

Staff Responses to Commissioners Questions about FY2025 Recommended Budget

May 13, 2024, Capital Work Session Follow-ups:

1. I know I have asked this before (and received the answer). It would be good to hear again for public/parent interest what the facility plan for WCPSS schools and county buildings is for healthy air quality. What did we learn from COVID, and what changes/updates have been made and continue to be made for healthy air quality in school/county buildings? (C. Stallings)

WC Staff Response: County facilities have transitioned from MERV-8 to MERV-13 HVAC air filtration and GSA will monitor and understand the impacts on employee and visitor health.

WCPSS Response: The current facility plan, and any relevant sustainability or air quality policies: We design buildings to meet the NC Building Code and have had no discussions about air quality policies. We will be discussing a new draft policy on sustainability later this month.

Any lessons learned from COVID: We don't have any data on air quality from COVID, but we do have information from the operational side. Our systems are designed to meet the current codes in effect at the time of design. With the guidelines during COVID recommending increased HVAC run times, additional outside air, and more efficient filters, we did experience a strain on our HVAC systems. They are not designed to operate with these increase requirements long term.

Any changes that may have been made or are planned to achieve healthy air quality in school buildings? None at this time. Again, we meet all current code requirements.

2. Define/explain green stormwater (in WCPSS capital presentation slide 24). (C. Stallings)

WCPSS Response: Stormwater is funneled into retention ponds, where sediment, oils and other impurities are filtered out and allowed to settle before the water is released to stormwater systems. This is a "green" effort to reduce pollution to our streams and waterways.

3. Thanks for the discussion on solar panels for school buildings and providing this update today. Has there been any discussion/investigation of solar canopies in parking lots (especially high school parking lots)? Would there be any federal funding to pilot this (from the Infrastructure Bill or Inflation Reduction Act)? (C. Stallings)

WCPSS Response:

Has there been any discussion/investigation of solar canopies in parking lots (especially high school parking lots)? No. We do not provide solar canopies in parking lots. This is an expense that we have not pursued due to budget constraints.

Would there be any federal funding to pilot this (from the Infrastructure Bill or Inflation Reduction Act)? We are currently looking at IRA opportunities.

Can you provide the cost difference between solar ready and solar installed projects? With a clean, new design, this is a nominal increase for solar ready. If we are budgeting a total "net zero" or other significant solar add, it would be an add of about \$10 - \$12/sf, plus additional costs for electrical gear (Elementary - \$ 1.5m+, Middle - \$ 2.5m+, High - \$ 4.0m+).

4. Total Enrollment for WCPSS was requested and answer was rounded at the meeting; specifics are: (C. Stallings)

- a. Month 2 Actual (Principal Monthly Report figure) 2023-2024 is 159,995
- b. Forecast for 2024-2025 is 160,445

5. How many land-banked sites? (S. Evans)

WCPSS Response: 16

Type	Name or Designation	School/Use Type	Address
School	H-15 (Capital Blvd.)	HS	1820 Capital Boulevard, Raleigh NC
School	M-12 (@ Bryan Road ES)	MS	8317 Bryan Road, Garner NC
School	M-17 (@ Poole Road ES)	MS	0 Barwell Road, Raleigh NC (TBD)
School	M-18 (@ Woods Creek ES)	MS	7541 Woods Creek Road, Apex NC
School	Poole Road ES (E-28)	ES	1920 Barwell Road, Raleigh NC
School	E-42 (@ Rolesville HS)	ES	1099 E. Young Street, Rolesville NC
School	E-54 (Old Bunn Road, Zebulon)	ES	2200 Old Bunn Road, Zebulon, NC
School	E-55 (Louisburg Road, Rolesville)	ES	0 Louisburg Road, Wake Forest, NC (TBD)
School	E-56 (Veridea/Jessie Drive Extension, Apex)	ES	0 US Hwy 1, Apex, NC (TBD)
School	New Hill Olive Chapel Road Assemblage	ES/MS/K8/TBD	8900 & 8908 Olive Meadow Lane, Apex, NC
School	N. Ennis St. (FVMS Site)	ES/TBD	109 N. Ennis Street, Fuquay-Varina, NC
School/ESAS	Creedmoor Road Site	TBD	0 Creedmoor Road, Raleigh, NC (TBD)
ESAS	Tryon Road/Yates Mill Pond Road Site	ALP 6-12/TBD	5417 Tryon Road, Raleigh, NC
ESAS/CTE	Piney Plains Road Central Services Center	TC/CTE	1660 Piney Plains Road, Cary NC
ESAS/TBD	Wendell Boulevard (@Wendell MS)	TC/TBD	2281 Wendell Boulevard, Wendell, NC
ESAS/TBD	Optimist Farm Road Site (@ Middle Creek HS)	TBD	0 Optimist Farm Road, Cary, NC (TBD)

