

**REPORT OF THE SCHOOL BUDGET  
STUDY COMMISSION  
. To  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**House Document No. 11**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
Richmond  
1974**



## MEMBERS OF COMMISSION

B. R. MIDDLETON—*Chairman*  
HOWARD P. ANDERSON—*Vice-Chairman*  
PETER K. BABALAS  
CLIVE L. DUVAL, II  
GEORGE MASON GREEN, JR.  
GEORGE H. HEILIG, JR.  
WILLIAM R. MURPHY  
ELEANOR P. SHEPPARD  
DAVID F. THORNTON  
EDWARD E. WILLEY

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## STAFF

JOHN A. BANKS, JR., DIRECTOR  
DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

E. M. MILLER, JR.  
STAFF ATTORNEY

JILL M. POPE  
LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATE



Report of the  
School Budget Study Commission  
To  
The General Assembly of Virginia

Richmond, Virginia  
November 1, 1973

To: The General Assembly of Virginia

I. *Introduction*

This report is a result of the directive contained in House Joint Resolution No. 264 passed by the 1973 Session of the General Assembly as follows:

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 264

Creating the School Budget Study Commission.

Whereas, the budgets of counties, cities and towns are approved at varying dates through the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, in some instances, school budgets are not approved until late in June;

Whereas, such late approval makes it difficult for local school divisions to plan adequately for summer school programs, order equipment and supplies in time for delivery prior to the regular fall school term; and

Whereas, such late approval also makes it difficult for certain local school divisions to contract with teachers sufficiently early in the year, resulting often in the loss of experienced personnel to other school divisions whose budgets are approved at earlier dates; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the School Budget Study Commission is hereby created. The Commission shall be composed of ten members, five of whom shall be appointed from the membership of the House of Delegates by the Chairman of the Committee on Education thereof and five of whom shall be appointed from the membership of the Senate Committee on Local Government by the Committee on Privileges and Elections. The Commission shall study all aspects of the problem, including the possibility of making it mandatory that governing bodies approve school budgets on or before April fifteen of each year. The Commission shall complete its study and report to the General Assembly no later than November one, nineteen hundred seventy-three.

Pursuant to the study directive, the Chairman of the House of Delegates' Committee on Education appointed George Mason Green, Jr., Arlington; George H. Heilig, Norfolk; B. R. Middleton, Virginia Beach; William R. Murphy, Manassas; and Eleanor P. Sheppard, Richmond as members. The Committee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate appointed Howard P. Anderson, Halifax; Peter K. Babalas, Norfolk; Clive L. DuVal, II, McLean; David F. Thornton, Salem; and Edward E. Willey, Richmond from the membership of the Senate Committee on Local Government. The Commission elected as its Chairman, B. R. Middleton, and

as Vice-Chairman, Howard P. Anderson. The Division of Legislative Services made staff and facilities available to carry out the study, E. M. Miller, Jr. and Jill M. Pope being assigned to assist the study group.

The Commission held meetings in Richmond following its creation and sought the guidance of local governing bodies, superintendents of schools, the Virginia Education Association, the Virginia School Board Association, the Virginia Association of Counties, the Virginia Municipal League and numerous other individuals and associations.

After consideration of and debate on several proposed recommendations, the Commission makes the following recommendations.

## II. *Recommendations*

- A. The Commission declines at this time to establish a mandatory date for the approval of school budgets by local governing bodies.
- B. The Commission urges local governing bodies to complete their school budget processes by late May or early June and recommends that the State Department of Education exercise its good offices to expedite as appropriate the approval of these budgets by the several localities.

## III. *Rationale*

Early in their deliberations, the members of the Commission found that in some instances the time span between the dates of contract non-renewal notice to teachers by school boards and the approval of the school budgets by the local governing bodies covered some two to three months oftentimes creating serious problems. Section 22-217.4 of the Code of Virginia reads in part:

If a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status receives notice of reemployment, he must accept or reject in writing within fifteen days of receipt of such notice. Written notice of nonrenewal of the contract must be given by the school board on or before April fifteenth of each year.

