

## **FY 2024 Rules of Engagement for School Board Budget Questions and the Add/Delete Process for the Combined Funds and 10-Year CIP Budgets**

These rules of engagement establish the process to be used by the Superintendent, School Board, and staff of Alexandria City Public Schools during the School Board Budget Question period and add/delete process.

### **I. School Board Budget Questions:**

The School Board Budget Questions provide a vehicle for the School Board to seek clarification and ask for additional information regarding the Combined Funds Budget and the 10-year CIP Budget. Given the time constraints, questions should focus on matters that are necessary for School Board Members to make a decision about budget approval. Staff will keep a log of all questions and responses and will post them publicly on the ACPS website.

All questions concerning the FY 2024 Proposed Combined Funds and 10-year CIP Budget are submitted electronically (to the Superintendent, Board Chair, Chief Financial Officer and Board Clerk) by the deadlines shown on the Approved FY 2024 budget calendar. (For the CIP budget, they are also submitted to the Chief of Facilities & Operations and the Executive Director of Facilities & Operations.) In lieu of this, any Board Member who does not intend to submit questions will provide that notification instead. Staff will post all responses by the deadlines noted, as is feasible based on the number and complexity of the questions.

### **II. Add/Delete and Budget Adjustment Process:**

#### **A. Overview:**

The add/delete process provides a vehicle for the School Board to make changes to the Superintendent's proposed CIP and Combined Funds budgets. There are two iterations of the Add/Delete process:

- The first iteration (in December for CIP and January/February for Combined Funds) allows the School Board to approve adjustments to the Superintendent's Proposed Budgets, creating the Board's Approved Budgets which include the amounts of City funding requested for the Operating and CIP budgets.
- The second iteration (in May for both CIP and Combined Funds) follows the City Council's approval of the City's General Fund and CIP budgets which include the final appropriation amounts to ACPS. Based on these amounts, particularly if they are different than the requested City funding, the School Board will need to make changes to the Approved Budget, creating the School Board's Final Adopted Budget.

#### **B. Add/Delete Requests:**

Requests to make changes to the CIP and Combined Funds budgets should be submitted

electronically on a School Board Budget Proposal form which will be provided by staff. This form requires the following information:

- A brief description and justification of the request;
- An estimate of the annual cost and multi-year dollar impact (if applicable) which will be validated by staff;
- An explanation of how the change advances the School Board's strategic goals and a description of the programmatic impact of the proposed change; and
- A proposal of how to offset the proposed addition or use the cost savings from a proposed deletion.

All requests to add expenditures to the CIP Budget must include an offsetting expenditure reduction, or a request to increase the City allocation. (Note that any request to increase the City allocation requires 2/3 majority vote for approval.)

All requests to add expenditures to the Combined Funds Budget must include an equivalent offset, in the form of additional revenue, expenditure reductions, or use of unassigned fund balance.

Add/delete forms are submitted electronically to the Superintendent, Board Chair, Chief Financial Officer and the Board Clerk. (For the CIP budget, they are also submitted to the Chief of Facilities & Operations and the Executive Director of Facilities & Operations.) In lieu of this, any Board Member who does not intend to submit an add/delete form will provide that notification instead.

### *C. Co-Sponsorship*

After all add/delete forms are received from the School Board Members, the items are posted for School Board review only. Each School Board Member then indicates his or her co-sponsorship of the items and this is tabulated by ACPS Staff. Board Members submit their co-sponsorships electronically (to the Superintendent, Board Chair, Chief Financial Officer and Board Clerk) by the deadlines shown on the approved FY 2023 budget calendar. (For the CIP budget, they are also submitted to the Chief of Facilities & Operations and the Executive Director of Facilities & Operations.) In lieu of this, any Board Member who does not intend to co-sponsor any adds/deletes will provide that notification instead.

In addition to the original School Board Member that proposes an add/delete item, all add/delete requests need a minimum of two co-sponsors to be considered with the Superintendent's recommended adjustments and to be prioritized for discussion at the add/delete work session. Any proposed addition or deletion that does not have this level of support will not be prioritized in the add/delete compilation but may still be discussed by the School Board. All add/delete

proposals, even those without the required support, will be posted for public review, once the dollar and FTE impacts have been validated by staff.

*D. Add/Delete Submission Process (First Round):*

- Superintendent, Board Chair, Chief Financial Officer, and Board Clerk), and Facilities staff will post all proposals and validate the reasonability of cost estimates by the applicable dates on the approved FY 2024 Budget Calendar. (For the CIP budget, they are also submitted to the Chief of Facilities & Operations and the Executive Director of Facilities & Operations.)
- School Board Members electronically submit completed Combined Funds add/delete forms (to the Superintendent, Board Chair, Chief Financial Officer and Board Clerk), and Financial Services staff will post all proposals and validate cost estimates by the applicable dates on the approved FY 2024 Budget Calendar.
- In lieu of this, any Board Member who does not intend to submit any add/delete proposals will provide that notification instead.

