitive. And that's one way, from my perspective, that we're trying to prioritize our students is getting quality staff in the classroom and being a competitive district, so people are coming to work here and filling our vacancies. And I think that's an investment. Increasing the ADA percentage has been one of our primary goals, and having strong teachers in the classroom is going to be fundamental in that work going forward. But that's from my finance perspective.

Trustee Culton asked. Is anyone able to answer from a programmatic perspective?

Dr. Goree replied. I would invite Dr. Nix and Dr. Goodman. Two things that they can speak to, one being our middle school PLC change of structure as well as our ISS structures and things that we've done there, and anything else that they'd like to share as we've gone through this budget process.

Dr. Winnefred Goodman replied. Good evening, Madam President, Board, and Dr. Goree. I will start by

just talking about some of the things that Dr. Goree just mentioned, really around staffing. And so, you ask about prioritizing. As we've looked at campus shifts for next year, one of our campuses that we've spoken about is Bilhartz, and we've talked about the additional staff that will be there to support that as far as it relates to interventionists. Those are things that, typically, were traditionally stuffed the same. Some of those things will change, and that has been prioritized in the budget going forward.

When we look at the change in the middle school PLC, we've talked about that PLC going away, but we have structures in place so that we can prioritize having some time every three to six weeks so that they can be pulled and have a PLC definitely together. Also, the addition of the way that we're using our instructional coaches for next year. So those are some things that are changing that are also included in this budget that will shift.

Trustee Culton asked. Can that be documented somewhere?

Dr. Goodman replied. Yes, ma'am, for sure.

Jacqueline Culton commented. Well, I do have another question regarding the budget for '26... But I don't know if Dr. Nix wanted to address the board.

Dr. Sam Nix replied. Thank you, President Flowers, members of the Board, and Dr. Goree. Everything that Dr. Goodman says, I concur with. As you said, how are we prioritizing the budget? Most of the time when a school district goes into a budget challenge or a process, they may not prioritize the things that have the greatest impact on students first. For example, what we find is that school districts may not prioritize slashing personnel or support for campuses. But what Dr. Goree, what Ms. Mayo, what we've done as a district, is we have not just looked at, well, how do we just cut all the support to campuses? We've taken a good hard look at the instructional materials that are provided to the campus, the support that is provided to the campus, and prioritizing that as a budgetary need.

And so then by going line by line, precept by precept, really program by program, Dr. Goree, is always, all right, what do the campuses need? What support is vital for them? And then, what do we need to rethink? So in addition to things like restructuring our ISS process, in addition to things like our instructional materials and how we are making sure that we're not cutting back on things that would hurt the schools or harm instruction, that's always at the forefront of the conversations that we're having while still looking at where can we cut that doesn't have the greatest impact on losing support for campuses. So that's another perspective that I just wanted to add.

As we start to prioritize this budget, Ms. Mayo, I tell you what, she has an instructional mind when it comes to money, which is a little different than what I've been used to working with CFOs, but she's just very instructionally focused. Dr. Goree, of course, is instructionally focused. So, the conversations start with, what are we going to cut, where can we save money, but that doesn't hurt the campus, that doesn't have the greatest impact on instruction? Because if you're not careful, you'll start cutting everything and not think about the impact on the campus. And that has not been our process moving forward.

Trustee Culton commented. I was just wondering where that is documented, because we owe the community an answer for our performance and I know that there are a number of things that we have

considered and that we're doing, and so it would be good if we could say, "We will be implementing X, Y, and Z. And the dollars associated with that, we can't cut." We're here to educate students, and so we've got a budget, but it can't drive that. We've got to be able to educate the students and ensure that they get a good education. And so, any budget that's built around just dollars, that's not what we're about. I know that you all have considered it. It just hasn't been shared in a manner that can be communicated well. So, yeah, I have additional questions regarding the budget for Mrs. Mayo.

Dr. Goree commented. We will provide the board with a detailed list of those academic focuses that drive the budget. Even to the deficit. I mean, because we could have cut the budget and just started cutting, cutting, cutting, but that was not what we saw as the best way to do it. Thank you for the great question.

Trustee Culton asked. On slide 11, on the proposed budget for '26, the total local revenue, I'm assuming that that is property taxes? What is that?

Ms. Mayo replied. The majority of that number is local property taxes. It also includes items like ticket sales or rental use that are some small things. It also includes our investment income from our investment pools.

Trustee Culton asked. Because I know that we're anticipating a 3% increase in property taxes. However, if you look at the trend from five to six, we see, what, a \$2.8 million decrease. And so, I guess, what is the reason for that?

Ms. Mayo replied. We will be experiencing some M&O tax compression as triggered by the law, so that is where the decrease comes in there. But just to kind of let you know, the way the current state funding model is set up is that it does take into consideration the change in local tax revenue. Fundamentally, if all things stay the same, if ADA stays the same and our tax rate stays fundamentally the same with the pennies, then your total revenue is going to be very similar from year to year. Even though we might see a reduction in local revenue, you can see that the state revenue has increased. And so, any kind of reduction in overall total revenue, they're likely attributed to a reduction of ADA.

Trustee Culton asked. Then in the expense part of it, I think \$8 billion in reductions have been identified. Where is that in the proposed budget? Or \$6 million, whatever.

Ms. Mayo replied. We're going to see about \$2 million in savings overall. When you look at the way that's going to affect this budget... If I could draw your attention up to 6100, Payroll. The reductions that were in the '24-'25 budget for payroll is reflected in that reduction in payroll. So, we started the year with less payroll. Then the savings are on top of that because, for example, we have estimates of the middle school PLC, we have estimates of the instructional support specialist, but those were changes that we were making with people. We are going through that process. And so, the totals are reflected there, but they are not all reflected in like that 6100.