The staff conducted a poll of school superintendents regarding the date of final approval by local governing bodies of the school's budget. The poll indicated that approximately one-third of those school districts answering did not have their budgets approved until some date after June 1. (See Appendix I) The Commission found that this time lag often caused difficulties for teachers who are required to notify school boards of their intent to contract for the ensuing school year without knowing precisely what salaries will be paid and for the school boards who must plan for fall and summer programs, recruit personnel and order materials, without having precise knowledge of the funds that may or may not be available.

The local governing bodies, however, are faced with a similar problem. They are unable to finalize their budgets and begin their budgetary approval processes until the General Assembly has approved the general appropriations bill, which historically has not been finalized and approved until late March. The Commission feels that sufficient time must be allowed local governing bodies in conducting their budgetary processes. Time is needed for a local governing body to analyze the impact of any State actions on the local school system, to review and analyze the school budget request and available revenues, to confer with the school board, and to conduct public readings of the budget prior to final action.

The Commission concluded that flexibility must be allowed local governing bodies to enable them to make intelligent decisions on school financing. The Commission, therefore, declines at this time to place a statutory deadline on local governing bodies for the approval of their school budgets.

#### IV. *Conclusion*

Although the Commission does not recommend a mandatory school budget approval date at this time, it does urge local governing bodies and school boards, working within their present structures, to make every effort to complete the budget processes as expeditiously as possible. It is felt that the budgetary processes can and should be finalized by late May or early June, barring unusual circumstances.

The Commission also directs that the State Department of Education utilize its good offices, as appropriate, to assist the local governing bodies and school boards in completing the budgetary processes.

Respectfully submitted,

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B. R. Middleton, *Chairman*

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Howard P. Anderson, *Vice Chairman*

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Peter K. Babalas

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Clive L. DuVal, II

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George Mason Green, Jr.\*

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George H. Heilig, Jr.

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William R. Murphy

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Mrs. Eleanor P. Sheppard

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David F. Thornton

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Edward E. Willey

\* Mr. Green abstains from either approval or disapproval of action taken by the Commission.

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School Budget Study Commission

Appendix 1

Name of School District	Date S.B. normally sub. to gov. body	Date gov. body normally approves such budget	Date budget approval deemed nec. for full implementation of summer school program and fall supply request needs met
Accomack County	April 12, 1973	May 17, 1973	
Albemarle County	Feb. or March	June	April 1
Alexandria City	Jan. 15 - Feb. 1	3rd Tuesday in May	
Alleghany County	March 1	June 15	April 15
Amelia	Before April 1	May 30	April 15
(Salary portion is absolutely necessary.)			
Amherst	March	June	April
Appomattox County	March	Before April 15	Not later than April 15
Augusta County	After the adjournment of the legislature.	Approximately 30 days after budget is submitted.	When necessary the Board of Supervisors authorizes and appropriates funds nec. for summer and early fall expenditures.
(We have no problems in Augusta County in this area.)			
Arlington County	April 5	May 15	April 15
Bath	February	May - June	April 15, 1973
Beford County	Feb. or March	June	May
Bland County	Feb. Meeting of Board of Supervisors	March Meeting	March 31
Botetourt County	3rd week in March	June 12 this year	By April 15

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Bristol City	April	May	June 1
Brunswick County	February	April	April
Buckingham County	April 1	May 1	April 15
Buena Vista City School	March	May 30	April 15
Campbell County	March	June	Feb. or March
Cape Charles (town)	April 15	June ?	April
Caroline County Public Schools	Feb. 15	May 15	April 1
Carroll	2nd Tues. in March	June - final approval	April
Charles City County	April	May	March
Charlotte Co.	March 10	June	May
Charlottesville Public Schools	March 15	April 15	April 15
Chesapeake	January	May	April
Chesterfield County	February 1	April 1	April 1
Clarke County	March 1	May 1 - 15 (sometimes later)	April 15
Clifton Forge City Schools	November	March to June	April 15
Colonial Heights City	March 22	June	April 15
Covington City	March 31	Middle of May	April 15

