



Steve Barnette
Interim Superintendent

Engage. Inspire. Prepare.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

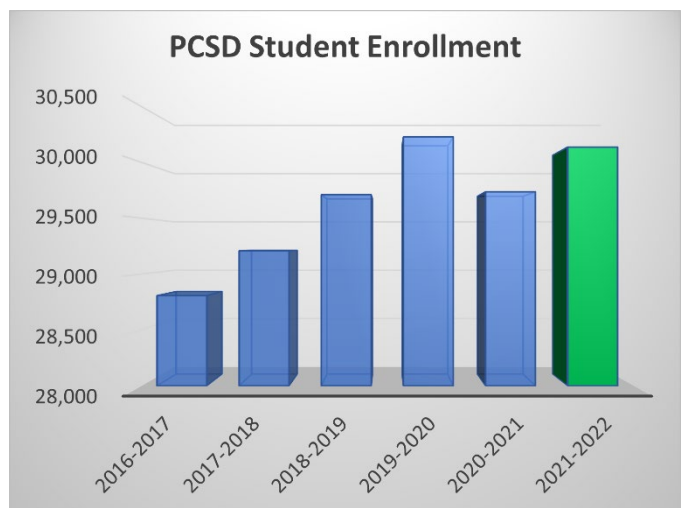
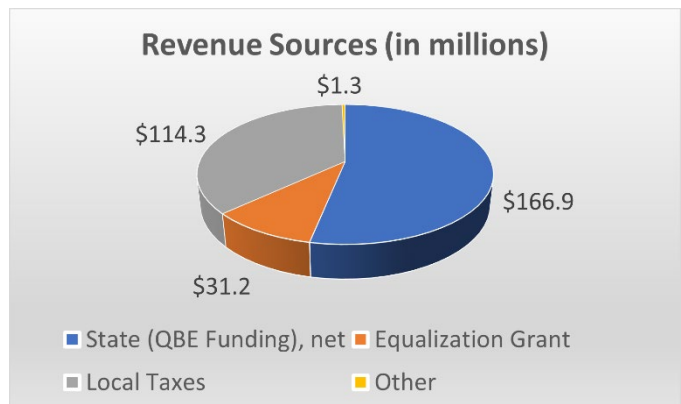
June 22, 2021

Board of Education Approves Education Improvements in FY2022 Budget, Leaves Millage Rate Unchanged

The Paulding County Board of Education has approved a budget for Fiscal Year 2022 that includes funding for a wide range of educational programs, technology enhancements, and a 2.5 percent pay increase for all staff, all while maintaining the current millage rate. The school board unanimously approved the \$313.7 million budget at its June 8, 2021 regular meeting, and approved the millage rate at today's regular board meeting following a public hearing.

The approved budget represents an 8.9 percent increase over the FY2021 budget due to a 2.5 percent increase in state funding and a county tax digest that grew more than 13 percent. The approved budget is based on an unchanged Maintenance & Operations property tax millage rate of 18.750, which the school board reduced from 18.879 in 2019. Property owners in Paulding County do not pay a separate Bond Debt millage, unlike residents in some Georgia counties. That is because debt from prior capital expenditures is being retired by a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, or SPLOST, approved by voters in 2019.

