

# Goochland County Public Schools Budget Factors

## The Schools Our Children Deserve

We all want our children to attend schools that are well-resourced and able to provide reliable transportation, nutritious meals, quality instruction, and essential health services. Since the pandemic, our roughly 2,000 students in Goochland face more challenges than ever, from staff shortages, drops in academic achievement, and additional mental health needs. When looking at our current local spending, it's clear our budget comes up short in meeting the most pressing challenges our students and schools face today. Goochland can step up to fund our schools at levels that meet our students' needs and better reflect our capacity and commitment to our children.



### Budget

In the 2022-2023 school year, Goochland County spent \$14,532 per student, ranking us 64 out of 131 school divisions in the state. Yet, when adjusted for the high cost of living, the spending power drops to \$11,856 per student and Goochland County ranks 122 out of Virginia's 131 school divisions.

Goochland has seen a drop in local per student spending of \$27 between the 2014-2015 and 2022-2023 school years (adjusted for inflation). The Central Virginia region increased local per pupil spending by 5% over this time.



### Capacity and Effort

Virtually every locality in the state spends beyond what the state requires it to match (referred to as Required Local Effort) because the state vastly underestimates what it actually costs to run schools. In aggregate, divisions spent 107% above the Required Local Effort, but Goochland County only spent 69%, which is 38 percentage points below the state average. Goochland would need to spend \$6,082,851 more annually to be at the average state percent above the Required Local Effort (this reflects the low level of effort the division puts into per pupil spending relative to the state).

Goochland County has capacity to do more to raise adequate revenue for its schools. The locality has one of the top revenue capacity scores according to the Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts and a low level of fiscal stress. Goochland County's property tax effort is 39% below the average regional rate.

A one penny property tax increase in Goochland County would raise approximately \$700,000 annually.



### Outcomes

Many students lost significant ground on state academic achievement between the 2018-2019 and 2022-2023 school years. Students in Goochland saw a drop in pass rates on the reading SOL test of 10.8% and 31.3% in math - among the largest declines in the state. Yet further disparities exist, with math SOL pass rates dropping 71.8% for English Learners and 55.6% for economically disadvantaged students. Goochland must do more for its students who face significant barriers to education.



### Staffing

Goochland had an average budgeted teacher salary of \$63,835 in the 2023-2024 school year, which is \$6,606 below the state average. Adjusted for the relatively high cost of living in the locality, the average teacher salary drops to \$52,082. With high salaries and lower cost of living in nearby communities, on top of a dwindling supply of graduates with teaching degrees, Goochland is not in a strong position to compete for high-quality educators in the future.