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The proposed operating budget contains a large tax increase, justified to meet the school budget.

The facts are these:

- From FY17 to FY25, enrollment grew by 1.6% (about 2,570 students), but staffing grew by 10.2%, adding 2,267 positions. Teacher positions grew 6.2%, counselors by 21.2%, psychologists by 17.8%, social workers by 412.7%, and security by 23.5%
- Over the past five years, the budget has grown from roughly \$2.4 billion to \$3.6 billion, a cumulative increase of about 50%.

In other words, enrollment growth has been tiny, teacher positions have increased somewhat more, but the budget has ballooned.

There are now many more unionized positions in the school system than there were several years ago. The political and economic power of the teachers' union has increased. The burden on the taxpayers has soared. We are in a vicious cycle, which will continue until either the political power of the teachers' union is curbed or the economy of our County is strangled to the point where no more tax revenue can be obtained.