



September 15, 2021

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Co-Chairman, Senate Finance and
Appropriations Committee
Virginia General Assembly
P. O. Box 2608
Reston, Virginia 20195-0608

The Honorable Luke E. Torian
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
Virginia General Assembly
4222 Fortuna Plaza, Suite 659
Dumfries, Virginia 22025

Dear Senator Howell and Delegate Torian:

Section 22.1-98.2, Code of Virginia, provides additional state funding to school divisions serving fewer than 1,100 students in the prior school year, in a locality that has a local composite index of 0.6000 or greater, and has 65 percent or more of its local taxes coming from real estate taxes, if they enter into a cost-saving or service-sharing agreement with a contiguous school division that meets criteria established by the Board of Education. A copy of the current criteria approved by the Board of Education is attached. Section 22.1-98.2, Code of Virginia, further authorizes the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to provide the additional state funding to the qualifying school division by calculating its state Basic Aid entitlement using the lowest composite index of the contiguous school divisions involved in the agreement. The statute also requires VDOE to report annually to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees the cost-savings agreements made and the adjusted state shares approved.

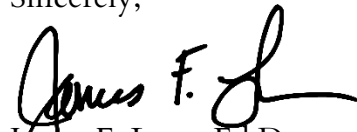
For fiscal year (FY) 2021, Highland County Public Schools and Rappahannock County Public Schools met the criteria established in Section 22.1-98.2. Highland County submitted a cost sharing agreement made with Augusta County Public Schools and Rappahannock County submitted a cost sharing agreement made with Madison County Public Schools. Copies of both agreements provided by the school divisions, pursuant to the Board of Education's criteria and Section 22.1-98.2, are attached. The submitted agreements were reviewed by VDOE and found to meet the criteria established by the Board of Education.

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In FY 2021, Highland County received a supplemental state Basic Aid payment in the amount of \$681,224. This payment was based on Augusta County's FY 2021 composite index of 0.3769 in lieu of Highland County's composite index of 0.8000. Rappahannock County received a supplemental state Basic Aid payment in FY 2021 in the amount of \$321,404. This payment was based on Madison County's FY 2021 composite index of 0.4738 in lieu of Rappahannock County's composite index of 0.7990. Rappahannock County's state entitlement is capped due to language in Chapter 589 of the 2008 General Assembly which stated that the sum of the Basic Aid and Supplemental Basic Aid payments to Rappahannock County shall not exceed its FY 2007 Basic Aid payment of \$1,129,280.

If you have questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Kent C. Dickey, Deputy Superintendent for Budget, Finance, and Operations, at (804) 225-2025 or kent.dickey@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Lane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "L".

James F. Lane, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

JFL/eml

Attachments

Dr. Thomas Schott
Superintendent



Highland County Public Schools

Board Members
Sherry Sullenberger
Joseph Neil
Kenny Hodges

240 Myers Moon Road PO Box 250 Monterey, VA 24465 Phone: 540-468-6300 Fax: 540-468-6306

June 23, 2021

Mr. Kent Dickey
Deputy Superintendent
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120



Dear Mr. Dickey,

Highland County Public Schools would like to continue our Cost-Saving Agreement with Augusta County Public Schools. We have enclosed a signed copy of a letter from Augusta County agreeing to this extension.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Schott, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Enclosure

**Service-Sharing/Cost Sharing Agreement
Between
Augusta County Public Schools
And
Highland County Public Schools**



This agreement is between August County Public Schools and Highland County Public Schools for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

General Agreement

It is the agreement between Augusta County Public Schools and Highland County Public Schools to work cooperatively together to provide such services that will assist Highland County Public Schools in providing educational services to its population at a cost savings. Highland County Public Schools have less than 250 students. Such services may include but are not limited to:

Head Start

Highland County Public Schools, as part of the Shenandoah Valley Head Start Consortium of which Augusta County Public Schools is the fiscal agent, will service as a site for a Head Start class. This program will allow preschool children in Highland County the opportunity to participate in an educational program at a savings to Highland County Public Schools. The cost savings is estimated at \$45,000.