Now, the increases that you see here, for example, Recruitment Budget or Second Step SEL platform, those aren't added into the 6200, 6300 budgets yet because they have not been viewed by the board. So, if we go through tonight and you all say, "This is our blessing," then I will go enter those into the

system, and the next time you see this it will be represented there. But this gives the board the opportunity to review these adds and changes.

Trustee Culton commented. So as a result of the feedback you get tonight, you will be reducing the proposed expenses, based upon our feedback

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, ma'am. Absolutely, yes.

Trustee Culton asked. On slide 12...The Historical Vacancy Saves \$6 million, that's every year?

Ms. Mayo: replied. It's been historically, yes. I've looked over the last... I think I looked at five year- No, I looked at four years back, because five years back was getting wonky with the pandemic, so I only looked at four years back, and then I had to remove anything that was put into ESSER, and so I only were able to consider the actual payroll. Now, if we begin to fill these vacancies, then that estimate could change. It isn't really all made up of just unfilled positions. Really, the vast majority of that is made up of the time it takes when someone leaves versus hiring them. And so, there is always, it doesn't matter, going to be saves as the ebb and flow goes through the year.

Now it could adjust as your hiring practices change, and that's why I put it there as expected because it's something that needs to be forecasted every single month, every single year, and then communicated to the board as you go.

Trustee Culton asked. What percentage of salaries is that?

Ms. Mayo replied. Let me do some math here. I think it's about, well, I think it's about 4%, which has been pretty consistent with budgets that I've seen in the past. It's a little over 4%.

Trustee Culton asked. Historical non-payroll savings, what is that?

Ms. Mayo replied. That's also kind of the ebb and flow. It isn't necessarily everybody just leaves money on the table. What happens, because we have 17 campuses and then a bunch of central departments, and they all have budgets. As they're going through the year, they have planned expenses. They're moving through the year, and sometimes they might estimate a program to be, they're going to spend this much on it. It ends up being a little less, or the timing runs out, or they shift gears. It's kind of a natural ebb and flow too. Sometimes you just simply order something, and it doesn't arrive by June 30th, and then you must pay for it in the next year. It's not really a savings. You still must pay for it. It just reflects on paper to be a savings for one fiscal year.

Dr. Goree commented. I used to describe this as if you were afraid to overspend too. So, there's always going to be some dollars that are left, and at some point, we capture all those dollars

Ms. Mayo commented. We also initiate purchasing deadlines, so then limits purchasing, so if you didn't plan ahead or things like that.

Trustee Veracruz commented and asked. Thank you so much for your informative session with us. I see

on page 12, it says positions reductions through attrition. Can you explain what attrition means? And then it says assistant principals, aides, central office, \$365,000. So, is that if we eliminate? Is that what that number means?

Ms. Mayo replied. I use the word attrition to further clarify what we did so that we don't say we just got rid of people because that isn't what the board decided to do. It is really just for communication purposes. Yes. But what happens when building this budget and looking at and reviewing positions, there were some changes made to positions that determined that some positions were going to be sunset, but maybe there was a person in that position. Well, the board or the district was not going to remove a position had a person in it. When the person moved on, then that position was taken back. So that's through attrition, and so it really kind of puts the focus on the support of our staff while still maintaining the ability to reduce and be fiscally responsible.

What happened is the board, with the support of the superintendent and the business office, or in the whole SLT team, determined that there were some assistant principals and some aides that were going to be reduced. And so they were, because of the timing of the decision, some of the positions still had people in them. They were put into the budget. And so, this is just reflecting how much it affected '24-'25's budget when we're just looking, how did we get from this number to this number?

And then the central office are the positions that are related to central office, and that's the total there. And I do believe you have some documentation in your binders that identifies which specific positions this is referring to.

Trustee McNeely asked. We're under the gun because we're doing it in July. If we went from September to September, does it make it easier for us to make these kinds of decisions, because we're making them when we don't know what we're getting from the state?

Ms. Mayo replied. Well, that's a great question. We have two opportunities as a school district for the fiscal year. We can be September 1 through August 31st, or we can be July 1 through June 30th, which is what we are. So, there's give and takes for both of those.

If you're June 30th, then you're building your budget based on a tax rate that you don't really know your taxable values yet. That used to be a whole big problem back before the state funding formula changed. That kind of kept us the same. So, because of that, we can build a budget while total local and state revenue could offset. Fundamentally, the total's going to be similar, but it is a weakness because we are having to adopt a budget based on a tax rate and an estimated taxable value that we're unsure of because we don't know that until July 25th.

The benefit of having a July budget is that campuses, when they come, and departments, when they come into July 1, can start planning for that next school year. When you're a campus or department, and you're in a September 1, you end school, and you still have to have money ready to start school, and that takes a lot of forethought and planning. It's just very difficult. So that's a weakness of that kind of budget.

I've been in both types of districts. Even though your budget isn't adopted until August 31, you're still building it well before July. You're still doing all your budget workshops and all your budget planning without the same knowledge. You just might have an opportunity to dive in at the last minute and make



a change. But the benefit is I think our campuses and departments being able to better plan as they go into their school year.

Trustee McNeely asked. So, could we adopt a budget on the 29th of June?

Ms. Mayo replied. Oh, I don't know what day that is. Is that a weekend? I mean, yes. You must have the budget adopted by June 30th.