6. What percentage of instruction takes place or student capacity is accounted for in trailers/modular units? (S. Evans)

WCPSS Response:

What percentage of instruction takes place in trailers or modular units? Students are taught in capacity trailers (867) and non-capacity trailers (105). The percentage of students taught in trailers changes on a yearly basis. For the 2024-25 school year we anticipate that 12.7% of ES students will receive instruction in capacity trailers, 8.5% of MS students will receive instruction in capacity trailers, and 9.9% of HS students will receive instruction in capacity trailers.

What percentage of student capacity is accounted for in trailers or modular units? The percentage of student capacity accounted for in capacity trailers changes on a yearly basis. For the 2024-25 school year, we anticipate that a total of 10.7% of all student capacity will be accounted for in capacity trailers.

7. How much would it cost to incorporate meaningful green energy generation in each new school? (M. Calabria)

WCPSS Response: We haven't estimated the full extent of solar and geothermal because current budgets are so tight. For solar at a new elementary school, a rough estimate would be \$1.5m plus additional electrical and switchgear costs.

General Fund Commissioner Questions and Responses

8. What, if any, costs do we anticipate related to the County's more central role in the COC (Continuum of Care)? (M. Calabria)

Response: The initial 12-month anticipated costs related to the County's more central role in the CoC is \$1.5 million; including a consulting firm contract to facilitate the transition, the cost of the HMIS contract, a CoC Director and contracted or direct employees. Some of these costs will eventually be offset by federal grants, though the grant transition process from the current recipients can take 6 to 9 months.

9. Please provide the rationale for why additional support for Legal Support Center was not funded (fully) and what specifically the funding would have enabled had it been recommended. (M. Calabria)

Response: The Legal Support Center's budget request was partially funded. The County Manager recommended \$31,000 of the request to allow the Center to extend hours. The remainder of the request was for funding to hire a Spanish-speaking staff member to supplement the existing Spanish-speaking staff member. The rationale for the County Manager not recommending this portion of the request was twofold. The Legal Support Center is not a service the County is mandated to provide; requests for mandated functions were prioritized over non-mandated functions. The second is the Legal Support Center is a partnership among multiple jurisdictions. Sixty-two percent of all clients served by the Center live within the City of Raleigh; the City has not increased funding for the Center since its launch in January 2023 and no other municipalities have been approached for funding.

10. Please provide the rationale for why education related community organizations were not funded (fully) and what specifically the funding would have enabled had it been recommended. (M. Calabria)

Response: East Wake Education Foundation requested an increase of \$29,800 to pay education staff (Program Director, Teacher, and two Teacher Assistants) that supported core programs. This request was partially funded, with an increase of \$10,620 recommended. The recommended increase is intended to support the Program Director and the two Teacher Assistants. The organization's total FY25 Recommended allocation is \$59,500 compared to \$48,880 in FY24 Adopted. The foundation serves Zebulon, Wendell, and Knightdale, and can also request funding increases from these jurisdictions. Requests for mandated functions were prioritized over discretionary functions.

Response: Communities in Schools (CIS) requested an increase of \$20,160 to support salaries for certified teachers and staff providing educational and enrichment services to residents, which included after-school/summer programs for students in CIS's learning centers. CIS also included that 75% of the requested increase would be dedicated to youth initiatives, with the remainder supporting adults. This

request was partially funded, with an increase of \$7,960 recommended. CIS's total FY25 Recommended allocation is \$107,800 (compared to \$99,840 in FY24 Adopted). CIS can request and receive funds from other partners and jurisdictions. Requests for mandated functions were prioritized over discretionary functions.

