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Description automatically generatedAll Students: Implement 2023 JLARC Recommendation to**

**Adjust the SOQ Formula to Appropriately Increase EL Funding**



Background: Senate Joint Resolution 294, passed during the 2021 General Assembly, directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to review and recommend changes to Virginia’s SOQ funding formula. Included in the JLARC review, released in July of 2023, is recognition that schools do not receive adequate funding for EL students and others with higher needs:

*The SOQ formula does not adequately account for higher needs students. State funding for at-risk students, special education students, and English learner students is less than the level of funding determined necessary to educate them in cost studies performed in other states.*

Current Reality:  Students who are English Learners in Roanoke City Public Schools represent a wide variety of nationalities, home languages, life experiences, and educational needs. This group includes ELs who have interrupted schooling, have special needs, are identified as gifted or advanced, and other unique characteristics that help to determine their educational needs.

Current SOQ funding levels do not consider the specific needs of these students and the staffing levels needed to provide them with sufficient English language development instruction.

RCPS recommends the General Assembly to:

**Update the SOQ formula to increase funding for EL students as recommended by JLARC.**

1. Adjust the current funding for EL teachers, which is 20 instructional positions per 1,000 EL students to fund 22 instructional positions per 1,000 EL students.
2. Fund one additional position per 25 students identified in one or more of the following groups of ELs:
3. Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)
4. ELs identified as having special needs
5. ELs identified as gifted