Trustee McNeely commented. You can call a special meeting.

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, of course. It must be adopted by June 30th according to law. If you're regarding how that might affect the legislative changes, it would depend on the language of the law. Before it said it had to be adopted after.

Trustee McNeely asked. I go back to, if we adopt, we're really not adopting, we could save \$4,000 or \$3,000 or \$2,000, but we're not adopting them until we adopt the budget?

Ms. Mayo replied. That's correct. Well, the compensation manual.

Trustee McNeely asked. Yes, but I mean, it's not official until we adopt the budget? Are you asking us to-

Ms. Mayo replied. It's official when the compensation manual is adopted. The budget gives the money to support decision in the compensation manual, but the compensation manual drives the salaries for TRS purposes.

Trustee Culton asked. Would you please explain again, slide 14?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes. This lists all the items that are projected for add and reduction. For example, campus closure estimates at the top \$800,000. That's the estimated amount of payroll and non-payroll that we have estimated just based on statewide data if a campus is closed for one year, and so that is an estimate reduction. The item, and that's just for one year because of our campus, two of them are closing only for one year.

That could change once we get into the data. This TASB salary study is a request to do a TASB salary study, but the funds needed to do that are not in the current operational budget, and so it's being requested on top, but only for one year. So, in the next budget year, that will come out. And then that's how they are at the top. And then the '25 and '26 future years, those are budget reductions or adds that will affect the budget ongoing unless there is a reduction or change in a future year.

Trustee Culton asked. Are these the only new additions to the budget?

Ms. Mayo replied. As of today, yes.

Trustee Culton asked. Does this also identify all the proposed cuts that you all were looking at?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes. Not the expected savings from salary, vacancy saves or any of the expected items. Those really must be realized as you go through the year.

Trustee Culton commented. Because I thought that more cuts had been identified other than the four that are listed. I thought we had a greater list. I thought it was \$2 million.

Ms. Mayo replied. It's a little over \$2 million, but when we start, it's over that, but when we put the adds back in, it offsets it down. So, the 2.098 reduction includes all the adds. I think before today, you had only seen the reductions. These adds, this is the first time for you to see these adds.

Trustee Culton asked. Were these reductions identified? What process did we use to identify these reductions?

Ms. Mayo replied. I'll start at the top. For the campus closure estimates, I did analysis and basically looked at some statewide data on what happens when a campus closes. So, you save non-payroll, you save utilities, you save some positions. In our example, because we are not reducing people. Teachers go with the kids, we know that, but in some instances, office staff probably would not be duplicated. Because our campuses are reopening, we didn't make a permanent change, so only vacant positions would be held out of the budget. So, I didn't assume the full expected savings.

In addition to that, I didn't reduce the utilities down as much because anytime you have a campus that's closed, you still have to have utilities. You can't turn it all the way off. But because we will have workers in the building, I still expect that there's going to be some draws on utilities that are probably not there if it's completely closed.

So, I took the average analysis from statewide data of closed campuses and then pulled it back to make it more conservative. It was my analysis and assumption, I couldn't find another district that had done something like this, and so I reviewed it with Dr. Goree, and we decided this was a conservative number. It could likely be more savings than we see. But I wanted to be conservative because I wanted to make sure you had your planning tools.

The middle school PLCs, HR worked with TASB to review the PLCs, and they reviewed all the data and all the positions at the middle school. And that analysis was done by TASB through the TASB study. Instructional support specialists, that was also work done through TASB. When I reviewed them, some of them are federally funded. So, I reviewed position by position and identified only the positions and benefits that affect the general fund, that's reflected there. The utility savings were also done because we're adding HVAC systems all throughout the district through the bond. I used statewide estimates to identify per square footage what possible savings could be for the HVAC systems we have already added. We are continuing to add them. So that number could also increase as those get added. And the unused allowances phone, and travel, that was just done by reviewing line by line position budgets and doing year over year analysis and determining that we weren't using some of those year over of year, so we took them out.

President Dr. Flowers asked. And so, for clarity, the middle school PLC savings, that \$1 million, that is because instead of our middle school teachers having two prep periods or two opportunities to have

PLC, now they'll have one, which means that they can teach more classes. Is that correct?

Ms. Mayo replied. Yes, that's correct.

Trustee Phillips asked. Ms. Mayo, would you give us some explanation behind the Lead With Impact assets and experiences? What is that?

Ms. Mayo replied. I will lean on Ms. Wallace for that. That goes directly related to the items needed for our strategic communication plan.

Ms. Connie Wallace replied. Good evening, Dr. Flowers, Board of Trustees, and Dr. Goree. The work that we have been engaging in with Holdsworth for the past two years is our leadership definition, which is Lead With Impact. And so, what we want to do now is really make sure that it's pervasive across our campuses so that we can cascade the message down all the way from our upper leadership to our campus leadership, teachers and eventually to our students.

With Lead With Impact, the ultimate goal there is that we are aligning our talent systems with all our processes for identifying, hiring and selecting teachers and leaders for our district. And so, it's really just the assets, the communication tools, the visuals that you'll see at campuses in the district offices, campus conference rooms when they're working with their different teachers and leaders during PLCs so that they can refer back and say, "This is our leadership definition. This is what we are about here in Duncanville ISD." So that it becomes, people speak about it with automaticity. They are clear about what we expect here in our district.

President Dr. Flowers asked. Where did the \$50,000 come from? Is this close to what we did this year? How did we come up with \$50,000?