11. Please provide the rationale for why Child Protective Services Investigator/Assessor were not funded and what specifically the funding would have enabled had it been recommended. (M. Calabria)

Since CPS Investigator/Assessor was not funded, what were the determinants used to evaluate the need for the position? (T. Waters)

Response: The Child Welfare division of Health and Human Services requested funding for a Child Protective Services (CPS) Assist Investigator/Assessor position to join an existing team of 1 Supervisor, and 4 other Assist Investigator/Assessor positions, funded in FY24—the Investigator/Assessor positions were recently filled in February 2024. This position would have focused on conducting planned and unannounced home visits, collaborating with other counties and states to ensure child safety when families relocate, and initiating reports of abuse, neglect, and dependency for children under 18. The County Manager's Office would like to understand the impact of the positions added to this program in FY24 as part of a staffing model analysis to help determine what future investments in this program is needed.

12. Please provide the rationale for why Permanency Social Workers for Adoption were not funded and what specifically the funding would have enabled had it been recommended. (Calabria)
What were the factors in determining not to fund the Permanency Social Workers for Adoption? (T. Waters)

Response: The Child Welfare division requested two Permanency Social Workers for the Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP). These positions aimed to proactively support adoptive families and improve permanency outcomes. The County Manager's Office would like to understand the impact of the 1 Adoption Subsidy Supervisor and 1 Social Worker positions added to this program in FY24 as part of a staffing model analysis to help determine what future investments in this program is needed.

13. If the HIV Nurse Supervisor remains unfunded, how will the associated work be supported? What is the salary range of the position? (T. Waters)

Response: While the HIV Nurse Supervisor position demonstrates strong justification, resource allocation limitations in FY25 necessitate alternative solutions. The existing STD Nurse Supervisor will continue overseeing both HIV and STD nurses, a practice currently employed. HHS is recommended to explore repurposing long-term vacant positions to potentially alleviate workload concerns. This position remains a high priority for FY26 budget considerations. The salary range is \$64,809 - \$110,172.

14. With a growing population of aging residents, what factors were considered when determining not to fund the Senior and Adult Services Social Worker and Adult Protective Services Social Worker? (T. Waters)

Response: While the program is experiencing rapid growth in reported cases and evaluations, current data suggests manageable caseloads and meeting established targets. In discussions regarding budget

expansion capacity with BMS and CMO, the department prioritized other areas for expansion, there are existing resources to include temporary employment of additional staff and the utilization of overtime.

15. Please provide the rationale for why Veterans Services officers were not funded and what specifically the funding would have enabled had it been recommended. (M. Calabria)

Response: The department requested 2 Veteran Service Officer (VSO) positions and 1 VSO Manager to increase the number of Veteran Service Officer staff from 4 to 7. In the FY24 Adopted Budget, 1 VSO was added to increase the number of VSOs from 3 to 4. The additional VSO added in FY24 reportedly led to a 56% increase in client intake due to the team's ability to cover more regions of the county. One of the three requested positions was included in the FY25 Recommended Budget to continue to build on the success of increased client intake while the department works to gather updated data on the Board's goal. The department and Budget and Management Services will work collaboratively this summer to obtain the updated data necessary to make future decisions.

16. What, if any, funding is going toward achieving the following board goal: E 1.2: Explore the need for summer and track-out programs and implement recommendations supporting children whose families face barriers to access. (M. Calabria)

Response: To better understand the out-of-school-time space in Wake County, the Cooperative Extension Department created a Steering Team in April 2023 to engage the largest providers of out-of-school-time programs and create an inventory of existing programs in the community compared to needs expressed by parents. The initial results of this [inventory](#) (linked) were shared at the October 23, 2023 Education Committee meeting. At that meeting, the committee members and other commissioners present supported continued collaboration among Wake County and our partners to identify gaps in out-of-school-time programs and ways we can work together to fill those gaps. The Steering Team continues recurring meetings to discuss gaps, resource needs, and policy issues in out-of-school-time programs. Community Services will establish a pilot program in the upcoming fiscal year.

17. What, if any, funding is going toward achieving the following board goal: PS 1.3: Assess local trends and implement strategies to assist crime victims by connecting them to services and resources, especially those in marginalized populations and communities experiencing crime victimization at disproportionate rates. (M. Calabria)

Response: The Recommended Budget does not include new, additional resources towards PS 1.3. The WCSO did not submit any expansion requests related to this initiative. The WCSO submitted expansion requests based on their operational priorities; additional resources toward this initiative were not among those requests.

