



# Darien

## Public Schools

FY26 Superintendent's Proposed Budget

Darien Board of Education

January 2, 2025



# Vision & Mission

Preparing all students today to thrive in a changing world tomorrow

Inspiring a love of learning in all students so they develop as critical thinkers and innovative creators who contribute to the world with integrity and purpose beyond themselves



# FY 26 Budget

**Investing in Core  
Educational Excellence**

**Supporting Student  
Learning Through  
Professional Learning for  
Teachers**

**Provides Sustainability and  
Efficiencies**



# Investing in Core Educational Excellence



Alignment to Strategic Plan and District Goals

State Legislation (K-3 Reading, Play-Based Learning, Restorative Practices)

Core programming (allocated resources to core curriculum, early childhood education, teacher retention & recruitment)

# Supporting Student Learning Through Professional Learning for Teachers



Dedicated time for teachers' professional learning through District early dismissals and high school late arrival on PLC Days

Curriculum (Eduplanet21 & curriculum writing and revision)

Teacher training for all students' learning, K-3 Reading, Play-Based Learning & Restorative Practices

# Provides Sustainability and Efficiencies



Managing challenges (grants, health insurance increase, outplacement costs)

Program review and redesign (Idea Gifted, Paraeducators, and Security)

Enrollment adjustments and staffing reductions

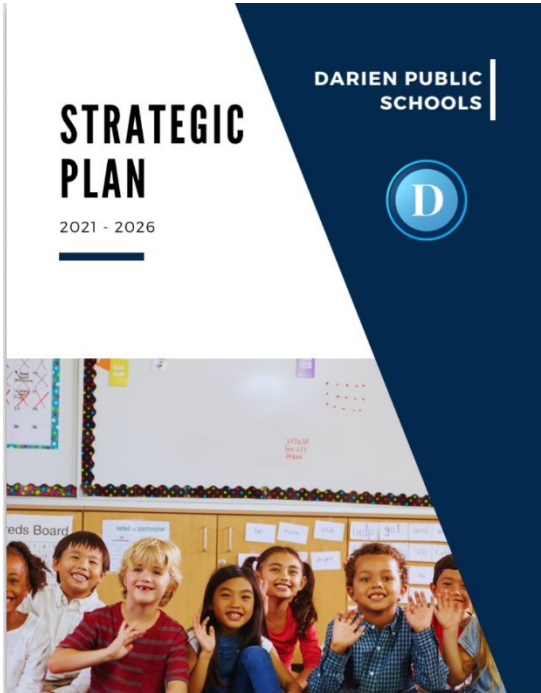
Deferrals in technology and athletic equipment

Long-term investments (Facilities Study, Early Learning Program, insourcing, transportation, teacher professional learning)

Enhancements to online resources (ASPEN, District website)

Investments supporting students and teachers (Play-Based learning, MMS Teen Talk, MMS Theater & DHS new courses)

# District Strategic Plan (Year 4)



1. Enhancing teaching and learning.
2. Fostering a culture that promotes wellness, diversity and inclusion.
3. Developing a balanced definition of student success through the Portrait of the Graduate.
4. Expanding the professional capacity of staff.
5. Developing and enhancing systems to promote effective communication.
6. Improving school facilities for student safety and access to learning.
7. Improving technology to support teaching and learning.



# 10-Year Operating Budget History

Year	BOE	BOE End-of-Year Return to the Town
<b>FY15</b>	\$88,135,967	\$46,567
<b>FY16</b>	\$90,722,526	\$179,698
<b>FY17</b>	\$93,847,816	\$493,302
<b>FY18</b>	\$95,874,777	\$729,230
<b>FY19</b>	\$98,122,266	\$336,376
<b>FY20</b>	\$100,118,408	\$569,611
<b>FY21</b>	\$104,284,508*	\$1,370,631*
<b>FY22</b>	\$106,624,199	\$694,441
<b>FY23</b>	\$110,607,016	\$810,367
<b>FY24</b>	\$114,630,074	\$3,676*
<b>FY25</b>	\$119,864,475	
	<b>Average (10-year)</b>	\$689,745

