



PREPARING EVERY CHILD TODAY FOR TOMORROW

On May 21, 2019, the Colleton County School Board received an update on the FY 2019-2020 proposed district budget. Administrators outlined several legislative mandates, district obligations and continuous improvement needs included in the two budget drafts presented during the meeting. Budget Option 1 totals \$47,467,840. Option 2 totals to \$48,203,462.

The district's projected revenues for FY 2020 total \$45,662,486. This leaves the district with a budget deficit of \$1,805,354 under Option 1, and a budget deficit of \$2,550,976 under Option 2.

Items that contributed to these deficits include:

- In 2019, the state legislature is requiring that school districts raise base teacher salary to \$35,000 and fund a four percent salary increase to certified staff, nurses, occupational and physical therapists, and psychologists. In addition, legislatures are requiring districts to increase employer contribution to the state retirement system by one percent, from 20.61 percent in FY 2019 to 21.61 percent in FY 2020. These mandates represent a total cost to the district of \$1,685,831 under Option 1. The state legislature is not fully funding these requirements, providing only \$1,177,186 to the district to comply with these mandates.
- Under Option 2, the district would provide an additional five percent increase to teacher salaries, in addition to the four percent required by state law. The additional cost associated with the increase to teacher salaries is \$735,622, bringing the deficit for Option 2 to \$2,550,976.
- The district is obligated to pay for increased costs associated with instructional supplies, legal services, maintenance contracts, and insurance premiums. The total cost of fulfilling these obligations is \$353,053 in both budget options.
- We also have continuous improvement needs that mirror statewide concerns expressed through feedback from teachers, district leadership, and community members gathered over the course of this year. These include classroom size reductions, additional school resource officers, increased mental health support, and cost associated with salary increases for classified staff. The total cost of funding these continuous improvement needs are \$1,254,989 in both budget options.

Our district obligations and continuous improvement needs would normally be funded through increases in base student cost, which is set annually by the legislature. By law, base student cost for FY 2020 should be \$3,095. However, the state legislature has not fully funded the base student cost since 1998. Base student cost is currently proposed to be \$2,487, an increase of two dollars over the 2018-2019 school year. Because base student cost is not fully funded at \$3,095, the loss of revenue is \$2,909,047 for 2019-2020 school year.



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District administration presented a resolution to board members to request an increase of 4.41 operating mills from the Colleton County Council to balance the budget. The motion failed to carry during the May 21 meeting. The district is continuing to explore additional options to balance the budget.

The items proposed for the FY 2019-2020 budget are designed to provide the best educational opportunities possible to our students. We have been listening to our community's concerns and questions, and we are acting to address them in every way that we can. The board will continue to discuss the proposed FY 2019-2020 school district budget at a meeting held in the Board Room at the Colleton Annex Learning Center Tuesday, May 28, beginning at 6 p.m.