The Sheriff's Office staff provided this information on current services. "Our Victims Assistance Unit deals primarily and solely with all the Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Temporary No Contact Orders. We not only have orders from here in Wake County, but orders from other counties and states. We ensure that all orders are put in our system and sent out for service by our Domestic Violence Deputies under the Patrol Division. Once an order is served either the deputy serving the order or someone from the Victims Assistance Unit will call and notify the victim of the service and answer whatever questions that they may have. For additional resources we refer victims to InterAct. For offender release notification, that is done through an automated system and the victim would need to

have an account set up for that notification through VINE. VINE is also utilized more with the District Attorney's Office and InterAct since our Victims Assistance Unit may never deal with a victim. Not all victims file for a Domestic Violence Protection Order."

18. I was interested in a broad picture of what the contracted services mainly include. For example, the County Attorney's Office lists \$100,000 to cover increased contracted legal services in response to real estate revaluation appeals. I did not see explanations for most departments. I was interested in learning if the amounts could potentially justify more staff to do work in-house at a lower cost. What additional information can you provide on contractual services for the following: (T. Waters)

- Board of Elections
- Finance
- Internal Audit
- Human Resources
- Register of Deeds
- Tax Administration

Response: County department operations are largely delivered through benefit-eligible county direct employees. The County department leaders consider their service delivery objectives when contracting for any portion of their programs. The County typically contracts for specialized services where the expertise is found in businesses or non-profits. This allows access to experts and resources and their tools. Utilizing contracts enables flexibility and agility to adapt to changing market conditions and challenges while providing cost savings and service level improvements.

Sometimes departments utilize recurring contracted service dollars to maximize County resources. An example would be Human Resources' ongoing contract with a benefits broker to ensure the County is getting the best prices, services, and coverage for employee insurance and benefit programs. This contract leverages multiple staff within a brokerage firm; the cost of hiring the same people individually would cost the County more.

Another example of a recurring contracted service is for the County's financial statement audit. NC General Statute requires that this audit be conducted by an external firm annually, and the NC Local Government Commission authorizes that only certain firms with specific local government audit expertise and training conduct these types of audits.

The Board of Elections manages temporary positions through their contracted services budget to support Early Voting sites and handle high volume in-office work tasks. These costs can fluctuate from election cycle to election cycle, but elections cannot succeed without these vital service workers from our community. Managing these costs through the Board of Elections contract services budget is more cost-effective than if these positions were maintained through in-house personnel and staffing processes.

19. How many individuals will benefit from the \$11,000 allocated to the Leadership Raleigh program to help advance the cross-organizational Blueprints initiative to dismantle systemic racism? How much year-to-date has been made available and utilized? Has past availability of funds met demand? (T. Waters)

Response: This is the second year of our Raleigh Chamber / Leadership Raleigh partnership. The recommended funding allocated to the Leadership Raleigh program will allow four community leaders to participate. For the current fiscal year, we were able to support 4 community members to participate (totaling \$11,200). The FY25 recommended budget is not \$11,000 additional dollars, but funding to continue to support this effort at FY24 levels.

20. What was the cost of the sprinter van to expand Bookmobile programming not funded? (T. Waters)

Response: A sprinter van would cost \$150,000. The County Manager's Office encourages Community Services to explore grant opportunities for the sprinter van. The request to replace the existing bookmobile, which is at the end of its useful life, is recommended for \$283,000. The sprinter van would have been complementary to the bookmobile.

21. Eviction prevention programs often yield cost savings for communities by reducing the need for emergency shelter, healthcare services, and other support systems associated with homelessness. What factors led to only partially funding prevention services? How was the funded amount determined? (T. Waters)

Response: The decision to partially fund the request is based on an analysis of actual spending over the prior two fiscal years. An additional \$450,000 of financial assistance funds is included in the recommended budget, based on Budget and Management Services (BMS) calculations of the prior two fiscal years of spending on financial assistance for the program.

The \$450,000 addition supplements the \$295,415 in Housing's FY25 base budget for the program's financial assistance to bring the total budget available to the department for prevention financial assistance to \$745,415, which is above the projected expenditures based on a 2-year average. This calculation excludes recurring federal ESG and CDBG assistance.

