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ONslow
COUNTY
SCHOOLS



Superintendent
Barry D. Collins, Ed.D.

May 7, 2019

Dear OCS Board of Education Members,

It is my distinct honor to present the Superintendent's proposed Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (FY20) budget to the Onslow County Schools Board of Education. This proposed local budget is presented to you in accordance with all state laws and local policies. It will identify the essential needs of the district as we continue to embrace the vision of Excellence in Education and continuous improvement focused on specific areas identified by our stakeholders.

We have prepared for the issues facing Onslow County Schools through a proactive, conservative approach which is efficient and designed to provide quality learning experiences. In all cases, our programs, processes, and people will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated to ensure maximum impact and efficiency, as well as to determine any necessary changes.

As we have come together to develop a budget proposal for 2019-2020, several priorities have come to the forefront as district-wide concerns. Some are related to the unprecedented experience of Hurricane Florence and its aftermath, while some are on-going challenges which face a constantly growing school district. Others are directly connected to the transient nature of OCS students moving within the county and coming to us from other parts of the country and world through our strong military connection. The priorities addressed in this proposal are focused around mental health services, safety and security and math instruction.

In the past few years, we have seen an increase in the number of non-EC students coming to us in need of mental health services. This has created a growing challenge for our regular education classroom teachers and building administrators. During this school year, the situation has been exacerbated by the psychological stress for our staff, students and families created by Hurricane Florence. Throughout the following budget proposal, you will see several items designed to assist our teachers, administrators, students and families through increased programs to support mental health services. The support includes the implementation of a suicide prevention program, the addition of four social workers, and the addition of one non-EC school psychologist.

Keeping students, teachers and staff safe and providing a secure learning environment has been a top priority for OCS. As the average age of the facilities in the district has gone up, we have seen an increased need for updating existing security systems. Similarly, as the total number of facilities across the district has grown, the need for additional safety measures has increased. The 2019-2020 budget proposal seeks to address this most important need of the district for keeping our staff and students safe. The additional security systems include door lock systems, and additional School Resource Officers assigned to our Elementary Schools.

Reviews of district math data have shown proficiency scores at or below the state average. There is no simple solution to the problem; however, strengthening foundational math skills and math instruction at the elementary and middle school levels has been shown to produce results. Designed to strengthen this base, a district-wide implementation of the Ready/i-Ready math program during the current school year in grades K-5 has shown promise in math skill development. Implementation of a common resource, using a common language, and providing a shared meaning, alignment and pacing will also address learning gaps which appear as students move from school to school within the district or come to OCS from outside the county. The adding of Ready/iReady math program to grades 6-8 this coming year will continue our upward trend in this area. We have also provided in this budget a program that will enhance elementary math instruction by allowing teachers the opportunity to advance their understanding of math content and pedagogy. Selected teachers will take university math courses that lead to a math licensure endorsement. Teachers will receive course reimbursement and a separate one-time supplement after completion. It is our belief a district-wide focus on math and math instruction will provide our students with the skills necessary to be successful at the high school level and beyond, and this belief is reflected throughout the current budget proposal.

OCS By the Numbers

- 27,000+ Students
- 4,000+ Employees
- 38 School Sites
- 285 Buildings
- 3.8 mil. sq. ft.
- 1585 acres
- 288 Buses
- 3.5 mil. Miles driven
- 15,820 Maintenance Orders

Budget at a Glance FY 2020

- FY 2019 local current expense county appropriation \$51,630,509.68
- Total key costs increase beyond our control \$2,024,000
 - includes state mandated salary adjustments, mandated employer social security cost, mandated employer retirement cost, mandated employer health insurance cost, property insurance, worker's compensation insurance, and charter school pass through
- Total highest priority expansion needs \$956,000
 - Safety and Security expansion \$273,000
 - Mental health expansion \$396,000
 - Math expansion \$287,000
- Less program adjustments (\$600,000)
- State Formula would require \$3.1 million increase in local current expense
- Previously established local formula yields over \$2.3 million increase in local current expense
- **Request Local Current Expense \$2,343,410.32 increase from county appropriations to \$53,973,920 (does not exceed previously established local funding formula)**
- Capital Outlay 2019 \$3 million received from county appropriations
- **Request Capital Outlay \$3 million increase from county appropriation to \$6 million**

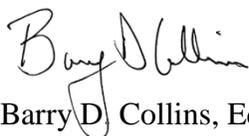
During the budget development process, valuable input was sought and received from knowledgeable resources including the Board of Education, principals, directors, and the teacher of the year advisory group. Through our review of the existing Local Current Expense Fund (LCEF) budget and upcoming operational challenges, funding needs were identified that exceeded \$73.2 million. Based upon the existing level of county appropriations to the LCEF at \$51.6 million along with other available resources including fines/forfeiture revenues of \$0.9 million and a \$6.8 million appropriation of fund balance, the identified needs still exceeded the total available funding by over \$13.9 million. Difficult decisions to remove critically needed budgetary items had to be made in order to bring the total funded needs more in line with potential funding increases through county appropriations. As there was no way to determine the amount of county appropriation that would be available for the upcoming school year due to the decision by the Board of County Commissioners to rescind the Joint Educational Funding Policy (JEFP), the estimated amount of funding that would be available utilizing the type of approach outlined in the State's default funding resolution process was calculated at an increase of \$3.1 million. Budget cuts were then made to stay within that level of funding. For comparison, the traditional funding calculation using the JEFP yielded a lower increase of about \$2.3 million. Additional cuts were then made to the budget in order to not exceed funding that would have been provided by the funding formula we have had in place with the County.

As presented in previous meetings with the Board, our annual capital outlay needs over the next five years average over \$8 million per year just for scheduled facility systems requirements. Additionally, there are needs to provide vehicles, modular classrooms, and other capital items. Capital outlay needs for next year exceed \$10.2 million. OCS only receives \$3 million per year to address this enormous need to protect and preserve these important assets. Last year, an increase of \$2.4 million for capital outlay funding was requested in keeping with the JEFP which would have merely returned OCS to the same buying power available back in 2003. That request was not funded, and no increase was provided. The capital outlay budget proposal for next year requests an increase in county appropriations of \$3 million which would primarily address the most urgent deferred roofing needs.

In conclusion, this budget proposal is a reasonable request to provide necessary resources towards funding our current operational and capital outlay needs. It should be noted that the proposed budget was made possible by the efforts of our wonderful staff. In particular, Jeff Hollamon, Steve Myers, Beth Folger, Jeff Pittman, CJ Korenek, Brent Anderson, Jodie Ramsey, our Principals, Directors, Teachers of the Year, and you our School Board Members.

Onslow County Schools' staff members are ready to provide additional information on any aspect of this budget upon request by the School Board Members.

Respectfully Submitted,



Barry D. Collins, Ed. D.
Superintendent
Onslow County Schools