Collegial Partnership Program

Since Highland County Public Schools is the smallest school division in the state, we only have one teacher per grade level at the elementary grades, three middle school teachers and normally one teacher for different content areas at the high school level. We do not employ content specialists and there is little opportunity to participate in collegial partnerships. This is a significant limitation in developing services and programs to meet the needs of our school population. Augusta County Public Schools, as a service to Highland County Public Schools, has agreed to participate in a collegial partnership.

Highland Elementary School will partner with Craigsville Elementary School. The principal of Craigsville Elementary School will partner with Teresa Blum, principal of Highland Elementary School. Both faculties will interact as we develop our curriculum offerings and continue to meet AMO and standards for SOL scores.

Augusta County Schools instructional specialists will form collegial partnerships with our school library media specialists and our middle school science teacher.

The Language Arts K-12, Foreign Language and ESL Supervisor will partner with our high school foreign language teacher and provide professional development opportunities for our Language Arts teachers.

The Technology Department will partner with our Coordinator of Administrative Technology, Gary Lane. Highland County Public Schools, due to our small size, has an extremely difficult time getting even one company to submit bids. Therefore this partnership is invaluable in purchasing servers and related hardware and software.

The high school will partner with similar content area teachers.

The cost savings in the above areas are estimated to be \$50,000 due to Highland County not having to pay for consultants in key curricular areas.

Transportation

We are investigating the shared services of partnering with Augusta County Public Schools in some repairs and maintenance. We anticipate a cost savings of approximately \$3,000.

These agreements comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.



Dr. Eric Bond, Superintendent
Augusta County Public Schools

6.22.21

Date

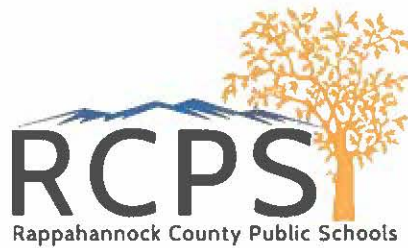


Dr. Thomas J. Schott, Superintendent
Highland County Public Schools

6/22/21

Date

RECEIVED
MAR 24 2021
VA DEPT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET/FINANCE/ACCOUNTING



School Board Office
6 Schoolhouse Road
Washington, Virginia 22747
Telephone (540) 227-0023
Fax (540) 987-8896
www.rappahannockschools.us

March 15, 2021

Mr. Kent C. Dickey
Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations
Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120

Dear Mr. Dickey:

Attached is the renewed cost-sharing/cost-saving agreement between Rappahannock and Madison counties.

Rappahannock County Public Schools agree to report this agreement annually to the Department of Education, in order to receive the state share for basic aid computed on the basis of the composite index of local ability-to-pay of the contiguous school division as permitted by State Board of Education regulations and Virginia Code § 22.1-98.2.

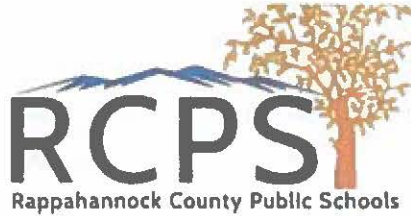
If you have any questions, please contact me at 540-227-0023 or by email at sgrimsley@rappahannockschools.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon L. Grimsley".

Dr. Shannon L. Grimsley
Division Superintendent

Attachment



School Board Office
6 Schoolhouse Road
Washington, Virginia 22747
Telephone (540) 227-0023
Fax (540) 987-8896
www.rappahannockschools.us

Contract Between the Madison County School Board and The Rappahannock County School Board

Introduction:

The School Boards of Madison and Rappahannock Counties agree to enter into this “cost-sharing/cost-savings” agreement as permitted by State Board of Education regulations and Virginia Code §22.1-98.2 – *Certain agreements; adjustment of state share for basic aid.*

A. Any school board of a school division in which fewer than 1,100 students were included in average daily membership for the preceding school year, in a locality that has a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and has 65 percent or more of its local taxes coming from real estate taxes, as calculated by the Auditor of Public Accounts and reported annually to the Department of Education, upon entering into certain cost-savings agreements with a contiguous school division for the consolidation or sharing of educational, administrative, or support services, shall receive the state share for basic aid computed on the basis of the composite index of local ability-to-pay of the contiguous school division, calculated annually, for a period of 15 years.