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Name of School <u>District</u>	Date Sch. Bud. normally <u>sub. to gov. body</u>	Date gov. body normally approves <u>such budget</u>	Date budget approval deemed nec. for full implementation of summer school program and fall <u>supply request needs met</u>
Craig County	February	June	April 15
Culpeper	February	May	April 15
Danville City Schools	April 1	June 1	April 15
Dickenson	March	June	Not later than April 15
Dinwiddie	March	May	May
Essex	March	March or April	April
Fairfax City	March 1	April 15	April 15
Fairfax County Public Schools	March 7	first Monday in May	May 1
Falls Church	March 1	May 25	April 15
Fauquier County	February 1	2nd Thursday in April	Early April
Floyd County	2nd Tues. in March	June	April 15
Fluvanna County Public Schools	February	July	April
Franklin City	March 15	Total budget in May but early approval is given for salaries.	It is necessary for the legislature to take action earlier than in the past for school boards to be able to pro- vide nec. info. to city council. Council can't obtain pertinent revenue info. to make fair allo- cations for following year if forced to give total approval too early.

(We have a good working relationship  
that has not handicapped us by waiting  
for final approval the latter part of May.)

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Franklin County	March	June	April 15 to May 1
Frederick County	February 1	May (latter part)	April 15
Fredericksburg City Public Schools	January	June	April
Galax City Schools	March	Before May 10	May 1
Giles County	March 31, 1973	June 15-30	April 15

(The two biggest problems concerned with late approval of school budgets are teacher contracts and the ordering of school buses. Approval to write teacher contracts was given informally on May 1. Since Giles County submits a monthly budget, final authority has not yet been given for the purchase of school buses. My Board acting on good faith accepted bids for buses on June 5. Both Boards had discussed school needs and the school budget on April 5. The lateness in placing orders for school buses may mean a late delivery. Buses ordered for the 1972-73 session were delivered during the Christmas Holidays.)

Gloucester County	March (2nd Thurs.)	April (4th Thurs.)	April 1
(Statutory requirements of April 15 on continuing contracts for teachers is perhaps more critical.)			
Goochland	March 1	June 15	April 15
Grayson County	2nd Mon. in March	2nd Mon. in April	by the 2nd Mon. in April at the latest.
Greene County	March 31	June 28	April 15
Greensville	Feb. or March	varies	April 15
Halifax County & Boston City	Feb. (middle of month)	May or June	before April 15
Hampton	March 15-30	Last of May*	April 15

(\*Required to adopt a budget by June 1st. This year it was finally adopted on May 23.)

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Hanover County	March	June	April
Harrisonburg City	February 16, 1973	May 8, 1973	April 15, 1973
Henrico County	Usually by Feb. 1	April 19	About the middle of April seems satisfactory.
Henry County Public Schools	March	June	May 1
Highland County	Feb. - March	June	April 10
Hopewell City	March 15 - April 1	2nd Tues. in May	May 15
Isle of Wight County	February	June	April 15
King George County	March 1	April 15	April 15
King William County	March 15	4th Tuesday in May	April 15
(It is usually impossible to complete a school budget until General Assembly has adjourned and pertinent data has been transmitted to local school divisions.)			
Lancaster County	Jan. 15	May 25	April 15
Lee	April 1	June 30	April 15
Lexington	Jan.	May or June	March
Loudoun County	February	June	March 15
Louisa	Feb. 15	June 5	June 5
(Instruction area approved April 15 for Teacher contracts.)			
Lunenburg County	March 15	May 15	April 15
Lynchburg City Public Schools	By May 1	2nd Tues. in June	April 1*

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Lynchburg City Public Schools (Note)			
(*Teachers must be notified of continued employment by April 15. They should know the salary to expect.)			
Madison County	March each year	May	April 15
Martinsville City	Late March - early April	April or May	May
(The real need is to have an approved salary scale by April 15 when continuing contracts are in force.)			
Mathews Co.	March 15	June 10	June 10
Mecklenburg County	by April 1	Final - 2nd Monday in May	2nd Monday April
(Earlier deadline should be accompanied by earlier determination of State funds based on General Assembly action.)			
Middlesex County	April 1	May	May 1
Montgomery County	March 25	May or June	April 30
Nansemond City	March 15	1st Wed. in June	April 1
Nelson	February 15	Partial - March 15 Final - June 15	April 15
(The April 15 deadline for governing bodies to approve school funds would be the greatest help that I can think of to school divisions.)			
New Kent County	March 15	June 11	April 15
Newport News	March	June	April
Northumberland	May 10 (this year)	no specific date	April 10
Northampton County	May 1	May	April
Norfolk City	Febraary 15	Last week in May	on or before April 15