Ms. Wallace replied. It is reflective of some of the funds that we just kind of pulled together out of our existing budget this year, and by adding an additional about \$20,000, \$25,000 to that. One of the things that we were able to do this year out of our existing budget, we purchased signage for the campuses so that in their boardrooms, so that they had one of each of the signs, so Lead With Impact, the categories, the placemat, we call it a placemat, which has our competencies. They receive three signs per campus.

But really for us to make this very well-known and clearly communicated throughout our district, we really need to ramp up the signage. We need to have different tools and resources available. One of the things that we want to do is bring together a group of teachers and leaders this summer, which would cost us money to do, so that they can help us to craft or create experiences or a tool kit for campus leaders to have at their fingertips so that when we focus on drive growth, which is one of our areas, when we focus on drive growth, they can have a tool kit to use with their staff so that they can actually do experiences with them about what does it really mean to drive growth in Duncanville ISD.

But to make some of those experiences happen, we would need extra duty funds. And so, while it says assets and experiences, that would be one of the experiences that we would be pulling together, a group of teachers and leaders to craft so that we can carry that forward into the campuses.

Trustee Phillip asked. I understand, I mean the signage and the tool kits. What about online tool kits?

We're trying to work through attrition to save some money. \$50,000 to put signs up to remind people, it just seems like, to me it just makes no sense. Online tool kits, is that an option?

Ms. Wallace replied. Absolutely. And we intend to do, have a place to curate all our assets on our website, and we will definitely make that happen. And if the decision is that we don't have the funds to put the physical signage up, then we will definitely adjust.

When I say experiences, I think that it is critical for us to cascade the message and make it pervasive in the district. But that would require us to have additional funds to pay our teachers and leaders that we are going to invite to help us create those so that they're not done in isolation. Because this is not a project that we wanted just to be something that we feel these will be great things to help people understand. We really want to lean in on the boots on the ground, the teachers, the leaders, and put their minds at work to help us create some of those experiences that then principals, it'll alleviate some of the things that they may need because then they will be able to just grab and go, use those with their staff to communicate out.

Trustee Phillips commented. Sounds like balloons to me, but I'm over it.

Trustee Fahey commented. I was thinking the same.

Trustee Fahey asked. Are we talking balloons and glitter and the pretty stuff?

Ms. Wallace replied. Absolutely not. We are more so talking about a lesson plan.

Trustee Fahey commented. A lesson plan. Okay. Because I wasn't sure about the craft. Okay. I wasn't sure really what we were speaking of.

Ms. Wallace replied. When I did use the word craft so that we could come together and craft, and what I meant by that is create, so as a group of teachers and leaders, we want to invite them to the table so that we can all year, for the past couple of years, we've been teaching our principals and assistant principals about the different competencies and the categories associated with Lead With Impact, which is our leadership definition.

When we bring the teachers and leaders together this summer, we will be inviting them to help us create lesson plans that the principals could then take back to their campus. So, if we designate September as drive growth month, they will have a toolkit of already designed experiences that they can lead with their teachers and leaders, so they can understand what it means to drive growth in Duncanville ISD.

And the significance there is that it does alleviate the need for principals across the district to have to come up with those ideas themselves. And because of our hiring practices, our professional development is all rooted in our leadership definition, that's where we're trying to be very systematic in our approach to the work.

Trustee Fahey asked. When you mention lesson plans, I mean, is this part of Bluebonnet, or is it one of

the curriculums? How does it...

Ms. Wallace replied. No.

Trustee Fahey asked. Is it something extra?

Mrs. Wallace replied. When I say lesson plan, I'm speaking of a tool or a resource that a principal can use. So, every principal, they host monthly staff meetings. Whenever they stand in front of their staff in order to introduce drive growth, then they would have a plan of action that they can say, this is how I'm going to introduce what it means to drive growth in Duncanville ISD. It's not a lesson plan that in the same sense as a teacher's lesson plan in their classroom, but in a similar fashion.

Trustee Fahey asked. And is it a Holdsworth idea?

Ms. Wallace replied. Yes, it is the body of work. It is us taking our learning from Holdsworth for the past couple of years to the next level.

Dr. LaSonja Flowers commented. Dr. Goree, we would just like to challenge you to adjust that \$50,000 Lead With Impact and solidify if there's a workshop or some type of experiences. How many teachers are we talking about? How many days? But as we go through all the time for cost containment of \$50,000 for assets and experiences, we don't feel like that's good stewardship.

Dr. Goree replied. Thank you. And let me thank the board too for your feedback. It's helpful as we go through the budget to continue to be impactful with those things that the board supports, because that is important that the board supports it. Thank you.

Trustee Culton asked. I would like to see us devote attention towards literacy. Can we give books to kindergartners?

Dr. T. Goree replied. Absolutely.

Trustee Culton commented. I want to see if you can bring something like that that we can include in the, I'm just one person, but I'm just asking.

Dr. Goree replied. Thank you very much.

President Dr. Flowers commented. Dr. Goree and I started this conversation a couple of weeks ago, Trustee Culton, and we are working on addressing that literacy gap to have that conversation with the board. And I can definitely see better use of \$50,000.

Dr. Goree replied. Right. In fact, very soon there will be a formal presentation of our district literacy plan presented to the board, which we're really excited about.

Trustee Culton asked. Will it be before we adopt a budget?

Dr. Goree replied. That presentation will come after the adoption of the budget. But again, we can directly show you how that program is impacted in the budget that you will adopt.