The School Boards of Madison and Rappahannock Counties agree to share certain services as follows:

- Do cooperative purchasing in selected areas (custodial supplies, duplicating paper, computers, food, etc.) to be determined through consultation between the school divisions’ finance offices and administrative staff.
- HS students may enroll in certain classes in the other school division at no cost. Rappahannock will reserve up to two slots in CTE classes to be determined by availability for Madison students through the second day of the semester. Madison will reserve up to two slots in CTE classes to be determined by availability for Rappahannock students through the second day of the semester. The school divisions may add courses to or delete courses from these lists by mutual agreement.
- Prior to putting surplus school buses and cars up for auction, Rappahannock will offer surplus buses and cars to Madison at no cost.
- Employees of both school divisions may attend on-site staff development on a space available basis at no cost.
- Rappahannock will send its designated professional staff member to Madison to complete approximately 40 written Social Histories annually as part of the Special Education evaluation process at no cost to the Madison Schools.

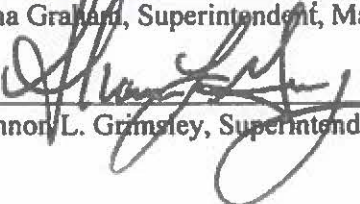
This agreement shall be in effect from July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022. This agreement complies with all Federal, State, and Local laws. For the purpose of renewing the agreement, the school divisions agree to consider revisions to this agreement by December 31 of each contract year. If either party wishes to terminate the agreement, written notice must be given to the other party at least 90 days in advance of the proposed date of termination.



Ms. Anna Graham, Superintendent, Madison County Public Schools

3/11/2021

Date



Dr. Shannon L. Grimsley, Superintendent, Rappahannock County Public Schools

2-9-2021

Date

§ 22.1-98.2. Certain agreements; adjustment of state share for basic aid.

A. Any school board of a school division in which fewer than 1,100 students were included in average daily membership for the preceding school year, in a locality that has a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and has 65 percent or more of its local taxes coming from real estate taxes, as calculated by the Auditor of Public Accounts and reported annually to the Department of Education, upon entering into certain cost-savings agreements with a contiguous school division for the consolidation or sharing of educational, administrative, or support services, shall receive the state share for basic aid computed on the basis of the composite index of local ability-to-pay of the contiguous school division, calculated annually.

The Board of Education shall develop eligibility criteria for such cost-savings and service-sharing agreements and for the adjustment of the state share for basic aid, consistent with the appropriation act.

The Governor shall approve the adjustment to the state share prior to the disbursement of funds. The Department of Education shall annually report to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations and Senate Committee on Finance the cost-savings agreements made and the adjusted state shares so approved.

B. The local school board receiving the adjusted state share shall not use the additional funds received to supplant local funds appropriated for education. The adjusted state share shall be used solely for educational purposes and shall not be used to reduce local operating expenditures for public education from the prior fiscal year. However, no school division shall be required to maintain a per pupil expenditure for operations that exceeds the per pupil expenditure in the prior fiscal year. The superintendent of the school division shall inform the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the public education purpose for which these local funds shall be used.

C. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the Commonwealth from terminating or modifying any program or function under which distribution to a local school board has been made, and if so terminated or modified all obligations hereunder shall cease or be reduced in proportion with such modifications, as the case may be.

D. Except as provided in subsection C, such contractual agreements shall remain in effect until terminated by the relevant school divisions. If any such contractual agreements between the relevant school divisions terminate, the Commonwealth's obligation under this section shall cease.

