



The Great Comeback: Reaffirming The Cumberland Commitment Cumberland County Schools’ Proposed 2021-2022 Financial Plan for Student Success “Budget Snapshot”

- For the 2021-2022 school year, the Cumberland County Board of Education is requesting \$88.1 million in local funding from the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners.
- This represents an increase of 9.2 percent or \$7.4 million over this year’s appropriation to fund local budget priorities.
- Calling for a great comeback, the budget request reaffirms the district’s commitment to the actions outlined in The Cumberland Commitment: Strategic Plan 2024.
- To help address student needs because of the pandemic, the request includes allocating significant resources to support students’ academic acceleration and address the social and emotional impact of the pandemic on students’ lives.
- We have identified specific strategies to improve our 23 schools designated by the NC Department of Public Instruction and the State as “Low Performing Schools” which we call Performance, Accountability, Support, and Empowerment (PASE) schools in Cumberland. Significant additional funding is needed to provide targeted assistance and resources to these schools.
- CCS plans to invest in all premier professionals by increasing the local supplement for teachers, assistant principals, principals and classified staff. It has been six years since the last supplement increase.
- The budget request also includes:
 - Hiring additional personnel to support school leaders and enable schools and students to thrive in the aftermath of COVID-19.
 - Increasing the number of project managers to address pressing facility needs at the district’s aging buildings.
 - Increasing the number of Technology Services personnel to support modern learning environments and the district’s one-to-one technology initiative.
 - Addressing anticipated salary and benefit increases as a result of projected state salary increases.

- As part of this year’s financial plan for student success preparation process, our team has built budget business cases to maximize the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds and to address many of the pressing one-time needs that exist in our school system while those funds are available, through FY 2023-2024 only. The total ESSER dollars in the business cases are \$35,897,643.00. The following strategic plan-aligned focus areas summarize those one-time needs:
 - intense support to combat learning loss;
 - resources to support designated low-performing schools;
 - technology expansion to support modern learning environments;
 - additional school nurses, counselors, and social workers to support the needs of the whole child;
 - family engagement to increase student success;
 - principal-pipeline development to grow future principals;
 - ventilation and HVAC evaluations to provide exceptional learning environments;
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety supplies to promote a safe learning environment; and
 - additional critical resources and supports.

- While we have worked to focus time-limited ESSER dollars to improve academic achievement for all students by addressing acute, one-time needs, the aforementioned local budget priorities remain, and recurring local dollars are especially critical for supporting personnel positions on an ongoing basis.

- To simply maintain the current level of funding or provide a minimal funding increase is in fact a reduction in funding when you factor in inflation. Inflation for 2021 ran about 2.0%, up from 1.6% in 2020. Therefore, if our school system receives the same level of local funding as last year, it would amount to a decrease of nearly \$1,600,000 less than last year.

- Considering COVID-19’s impact on Cumberland County, this budget request does not fully address all of the pressing needs that currently exist in our school system. However, we feel it is reasonable and provides the local resources to undergird our ‘comeback efforts.’

- In alignment with the strategic plan, this *financial plan for student success* provides funding to help us reimagine how we will engage students in robust learning experiences in Cumberland County Schools.

- Providing students with equitable access to engaging learning that prepares them to be collaborative, competitive and successful in our global world remains our overarching goal.