And one thing I do want to add too is that a part of this work, and this came as we work through some of the things when Dr. Bigbee was here doing our cost containment, is that we're working on a financial manual that will include will specify when we do things like buy food, will specify decorations and what that looks like. And I think that we are the City of Champions, but we too understand and agree that in some of our decoration settings, we must scale back based on where we are fiscally, even as I've worked closely with Dr. Nix around things like our Camp Panther, which is usually on steroids. But again, looking at how we can scale that back to show respect to our fiscal situation.

President Dr. Flowers asked. I had a question on 14. It's really not about page 14, but it's more for Dr. Goree. Have we considered options too, I'm thinking about reimbursements and travel and those things? In a past district, we had district vans for SLT or teachers or particular administrators, so instead of paying individual mileage and gas for 12 people that are all traveling to Austin, that it's contained in a couple of vans or buses or something like that, and it was very cost-effective.

Dr. Goree replied. Absolutely. And I'm looking at Ms. Zamora because we are in the process of doing this very thing. We are actually working through a couple of options around what's called White Fleet, where you have those district vehicles so that you can be more efficient when you're traveling, say to Austin or to different places. We are certainly in the process of doing that. Not a part of this budget because the group that we were working with actually ended up being a budget increase. But we do know that there are ways to work around that. We are working to identify different vendors in that respect.

Trustee Culton asked. Could we get a grant update?

Dr. Goree replied. Yes, ma'am.

Trustee Culton commented. I mean, not now.

Dr. Goree replied. Right, we'll write that question down. We'll add that to the note too.

President Dr. Flowers asked. And while we're doing notes, the Champions' Choice event was incredible, and I'm just wondering, is that the best of number that we could come in with \$239,814? And how much of that are we doing? \$239,000, I'm just wondering what's involved in that.

Dr. Goree replied. I will go back and look at that again. I do know that Dr. Nix's division, as well as Ms. Wallace's division has worked on that. And it's actually down, believe it or not. But what you saw happen this year was that because it was not a budgeted amount, a dollar amount, we all had to scramble to pull together the resources to do that. But let me assure you that we will review that again. And again, it was a steroid type of event, but we will review that to make sure that it is something that our community is super excited about because I do believe, and we know that choice is going to be critical as we move forward. So, we will look at that to make sure that we cannot adjust that sum and

still have an amazing event.

President Dr. Flowers commented. Thank you. And we are not talking about compromising quality.

Dr. Goree replied. No, not at all. And I don't perceive it that way at all.

President Dr. Flowers asked. Are there any additional questions for Mrs. Mayo regarding the PowerPoint? My questions aren't regarding the PowerPoint.

Does anybody have any questions on anywhere else in the binder before I start? I'll save for last.

Oh, these pages aren't numbered, but it's the Teacher Salary Schedule 2024/25 school year. It's immediately after Teacher Pay Scale. We desperately needed pagination for this.

I just have a question about, could we consider adding a column for doctorate? We are an educational institution, and we are promoting teachers to continue their education, and we don't offer an additional stipend for a doctorate degree. We are one of the few districts that don't do that. And so, I'm just wondering if that's been discussed.

Dr. T. Goree replied. It has not been discussed, but we absolutely can look into that.

Trustee Culton asked. I have a question regarding the teacher salary schedule. There's, what, \$11,200 difference in a teacher with zero years and with 30 years. How is the schedule set?

Ms. Pamela Brown replied. Good evening. The schedule is set to give teachers, well, of course, with more years of experience, a higher rate of pay. And so, most teachers' salary scales increase by step. And as Ms. Mayo discussed, the legislature is proposing, possibly, that teachers with higher levels of experience have an even greater increase. And so, this kind of models that already.

Trustee Culton asked. So, the state will have to address that. And I guess my observation relates to, you take somebody with zero years of experience, they're making 58.5, but then you look at teachers that have 30, and they're only making 11,200. That's 30 years. But you're saying that, I guess, the state is going to have to address that and we have no control over this?

Ms. Brown replied. I was going to say, our teachers' step schedule kind of models other teachers' step schedules where you increment. Some districts give \$300 just for every step, and they just work their way up until you get to the last year, whether it be 30 years, 35 years, or things of that nature. And so, on our step schedule, it kind of increases as you get higher, but the teachers' salary schedule is whatever the board adopts and approves. So, it could vary by step. As Ms. Mayo said, the legislature is proposing that... they could, for example, I don't want jump too much in her lane, but they could propose, for example, that teachers 10 years or more get a certain increment. It could be 20 years or more. And so, just depending on what the legislature proposes, then teachers at the higher end of the salary schedule may get a different step increase than those at the lower end, depending on what they pass.

Dr. T. Goree added. The one thing I was going to add is that this is a part of that salary study that we'll be doing to make sure that our teacher pay is aligned to what industry says it should be at those certain levels. That's an age-old issue in education, is that those jumps and increments just have never been large in the teaching field.

Trustee Culton commented. Yes, I noticed that a lot of our teachers don't have long tenure. So maybe if the scale provided a greater salary at the higher end, we might be able to attract some of the other teachers from other districts if their schedules look like this. I'm glad that you all will be looking at this. Thank you.

President Dr. Flowers asked. This doesn't have a page number. I'm still in the compensation manual, and it's the Pay Grade AP 2 assignment. My question is, there's a social worker listed here, how many social workers do we have?

Ms. Brown replied. Good evening. We had two social workers for the '24/25 school year, but moving into next year, that would be one.

President Dr. Flowers asked. What differentiates our social worker from our school counselors?