E. This agreement and adjusted state payment shall be in lieu of any existing funds a locality receives from a Small School Division Assistance grant.

F. Any standard of quality set forth in this act that is not required as of June 30, 2004, and for which additional state funding is required, shall not take effect unless the state's share of funding that standard is included in the general appropriation act for the period July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2006, passed during the 2004 Session of the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor. (2004, c. 820; 2008, cc. 589, 705; 2019, cc. 405, 406)

Eligibility Criteria and Procedures for Supplemental Funding for School Divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia That Enter Into Cost-Saving or Service-Sharing Agreements

Purpose

Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, directs the Board of Education to develop eligibility criteria for cost-saving and service-sharing agreements for school divisions that enter into such agreements with contiguous school divisions. School divisions serving fewer than 1,100 students in the prior school year, having a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and having 65 percent or more of their local taxes coming from real estate taxes that enter into such an agreement with a contiguous school division are eligible to receive the state share for Basic Aid computed on the basis of the composite index of the contiguous school division, calculated annually.

The Governor must approve the adjustment to the state share for Basic Aid prior to the disbursement of funds. The Department of Education must annually report to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance Committees the cost saving arrangements made, and the adjusted state shares of Basic Aid approved by the Governor.

Definitions

Eligible school divisions: School divisions that served less than 1,100 students in the prior school year, have a local composite index of .6000 or greater, and have 65 percent or more of their local taxes coming from real estate taxes.

Cost-saving or service-sharing agreements: A formal agreement executed between the eligible school division and one or more contiguous school divisions. This agreement must be evidenced by a written document that bears the original signatures of the superintendents of the participating school divisions. The agreement must contain sufficient information to demonstrate how the agreement meets the eligibility criteria.

Additional State Share of Basic Aid: The difference between the Basic Aid entitlement the eligible school division would normally receive and that which it would receive using the lowest composite index of a contiguous school division participating in the agreement.

Eligibility Criteria

Agreements submitted by an eligible school division to the Department of Education must be made with a contiguous school division and must demonstrate how the agreement meets the following criteria:

- evidence of one or more shared services with another school division; or,
- evidence of the savings or cost increases avoided as a result of shared services or a cooperative agreement for purchasing or other administrative practice; or,
- evidence that a savings has been achieved by contracting services with another school division.

The agreement must include a statement of assurance that it complies with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Examples of agreements that may meet these criteria include, but are not limited to, those that:

1. provide for the consolidation or sharing of specialized educational services or educational support services;
2. provide for the consolidation or sharing of specialized educational facilities in instructional areas such as career and technical education;
3. identify administrative or support services that are duplicative and establish a process for the consolidation or sharing of administrative or support services;
4. provide for joint professional development services;
5. provide for the consolidation or sharing of technology applications and support;
6. provide for the consolidation or sharing of operations and maintenance and custodial services;
7. provide for shared, bulk, or volume purchasing; and
8. provide for privatization or outsourcing of support services with a contiguous school division.

Procedures

To be considered for adjusted Basic Aid funding under Section 22.1-98.2, *Code of Virginia*, a school division must submit to the Department of Education a cost or service-sharing plan with a contiguous division prior to September 1 of each fiscal year. The content of the submitted cost or service-sharing plan must meet the above listed criteria.

Receipt of adjusted Basic Aid funding will begin after approval of the plan by the Department of Education and approval of the adjusted payment by the Governor of Virginia. The additional Basic Aid payments will be computed for the eligible school division on the basis of full year funding using the lowest composite index of a contiguous school division participating in the agreement. All payments of additional Basic Aid pursuant to these procedures are subject to appropriation of state funds for this purpose. State funding of additional Basic Aid does not reduce the required local effort of the eligible school division.

References

- Section 22.1-98.2, Code of Virginia
- Chapter 552, 2021 Special Session I Acts of Assembly