*E. Superintendent Recommended Adjustments (First Round):*

- The Superintendent will create a balanced list of recommended adjustments. This list may include School Board add/delete proposals as well as technical corrections that have been identified by staff during the review period. Recommended adjustments and technical corrections will be submitted to the School Board in advance of the first add/delete work session. If further adjustments are required subsequently, they will be submitted to the School Board prior to the final add/delete work session.

*F. Add/Delete Work Session (First Round) – First Meeting:*

- Staff will present the Superintendent’s recommended adjustments to the School Board.
- The School Board will discuss these recommendations, and has the option to accept or reject them in total, or in part by accepting only specific line item recommendations. All technical corrections must be accepted.
- The School Board may opt to end the add/delete work session upon the acceptance of the Superintendent’s recommended adjustments in total or continue with a discussion of each add/delete proposal. If the Board elects to continue, all eligible proposals must be discussed and an indication of majority support shall be provided as demonstrated by an affirmative thumbs up.
- If continuing beyond the Superintendent’s recommended adjustments to a discussion of the add/delete proposals, staff will present the consolidated add/delete list where all additions and deletions will be reviewed and consensus determined for each proposal. Staff will track all decisions and keep tally of the budget impact based on the majority-

supported adjustments.

- The School Board may request further information on any proposed add/delete to be discussed at a second add/delete work session.
- For any *newly proposed* add/delete (proposed for the first time during an add/delete work session), four co-sponsors are required for it to be evaluated by staff. Co-sponsors will be determined during the work session in which the proposal is made. Any *new* add/delete gaining the required co-sponsors will be submitted to staff in writing the following day by noon. *New* add/delete requests are limited to one per Board Member and must be budget neutral.
- The add/delete work session ends after all eligible proposals have been discussed. **A second add/delete work session is held unless:**
  - Board consensus has been reached on all eligible adjustments;
  - the majority-supported adjustments still result in a balanced budget or 2/3 majority-support is indicated to increase the City appropriation request; and
  - unanimous Board consensus has been reached that a second add/delete work session will not be held.

**G. Add/Delete Work Session (First Round) – Second Meeting:**

- Staff will answer follow-up questions from the first meeting.
- The School Board will continue its discussion from the first work session to complete the add/delete process as described above.
- A third add/delete work session may be held if at the end of the second add/delete work session, the Board indicates its majority support for doing so by an affirmative thumbs up.

**H. Follow-up Actions and Approved Budget Adoption (First Round):**

- Staff will incorporate into the budget all proposed adjustments for which there is consensus, and issue the changes and the resolution to adopt the budget to the School Board in advance of the meeting at which the budget will be considered for approval.

**I. Final Budget Adjustments and Add/Delete Submission Process (Second Round):**

After City Council approves its FY 2024 General Fund and CIP Budgets (in early May), the magnitude of required changes will be known. To address these changes:

- The Superintendent will create lists of recommended adjustments (including any technical corrections) to the School Board’s Approved CIP and Combined Funds budgets, and submit these to the School Board in advance of the first add/delete work session.
- School Board Members will provide “yes/no” feedback on these recommended adjustments, and may also submit additional add/delete proposals at this time.

- School Board Members must submit all “yes/no” feedback to the Superintendent’s recommended adjustments and any additional add/delete proposals by the applicable dates on the approved FY 2024 Budget Calendar to the Board Chair, Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer, and Board Clerk. (For the CIP budget, they are also submitted to the Chief of Facilities & Operations and the Executive Director of Facilities & Operations.) In lieu of this, any Board Member who does not intend to submit any feedback or additional add/delete proposals will provide that notification instead.
- After all add/delete forms are received from the School Board Members, the co-sponsorship process will occur as outlined in Section II.C.
- Staff will consolidate all submissions to include the Superintendent’s recommendations and all additional add/delete proposals and post on the website for public review by the applicable date on the approved FY 2024 Budget Calendar.
- Note: When a School Board Member supports a line item on the Superintendent’s recommended adjustment list (“yes” feedback), it will also be displayed as that Member’s adjustment in the consolidated spreadsheet. All technical corrections must be accepted.

*J. Add/Delete Work Session (Second Round) – First Meeting*

- See instructions in Section II. F.

*K. Add/Delete Work Session (Second Round) – Second Meeting*

- See instructions in Section II. G.

*L. Follow-up Actions and Final Budget Adoption (Second Round)*

- See instructions in Section II.H.

**Key Dates:** As listed in the approved FY 2024 Budget Calendar posted on the ACPS Department of Financial Services website.