Ms. Brown replied. Our social workers currently had a license in social work, and so they were licensed social workers. In addition to doing school, they could provide counseling services as well. And so, I know some of the support counselors and some of the student services and campus support team will be taking on the role and some of the duties to support in the absence of that one social worker.

President Dr. Flowers asked. If we didn't have a social worker, then that position would be a traditional counselor?

Ms. Brown replied. A lot of those things would be supported by the counselor, yes, ma'am.

President Dr. Flowers asked. I'm not asking if we cut the social worker. I'm just wondering if all our counselors are... Let me stick to my notes. Are our counselors receiving SES training, and if so, how often are there certifications given because of that? Are our counselors equipped to provide SES?

Ms. Brown asked. I'm going to speak, but you're referring to the social-emotional learning counselors?

President Dr. Flowers replied. Yes.

Ms. Brown replied. Yes. So, I mean, our counselor-

President Dr. Flowers commented. No, no, no. Our regular counselors, not the support counselors.

Ms. Brown replied. I do know the support counselors and they have monthly counseling PLCs where they do provide some of those social-emotional strategies. I'm going to ask Mr. Graham to come up since he can provide more details about their training.



Mr. Tellauance Graham replied. Good evening to Dr. Flowers, to all other trustees, and to Dr. Goree. Our counseling department does have our monthly PLCs with all counselors, and they do social-emotional learning, professional development with them. We're also working on ensuring that our teachers receive that same SEL professional development as we want to move it down to that level to ensure that our students are receiving that type of help from our teachers

President Dr. Flowers asked. Who's providing professional development to the counselors, and who's providing it to the teachers, and when?

Mr. Graham replied. Currently, our director of counseling provides the training to all our counselors, and that happens monthly. They have monthly PLCs with all the counselors. We're also having on campus; the high school also has PLCs directly from the lead counseling specialist with the counselors on that particular campus. Now, if they have SEL week monthly, I don't know that, but we do get that monthly from the director of counseling.

President Dr. Flowers asked. Okay, so monthly, are all the counselors are getting SES training?

Mr. Graham replied. Yes.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So, should they technically be able to provide that social-emotional support to all our students?

Mr. Graham replied. In a way, they should, but let's remember that our social workers have received specialized training through their college, and they will have a more in-depth knowledge of that type of training and professional development that they have received.

President Dr. Flowers commented. But we're talking about one, we have one for the entire district.

Mr. Graham replied. Yes. So, in that case, we do have our social-emotional learning specialists now that will have to get trained more from that one social worker to ensure that they're providing some extra help in those areas where we're trying to be more efficient since we won't have that extra social worker anymore.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So, all our counselors, if we're going to give our students what they need, we shouldn't need an additional category of counselors like social workers when our counselors can get the same training so that they can provide that. If we only have one or two, then our kids are still not getting what they need?

Mr. Graham replied. There are a few other things that our social workers do besides just that. Now, you do have the pantry that will take a little bit more help that we'll need in order to ensure that it is being run properly as well. So, efficiency, of course, is what we want to do in the department, and we're going to do whatever it takes to ensure that students get what they need. Now, if that means getting more software programs that's going to help us deliver SEL directly to the students better if that ensures that we get our restorative aides and our SEL counselors trained better so they can provide more support,

but, of course, our goal is to be efficient. So, whatever we must do to ensure that people are getting what they need, we're going to do.

President Dr. Flowers asked. That's what we want to know. What type of training are we providing and support so that our counselors can give our kids what they need? And does it have to be a social worker that works with the pantry?

Mr. Graham replied. It does not have to be a social worker. And in fact, since we only have one now, we will use some of our restorative aides and some of our SEL counselors to help that one social worker now.

Trustee Culton asked. Did we have more social workers before?

Mr. Graham replied. We had two this year. I don't know before this year.

Dr. T Goree asked. Ms. Brown, are you aware of any more than that? I'm not.

Ms. Brown replied. I'm not aware of more than two.

Trustee Culton asked. What are the duties of the social worker?

Mr. Graham replied. So, we'll start off with the food pantry, and, of course, that's ensuring that... You said-

Trustee Culton commented. Oh yeah, no, that... Okay, yeah, because you talked about the food pantry, but I'm just wondering, in these days and times, I can see a need for more social workers. So, I'm just wondering what all the social workers do. We know the pantry.

Mr. Graham replied. The next thing is providing services. When we have students that come in that need McKinney-Vento services, or just to know exactly what we have in the district, that social worker is the first person that contacts that student to let them know exactly what we have. Then there are several different programs throughout the district. You have the Christmas Angel Tree, and several other programs like that that our social workers work with, also. So, it's meeting with students throughout the year. They have a caseload. Normally they have between 80 to a hundred students that both meet with to ensure that those connected services that they provided are actually working. And if not, they continue to meet with that parent to ensure that they can get them what they need.

Trustee Culton asked. And so, are we sufficiently staffed to take care of that?

Mr. Graham replied. Currently, we are sufficiently staffed to take care of the needs of the district.

President Dr. Flowers commented. I wouldn't say we're sufficiently staffed with one social worker, but I would say that we're sufficiently staffed if all the counselors see this as part of their responsibility. The disadvantage I see with having two social workers is, then, the students that have real needs, their counselors are not aware of them, and they are all the counselors' jobs. So, if all our counselors had the

same training, because there's not a social worker degree required to work with the pantry. It's just an adult that knows what the students need and can communicate with the parents, and if the counselors are doing this all four years, then I just think that we're strengthening our counseling team to make sure that they have those skills.