22. How many employees currently work in animal care, control, and adoption? What is the salary range for the program coordinator, veterinary technician, animal care receiving technician, and animal shelter technician? (T. Waters)

Response: There are 48 full-time positions in the Animal Center. The following salary ranges come from the Job Title and Market Range Inventory of March 2024:

- Animal Services Foster Coordinator: \$48,812 - \$82,989
- Animal Health Care Veterinary Technician: \$38,424 - \$65,319
- Animal Health Care Receiving Technician: \$35,508 - \$58,588
- Animal Shelter Attendant: \$34,641 - \$57,161

23. What was the amount of the Wake Invests in Women marketing contract that was not funded? (T. Waters)

Response: In FY24, the County funded \$20,000 for a Wake Invests in Women marketing contract. The amount requested in FY25 for the Wake Invests in Women marketing contract is \$18,000. Data and outcomes associated with the increased funding last year are not yet known. Data and outcomes on the marketing contract are sought prior to adding more funds for the contract.

24. If the Crime Scene Science Forensic Manager remains unfunded, how will the associated work be supported? (T. Waters)

Response: The Forensic Manager was requested to achieve and maintain accreditation for the Crime Scene Science Division, while also having a secondary responsibility of responding to requests for crime scene service when requests for service were high. Accreditation of the Crime Scene Science Division would be a new initiative for the Crime Scene Science Division of CCBI – the division has not been accredited before. In the County Manager’s recommended budget, four Crime Scene Specialists are included to alleviate the increase in requests for crime scene service seen in the past few years. CCBI will continue to strive towards accreditation using existing resources. The department prioritized the Crime Scene Specialists above the Forensic Manager; the County Manager focused on existing and mandated requests compared to new initiatives.

25. Information from Emily (May 7) states that the Sheriff’s Office currently has 126 vacancies (jobs related to the detention center). And an additional 123.6 FTEs will be needed for a re-opening of the Annex? I know Sheriff Rowe has made progress in this area. What would be / is the plan to continue to address these vacancies? (C. Stallings)

What is the current vacancy rate for the Sheriff’s Office? Given recruitment challenges in law enforcement across the nation, what steps are being taken to increase the ability to fill the newly funded positions? (T. Waters)

Response: The FY25 recommended budget includes an Active Recruiter who will focus on vacant detention positions. Sheriff Rowe and his staff are also working with HR and BMS to review and update hiring ranges, as well as to provide pay incentives for special skills or relevant experience. Pay incentives are available for education, certification, foreign language fluency, prior Detention or LEO service, and military service. WCSO is also providing a \$5,000 signing bonus and \$1,000 referral bonus. The current department wide Sheriff’s Office vacancy rate is 17% per Wake County Human Resources. The County Manager’s Office will meet with the Sheriff’s Office over the summer to provide technical assistance.


26. What factors were considered when it was determined not to fund the Deputy Sheriff for D.A.R.E. program given the Opioid Epidemic? (T. Waters)

Response: In reviewing this request, the supporting materials suggested the need for greater understanding of the problem to solve and collaboration with the Sheriff’s Office, other departments and partners for future consideration given the resource allocation considerations for the County Manager in this year’s budget. BMS asked, if the request is resubmitted for the FY26 budget, for additional evidence on the program outcomes, the level of priority from the WCPSS, and a justification

for using a deputy sheriff position for social-emotional programming, that may be better served by a different type of resource/job role.

27. With the Detention Capacity Planning presentation, the Length of Stay has increased in the past several years due to an increase in violent crime. Is this a statewide, regional, national trend as well? What do we know about the break down in types of violent crime being committed in Wake County? (Stallings)

Response: The increase in jail population and shortage of staff continues to be a statewide, regional and national trend. The Sheriff’s Office continues to believe there are multiple factors contributing to this uptrend in population and average length of stay. We have identified the Wake County population increase, legislative changes (Pretrial Integrity Act), and rise of felony crimes as a few factors. The Wake County Sheriff’s Office continues to rely on its partnerships with judicial services, public, private and faith base organizations to manage these concerns.