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Nottoway County	April 1	May 18-19-20	April 15
Norton City	By April 1	Certain times before April 15 Total before June 15	July 1
(Money encumbered from previous year's budget)			
Orange	Jan. or Feb.	April or May	April 15*
(*The Orange County Board of Supervisors usually awaits the completion of the General Assembly's work in order to ascertain what funds will be available. If funds must be appropriated at the local level before the General Assembly makes an educational appropriation, local education might be the loser.)			
Page County Public Schools	January and March*	2nd or 4th Monday in June**	April 15
(* <u>January</u> - informally; <u>March</u> - formally. **Informal agreement to salary scales usually comes in March or April.)			
Patrick	March	June	April
Pittsylvania County	March 15	May 10	April 15
Town of Poquoson Public Schools	March 10	Late May or Early June	April 15
City of Portsmouth	March 31	2nd Tues. in June	April 1
Powhatan County	February	June	March or April
Prince Edward County	Feb. 15	June until 1973 May in 1973	Before April 15
Prince William County	March	June	May 1
Pulaski County	around March 20	April 1	April 1

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Radford City	April 1	June 29	April 15 (preferable no later than May 1)
Rappahannock County	March 31	June 1	April 15
Richmond City Schools	On or before April 7	On or before May 31	On or before April 15
Richmond County	Feb. - March	March - April	April
(Board generally advertises later, but by April they generally let us know if we are in line.)			
Roanoke City Public Schools	April 1	June 25-30	April 15
Roanoke County	First meeting in April	Last Week in June	May*
(*Greatest need for earlier budget approval is to know teacher salary scale in order to issue contracts and employ new personnel. Also, early approval would level out work load. June approval makes heavy work load in July.)			
Rockbridge County	Feb. - March	May 15 - June 15	April 15
Rockingham County	March 1	April or May	April 1
Russell County	March	May	April
Shenandoah County	March 1-10	Late April or May	April 15
(*Approval should be given to order school buses no later than February.)			
Smyth County	March or April	June	April
Southampton County	by April 1	June	May 1
Spotsylvania County	February	April - June	April 15

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Stafford County	*March 14	*June 21	March 15
(*This was our experience this year - It was normal for this county - It also puts us in a bind - We cannot fill up vacancies until our budget is approved.)			
Staunton City	January	March - June	April 15
Suffolk City Schools	March 1	Late May or June	April 1
Surry	April 15	??*	May (or before)
(*Budget is not publicly presented until June but the salary part is informally approved in May.)			
Sussex County	March - April	June	April
Tazewell	March 1	June 10	May 1
Virginia Beach City Public Schools	March 1-10	May 10-20	April 15
Warren County	March 15 to 31	May 15 to June 1	April 15
Washington County	March 15	May 1	April 1
Waynesboro	March 15	April 15	April 15
Westmoreland Co.	March	April	April
Winchester	February 20	May 15	May 1
Wise County	March 1	May 25	
(We have had no trouble)			
Wythe County	April 1	June 10	May 1
York	Feb. 28	June 6	April 1

*APPENDIX 2*

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. ———

Requesting cooperation between local governing bodies and local school boards to facilitate the expeditious approval of school budgets.

Whereas, the School Budget Study Commission was directed in 1973 by House Joint Resolution No. 264 to study all aspects of the approval processes of school budgets by local governing bodies, including the possibility of making it mandatory that local governing bodies approve such budgets on or before April fifteen of each year; and

Whereas, the School Budget Study Commission, after consideration and study on several proposed recommendations, reported to the General Assembly that they declined at this time to establish a mandatory date for the approval of school budgets by local governing bodies, but urged local governing bodies to complete their school budget processes by late May or early June; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That since the interval between the dates of notification of teacher contract non-renewal by school boards and the completion and approval of school budgets by some localities in late June creates serious problems for teachers who may not know precisely what salaries they will be paid and for school boards who must plan for fall and summer programs, recruit personnel and order materials, the local governing bodies and the school boards of the Commonwealth are hereby requested to join forces in full cooperation during the budget approval processes to facilitate the expeditious approval of school budgets as early as possible.

Resolved Further, That the State Department of Education is directed to exercise its good offices to expedite as appropriate the approval of school budgets by local governing bodies.