Mr. Graham replied. I do agree with that. And when you think about the social worker and being that first point of contact, once they start meeting with that child, they should have that relationship with that counselor to let them know that this child is receiving these particular services. And as I trade them off to you, I expect you to continue to ensure that they're getting the services that they need to be successful.

Dr. Goree added. If I could add one thing, Dr. Flowers, and first of all, I fully agree, but when I think about some of the services, and it was a tough decision even as we went from two to one, because let me agree that in a district with 12,000 kids, you wonder, "Well, what is one or two helping?" Nevertheless, if you look at these as our most severe situations, this is when you really see the social worker get involved. And that's that caseload of about a hundred kids that Mr. Graham has referenced. So, they're working with those most difficult situations. What I will say, though, is that we know that our counseling department is going to have to pick up some of the slack just because you're now down to one person, and we know that a hundred kids' number is not going to change.

But again, as we go through budget cuts, these are some of the hard decisions that we face because we must cut something, or we'll make no progress. But again, let me agree with you that we will continue to expand upon our counseling support, even as we continue to look at the positions like our restorative people, people in that space will continue to look at how we can fine-tune the work.

Trustee Philips asked. Mr. Graham, you mentioned programs that you might need to get the counselors up to speed to where the social workers are. Could you explain what type of programs you would need to prepare them for that role?

Mr. Graham replied. So right now, I'll go back to priority two in the strategic plan, which deals with SEL. Our goal is to ensure that what gets monitored gets done. We've been using SEL programs before where we couldn't get good data on whether they were using the programs or not. So, we did add a budget item to add this program called Second Step for 6th through 8th grade to our programming. And with that, now we can get good data on, when counselors go into the classrooms, or when teachers are using the program, how are the students using it? Is it making a difference? How often do they use it? All the data that we need to ensure that we're running an SEL program.

So, as we're talking about getting it down to the student level, this is what we're referring to. When our Director of Counseling now meets with our counseling team and with our social workers, they're going to go through that platform to ensure that our counselors go into the room and use that, and help our teachers use it to ensure that we're getting data on the usage of that particular platform.

Trustee Philips asked. So, Second Step only costs us \$8,400?

Mr. Graham replied. Well, it's addition to what we're already paying for it.

Trustee Philips asked: Okay. [inaudible 01:49:32].

Mr. Graham replied. That's a great question that I'll have that answer-

Trustee Phillips asked. So, who's monitoring this program?

Mr. Graham replied. Right now, you'll have the director of counseling, along with the counselors on the campus that will be using it, and, of course, I will be monitoring it, along with the Director of Counseling.

President Dr. Flowers asked. What are you exactly monitoring?

Mr. Graham replied. We're monitoring usage rates. We're monitoring the effectiveness of the program. So, if we're looking at one of the areas, it might be relationship building, and what we like to say about SEL, it's not effective when it's in isolation. It should be embedded into the curriculum. It should be embedded into what we're doing daily. Now, these programs can take a TEK and they can create a lesson around that particular TEK and embed relationship skills into that lesson to see and create an exit ticket or some other type of curriculum item where we can measure if teachers are using it. Now, again, when it goes to effectiveness of it, that's going to be a little bit harder to measure, but ultimately, using it first. We must get something where we know that teachers are actually using it, and that's the first step.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So, we have a plan to monitor who's monitoring it, and we have an expected outcome because we've approved so many more programs and things. And if they're not used with fidelity or if there's no buy-in... And you weren't here, I'm just saying. We don't want to see another purchase of a program with it addressing a philosophical need. I would like to see next time, or whenever you bring it back, some logistics. What does this look like for somebody to use it in the classroom?

Mr. Graham replied. I 100% agree with you because, again, I believe in what gets monitored gets done, and what gets monitored publicly gets done faster. So, therefore, we will have some data on whether the SEL program is working or not.

President Dr. Flowers commented. That's what we need.

Trustee Fahey asked. Do we have both support counselors and academic counselors or is it all-in-one? At elementary and secondary. I want to know.

Mr. Graham replied. We have basically three layers of counseling in the district. So, you have your comprehensive counselor at the school that does your day-to-day counseling for that particular child with grading, and then day-to-day behavioral issues or anything of that nature.

Next, we have our support counselors, which are our SEL counselors and our restorative aide counselors. And when we start talking about response to intervention, they are basically our level 2

counselors when we have students that are having academic issues and behavioral issues that comprehensive counselors may not be able to solve, or they may not have the time to deal with, and we need some extra support for that particular child.

Our third level is our wraparound counseling services where we use Hamilton Counseling that you approved a few months ago that provides those interventions on those intensive students that we're referring to. Our support from our social workers also comes into play to ensure that if that child needs those intensive supports, they can help our wraparound counselors, and they, of course, help all three levels of counseling to ensure that the parents are involved and they're getting the services that they need.

Trustee Fahey asked. I thought of something else. So that means 8th-graders who are planning their future at high school, who helps them select the course of study?

Mr. Graham replied. That's the comprehensive counselor.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So, my next question is about ESL and LOAT. I don't know if anybody here can respond to that. What's the update on this department? Because I see we have a coordinator, we have... What's the update on that department, LOAT and ESL?

Dr. Nix replied. I can get you an update. Are you talking in terms of the staffing of that department, or in terms of the impact of that department?

President Dr. Flowers commented. The staffing. It's not paginated, but we have a specialist ESL, LOAT. We also have a coordinator for ESL, LOAT.

Dr. Goree commented. Dr. Nix, she's looking at the compensation manual. I think what the question is, you just wonder, what staff could comprise of that department now?