WAKE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
2023 Crime Report

Crimes Against Society

Offense	2023 Count	Prior Year Count
ALL OTHER	1237	1067
DRUG/NARCOTICS OFFENSES	622	463
DWI	89	34
LIQUOR VIOLATIONS	4	5
PORNOGRAPHY/OBSCENE MATERIAL	15	44
PROSTITUTION OFFENSES		1
Total	1967	1614

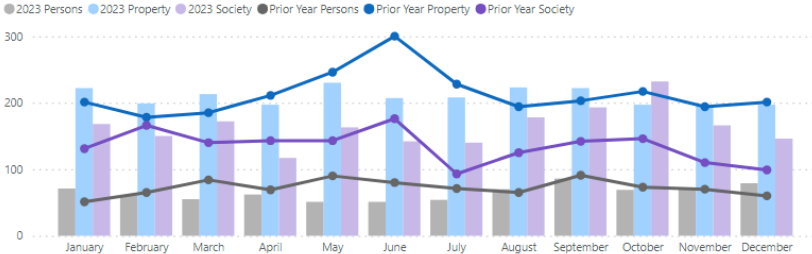
Crimes Against Persons

Offense	2023 Count	Prior Year Count
ASSAULT OFFENSES	723	808
HOMICIDE OFFENSES	8	4
HUMAN TRAFFICKING OFFENSES	1	
KIDNAPPING/ABDUCTION	9	8
SEX OFFENSES	32	33
SEX OFFENSES, NONFORCIBLE	8	16
Total	781	869

Crimes Against Property

Offense	2023 Count	Prior Year Count
ARSON	20	14
BURGLARY/BREAKING & ENTERING	240	235
COUNTERFEITING/FORGERY	10	10
DESTRUCTION/DAMAGE/VANDALISM	482	480
EMBEZZLEMENT	3	1
EXTORTION/BLACKMAIL	18	14
FRAUD OFFENSES	722	616
LARCENY/THEFT OFFENSES	752	936
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	204	211
ROBBERY	23	23
STOLEN PROPERTY OFFENSES	36	18
Total	2510	2558

The Patrol Division consists of four platoons providing services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This division is dedicated to crime prevention and the safety of Wake County Citizens. Even though the Wake County Sheriff's Office has law enforcement jurisdiction anywhere in Wake County, the Patrol Division of the Wake County Sheriff's Office provides the front line of police services to the unincorporated areas of Wake County and assists local municipal departments.



Crimes by Day of the Week

Day	Crimes Against Persons	Crimes Against Property	Crimes Against Society
Sun	105	258	202
Mon	115	422	243
Tue	104	408	323
Wed	98	404	278
Thu	135	368	326
Fri	127	377	288
Sat	89	263	192

28. Do we know what the value of State-owned land in Wake County is? NC State University? It would be good to know the value of land not in the tax base because of State Government. (V. Adamson)

Response: The pre-revaluation value for all exempt or excluded real property value in the County is \$29.9 billion. Of that, \$14.9 billion is governmental ownership (state, county, municipal). Post-revaluation values will not be available until October.

29. On page 11 last paragraph, the first sentence talks about us being elected at large - should this be changed? (V. Adamson)

Response: Will be addressed in Adopted Budget document.

30. On page 44 the paragraph "Office of the Sheriff Fees and Charges" it mentions revenue from pistol permits - I believe the pistol permitting system was removed by the General Assembly. (V. Adamson)

Response: Will be addressed in Adopted Budget document.

31. On page 71 Total Revenue by Source - What is "Proposed Future Funding" of \$324,276,000? (V. Adamson)

Response: Proposed Future Funding is the Limited Obligation or General Obligation bonds funding capital projects. Staff will identify clearer labeling.

32. What percentage of all departmental expansion requests made it into the manager's recommended budget? What percentage of the school board's expansion request made it into the managers budget? (M. Calabria)

County Expansions			
	Department Expansion Requests	County Manager's Recommended Budget	Percent Included in Recommended Budget
Expenditures	\$86,494,327	\$67,692,310	78.3%

- Only General Fund Expansions; excludes WTCC, WCPSS, and Smart Start requests
- Excludes expansion requests that were funded via an alternate source

WCPSS			
	WCPSS Request	County Manager's Recommended Budget	Percent Included in Recommended Budget
Superintendent Request	\$58,344,183	\$49,000,000	84.0%
Board of Ed Request	\$63,214,006	\$49,000,000	77.5%

33. Would it be possible to develop a line graph showing inflation adjusted county appropriations to the school system over the last 5 to 10 years? On the same graph, can we show inflation adjusted county appropriations to each of our departments? Other words, in real dollars, how much has the school system's appropriation increased over the last 10 years? How much has the total appropriation to the human services department changed? Community services? Public safety? (M. Calabria)

Response: Line and Column Chart Options. Individual lines and blocks represent departmental functional groupings of departments and our funded education partners.

