

## Media Release

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## **NEWS RELEASE — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

### **Lexington District One continues 2022–23 budget process**

LEXINGTON, S.C. — Lexington County School District One administrators continued the budget process by presenting a second reading of the proposed 2022–23 general fund operating budget to the Board of Trustees during the May 17, 2022 meeting.

The proposed budget prioritizes a step increase for employees, increases the beginning step of the teacher salary schedule, maintains the current student-to-teacher ratios, and focuses on retaining and recruiting employees.

The proposed budget meets state and federal requirements, and includes inflationary costs. The proposed budget provides support for additional instructional intervention for students, enhanced safety and security measures, and a stand-alone site for the Lexington One Online Learning Academy and The College Center which will both be housed on the Lexington Middle School campus next school year.

As a reminder, the district’s general fund operating budget provides funding for the district’s day-to-day operations, such as paying salaries, insurance and utilities, and purchasing supplies, materials and services. This is not to be confused with the district’s capital budget, which funds fixed assets such as facilities and equipment.

The proposed general fund budget includes these recruitment and retention strategies:

- provides all employees a step increase (about \$3.7 million);
- increases the beginning step of the teacher salary schedule from \$37,844 to \$41,410 (since 2015, the district has increased the starting teacher salary more than 28%);
- increases bus driver pay based on the state’s budget proviso and raises starting pay to \$17 an hour;
- eliminates grade five on the support salary schedule and shifts those employees to grade six;
- provides an additional 1% increase for certified, support and administrative staff (\$2.3 million);

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- reconciles pay to actual years of experience for employees on the teacher salary schedule;
- expands substitute bonuses to include a \$750 bonus for those who work 60 days or more per semester (substitutes who work 45 days per semester currently receive a \$500 bonus; substitutes may earn only one bonus amount per semester);
- increases fine arts supplements by 10%;
- expands athletic supplements to cover middle school sports; and
- continues a retention incentive every five years by providing step six pay, for instance, for two years (year five and year six) once a teacher reaches five years of experience.

The district anticipates a 2.3% student increase of 610 students, 68.67 certified and licensed professional FTE, and 38 support and administrator additions.

The budget, as it appears in this second reading, is merely a projection. The district has made preliminary projections for revenue based on historical data, the Senate version of the state budget and preliminary local assessment projections from the county.

Lexington District One administrators recommended a revised 2022–23 general fund budget of \$325,808,206 — about a 3.6% increase from Lexington District One’s current amended operating budget for 2021–22 of \$314,635,616.

The state allows districts to increase millage by the Act 388 formula (the percent of the growth in school district population and CPI). At first reading, however, Lexington District One administrators currently recommend a budget that includes no mill increase.

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