President Dr. Flowers replied. Yes.

Dr. Goree commented. Today.

Dr. Nix replied. Okay. I can get you an update on that. I just don't have that in front of me now. I can look at that. I just want to make sure I get you what you need. I'll look at the ESL and LOAT department and give you the most updated org chart for that department or where we are.

President Dr. Flowers commented. Yes, because I'm wondering if we could clean up our compensation manual to reflect jobs that we really have. That's really what I'm asking. If we could clean it up. I don't really need reports, but if we could clean it up to reflect the jobs we really have, because looking at some, and I know some don't exist, but we have them here.

Dr. Nix replied. Got it. I understand. Thank you.

Dr. Goree commented. Thank you. And, Dr. Flowers, thank you for that. I think that would answer your

question, but I also think we can provide you with a list of those employees that do fill those administrative positions.

President Dr. Flowers: If we could get a list of everybody on the admin pay scale, because what we have now is not everyone.

Dr. Goree replied. We absolutely can do that, yes. We've provided the directors and above, but we absolutely can do that.

President Dr. Flowers commented. With the thought in mind of cleaning up what we don't have existing right now.

Dr. Goree replied. Absolutely.

President Dr. Flowers asked. And for Collegiate, do we have a principal, dean and counselor?

Dr. Nix replied. Yes, ma'am. That is correct. We have a principal of Collegiate. We have an assistant principal of dean, Ms. Lee, and then we have a counselor. Yes, ma'am.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So that is AP/dean, those are not two different people?

Dr. Nix replied. No, ma'am. We just have one assistant administrator, which we call an academic dean, if you will, for Collegiate, and what she does is spend a lot of her time at Mountain View College, because part of our MOU is that someone needs to be there with those children. And so, the principal can be at Collegiate Academy at the location, Duncanville High School, while that allows Ms. Lee to be over at Mountain View to fulfill our MOU with the college to be there with those students.

President Dr. Flowers: I saw "dean" listed, but sometimes I hear "AP of Collegiate" and I didn't know if those were two different positions.

Dr. Nix replied. No, ma'am, that's the same position.

Trustee Fahey asked. Dr. Flowers and Dr. Goree probably can answer this. The job descriptions, some were done last spring, 2024, some have just recently been done. Who does the job descriptions?

Dr. Goree replied. So, a huge thank you to Pam Brown and her team who have worked with our staff to update our job description. In fact, one of my goals is that we will go through and update all our job descriptions, and we started with SLT.

Trustee Fahey commented. Thank you for that, because I've often wondered just what the positions were responsible for doing. Thank you.

President Dr. Flowers asked. And so, will some of the organizational charts be adjusted as well?

Dr. Goree replied. Absolutely. Right. And if you look at the compensation manual, that is last year's

manual because the new one has not been approved yet, and our goal as we go into the new one was to remove those positions that, quite frankly, no longer exist.

President Dr. Flowers asked. My last question is, can you tell me a little bit about the police communication supervisor that's proposed?

Dr. Goree replied. I'm going to invite the interim chief to come and give some information about that.

Chief Geron replied. Dr. Flowers, trustee members, Dr. Goree. So, the police communications supervisor position is one that will directly supervise the dispatchers in communications, as well as be our NCIC and TCIC, which stands for National Crime Information Center and Texas Crime Information Center, point of contact. So, there are a lot of regulations around certifications for dispatchers, for police officers and everyone that has access to criminal justice information. And so, we need one person that's in charge of making sure that all our certifications stay current. Right now, I've got our safety coordinator serving as an interim dispatcher. This position, filling it and filling the dispatch positions will free her up to be able to do her job. And those are two separate and distinct jobs.

President Dr. Flowers commented. I guess I'm confused by the police communications. The communications part is throwing me off.

Chief Geron replied. So, in my experience, communication has to do with radio dispatch, 911 call-taking, those kinds of communications, as opposed to, say, public information, or the job that Ms. Wallace does.

President Dr. Flowers commented. Okay, that's what I was wondering. So, is this person supervising dispatchers?

Chief Geron replied. Correct. Yes, ma'am. And would be doing the job of dispatching as well. My goal is to make sure that we have a dispatcher on the radio whenever we have officers in the field or working an event. We can't afford to have officers out there without a lifeline to call in. In the process of creating this position and filling the vacancies, we will work on adjusting our scheduling so that we can have that either overlapping with the schedule or adjusting over time to make sure that we have that dispatcher in position whenever officers are, again, working in the field or working an event.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So, would this police communication supervisor also serve as dispatcher?

Chief Geron replied. Correct. Yes, ma'am.

President Dr. Flowers asked. So then, is this not too different? We don't have a dispatcher and police communication person.

Chief Geron replied. Correct. So, we have a security dispatcher right now. My goal is to get her the police certification so that everyone that is a dispatcher can be a police dispatcher, whether they sit on the radio for the security side, or the next day they sit on the police side so that we have that level of competency. The supervisor would also sit on a terminal, or sit as a dispatcher, serve that function, but

would have supervisory oversight of the dispatch center as well.

Dr. Goree concluded the budget workshop. Thank you so much, again, to all the trustees. I do look forward as we work up to our next work session. Of course, continue in our one-on-one meetings around the budget, and certainly, I will be reaching out to ensure that what we bring meets the needs of the board as we meet the needs of our children. Thank you.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT AT 8:29 PM**

Trustee McNeely made a motion to adjourn; Trustee Phillips seconded the motion.



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Dr. T. Lamar Goree  
Superintendent of Schools

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Board President

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Board Secretary