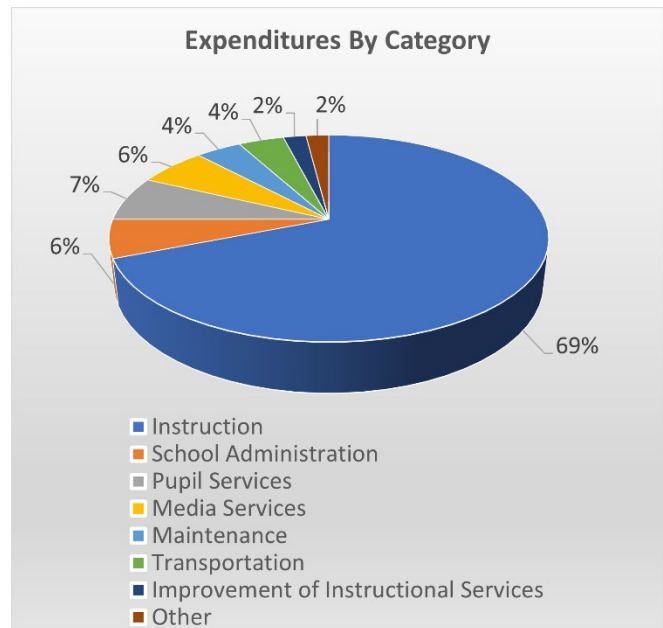
"I am very pleased that the Board was able to pass a budget that will provide exceptional educational support for students in this crucial upcoming school year," said School Board Chairman Jeff Fuller. "We would like to see a return to some normalcy in our schools following the pandemic, so it is great that with this budget we can provide the programs and resources that students are going to need. At the same time, I am thrilled we were able to support the school district's hard-working staff with a 2.5 percent raise, as well as maintain the current millage rate for property owners."





With projected enrollment expected to top 30,000 students for the 2021-2022 school year (following last year's slight decline due to the pandemic), the school district is anticipating a 2.5 percent net increase in funding received under the state's Quality Basic Education Act funding formula – to \$166.9 million. Paulding County is a relatively low wealth county with a small tax base due to limited commercial industry, but at the same time has a relatively large number of school-age children per household. The help offset the imbalance, the state funding formula provides an Equalization Grant that will total \$31.2 million for the school district in FY2022, a 7.8 percent increase over FY2021.

With education being a “people-focused” industry, approximately 88 percent of the school district budget goes to pay the salaries of teachers, school administrators, and support staff, while the remaining 12 percent includes operational expenses such as technology and utilities. The FY2022 budget will provide \$3.5 million for vehicle purchases including school buses, as well as \$3.5 million for technology to support critical enhancements to the district's wi-fi network. Additionally, the budget includes significant educational and financial improvements for schools, students, teachers and district staff. Some of those improvements include:



- A \$2.2 million increase for new textbooks and professional learning (teacher and staff training and development);
- Added instructional resources for digital learning to support the Paulding Virtual Academy as it continues to serve more than 1,800 K-12 students following the pandemic;
- An additional Math Coordinator to support middle and high school instruction;
- An Executive Director position for 6-12 Curriculum to drive improvements in middle and high schools.

By allocating 69 percent of expenditures directly toward student instruction, a level that continues to exceed the state average, the Paulding County School District remains committed to putting students first. The approved budget also leaves the district an emergency reserve that represents a healthy 17 percent of the General Fund. This efficient budget management has resulted in the Governor's Office of Student Achievement awarding the Paulding County School District a four-star Financial Efficiency Star Rating as a “low spending” district, placing PCSD in the 85th percentile of Georgia school districts with more than 10,000 students, and the 93rd percentile of all state districts.

In addition to the general fund budget, the school district has also applied for and received multiple state and federal grants to support specific literacy initiatives and additional academic programs to help mitigate learning loss attributable to the pandemic. These grants:

- Added instructional positions to support math instruction in middle and high schools;
- Added additional Early Intervention Programs;
- Added a math intervention program;
- Provided Summer School and Extended School Year opportunities for all students.



FY2022 Budget/Millage Rate Approved

“Coming out of the pandemic year, we know the upcoming school year will be an important one to reset expectations and return to the level of academic growth we were experiencing pre-COVID,” said Interim Superintendent Steve Barnette. “The FY2022 budget that the school board just approved will provide the academic support students need and will provide our teachers the resources and materials they need as well. I am optimistic about the year ahead!”

The Paulding County School District is the 12th largest school district in Georgia based on student enrollment, and the fiscal year runs begins July 1 and runs through June 30. More information about the Fiscal Year 2022 budget can be found at <https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/45542>.

Press Inquiries Please Contact:

Paulding County School District Communications Office
communications@paulding.k12.ga.us
(770) 443-8000