



# news

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA CONTENT

341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Board Adopts 2025 General Fund Budget With No Tax Increase** *Approves New Contracts with Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers*

PITTSBURGH, December 18, 2024 – The Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) Board of Directors adopted a 2025 General Fund Budget of \$752.3 million, which includes no increases in taxes. The budget includes an operating deficit of \$28.1 million and adheres to the Board’s minimum 5% fund balance policy. Due to rising charter school payments, the final budget represents 1.76% increase from the 2025 preliminary budget.

“Pittsburgh Public Schools faces a challenging fiscal reality, requiring us to strike a delicate balance between building on our progress and reducing expenses to align with declining enrollment,” said Superintendent Dr. Wayne N. Walters. “While our 2024 financial outlook is better than initially projected, this improvement is largely due to unfilled positions, a factor we cannot rely on moving forward. It’s imperative to acknowledge that substantial deficits are projected for this and future budgets, and we cannot indefinitely depend on our fund balance to bridge these gaps.”

### **Budget Highlights**

The 2025 General Fund Budget does not assume school closures, renovations, or changes to delivery models for the 2025–2026 school year. Last month, Dr. Walters announced that no school changes would be recommended for the 2025-2026 school year to allow for a comprehensive review of facility utilization recommendations from Education Resource Strategies (ERS). At the Board’s request, Dr. Walters and his team are carefully analyzing ERS’s recommendations, which address critical areas such as grade configurations, facility use, school consolidations, and program enhancements. A final feasibility report is anticipated early in the new year.

Additionally, the budget does not include the estimated \$2.4 million annual cost of the District’s Summer BOOST program. Due to its limited impact on student achievement and persistent attendance challenges, the District has decided not to run the program next year. Instead, PPS will explore new and innovative approaches to summer learning.

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## **Board Approves New Contracts with Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers**

In addition to adopting the budget, the Board approved four-year collective bargaining agreements with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT) and its three bargaining units: Teachers and Other Professionals (PRO), Paraprofessional employees (PARA) and Technical-Clerical employees (TEC).

The agreements include several key updates:

- **Residency Requirements:** Removed residency requirements for paraprofessional and technical-clerical employees, aligning with existing provisions for teachers and other professionals represented by the PFT.
- **Substitute Teacher Rates:** Increased substitute teacher wages.
- **Paraprofessional Work Hours:** Adjusted paraprofessional work hours to 7.5 hours per day with corresponding wage increases each year. Paraprofessionals include all educational and classroom assistants (I, II, III, IV), School Safety positions, and assistant teachers.
- **Teacher Wage Scales:** Increased wages competitively.
- **Retirees:** Increased health care contribution to one consistent rate.

“This agreement represents a win-win for the District and its dedicated employees,” said Dr. Walters. “It acknowledges our financial constraints while ensuring we remain competitive in attracting and retaining high-quality staff who are integral to the success of our students.”

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