



Pine-Richland School Board

Focused on Learning for Every Student Every Day

A Message from the PR School Board Regarding 2021-2022 Budget

May 26, 2021

Dear Pine-Richland Community,

As we approach the end of the school year, final approval of the 2021-2022 school district budget is anticipated at our June 7, 2021 board meeting. There is no change expected in real estate taxes, with rates remaining at 19.5897 mills since the 2017-2018 school year. It is an appropriate time to reflect on the financial position of the district and our approach to financial management that has helped us to achieve this position. The links below will take you to presentations from public meetings held over the past year. While we approve a new budget each June, our focus on good planning happens all year long.

Future-Focused Planning

The district closely monitors internal and external factors that impact our financial position and how our taxes are spent. [Demographic trends](#) are studied, which has allowed us to respond to shifting population patterns in recent years. The human resources department monitors [staffing needs](#) by analyzing the workforce capability and capacity as it responds to student population, curriculum, and support requirements at all grade levels and buildings. Our finance department supports long-term capital requirements through a highly refined [capital funding plan](#) that is used to track and anticipate needed investment in equipment, buildings, and technology.

Increase Savings & Reduce Debt

Your school board has also been intentional about [reducing our local debt](#) and funding capital projects through accrued savings and fund balances. This year's budget continues this trend, devoting approximately \$1 million in fund balance toward \$4 million for facility repairs and improvements, replacements to equipment, and infrastructure. Since 2017, we have paid down nearly \$35 million in outstanding debt and reduced our annual debt service from 11.3% to just 9.2% of total expenditures.

Management & Staffing

Personnel salaries & benefits continue to make up the largest portion (about ⅔) of our budget. We have a mature and robust staffing process that optimizes our return on investment and limits expenses. This has resulted in consistently [high-efficiency ratios](#) compared to other districts in Allegheny County. Standard & Poors noted in April of this year that, *"Pine-Richland School District reported its tenth-consecutive general fund surplus in fiscal 2020, a reflection of the district's good and proactive management team."*

Looking Ahead

Good planning and sound management practices cannot eliminate all uncertainty and there remain areas of focused concern for the future. These include cyber / charter school tuition expenses, which have roughly doubled in the past five years and are expected to be \$1.3 million in 2021-2022. We also cannot expect to maintain tax rates unchanged indefinitely and still continue the positive trends in debt service and capital funding plans. Tax rate decisions are considered through the mission of the district and the importance of sustaining a wide range of programs and services for students.

We are committed to continued transparency in our planning and communications with you. If you require any further information, please consult our [Budget & Finance website](#) or feel free to contact the board or administration at boardsecretary@pinerichland.org.

Sincerely,
The Pine-Richland School Board

Visit our website