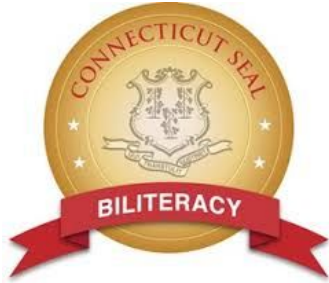
*\*Includes supplemental appropriation*



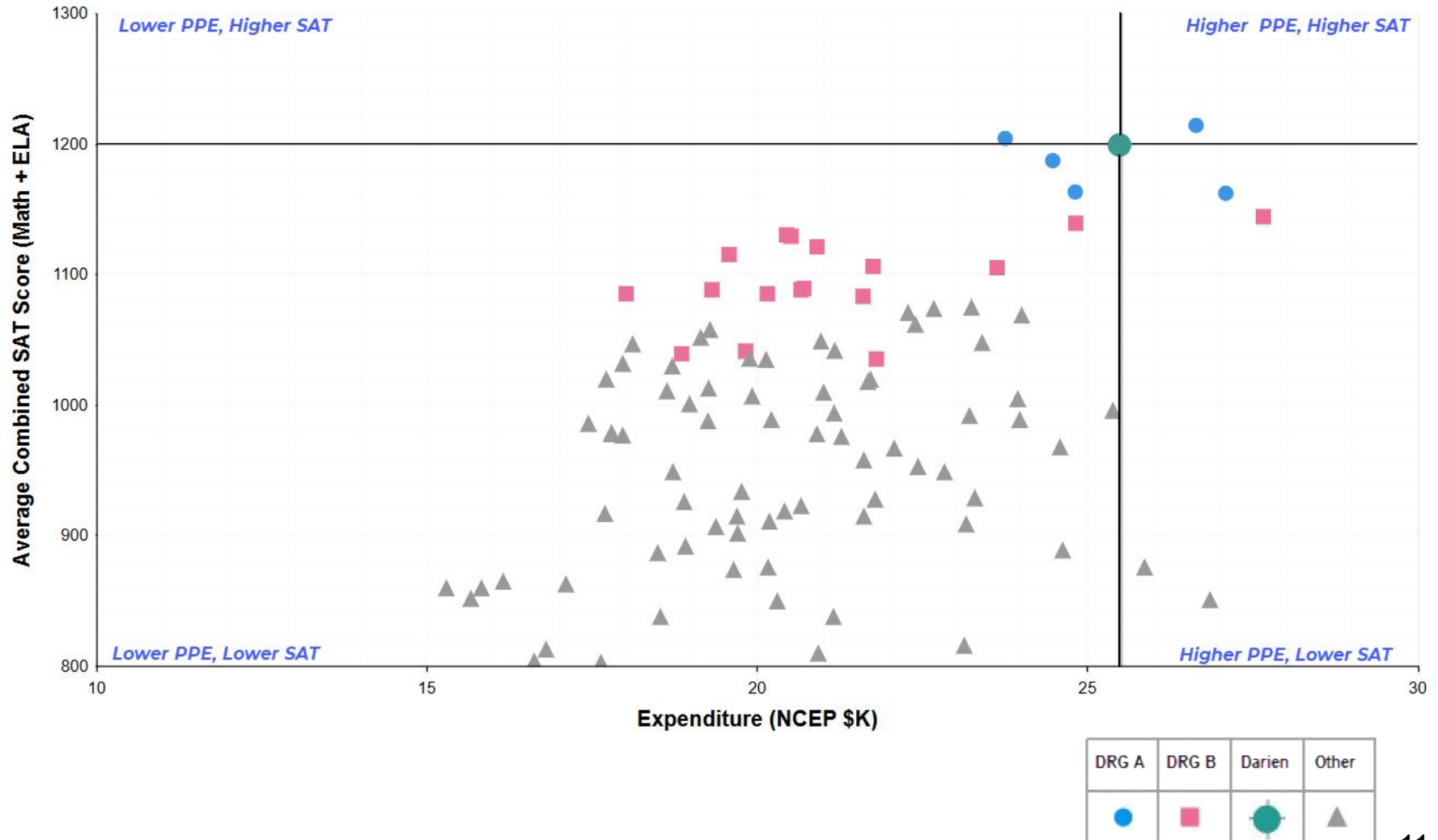
# FY25 DRG A Per Pupil Expenditures (PPE)

District	NCEP Net Cost Expenditure Per Pupil	Additional or Less Revenue with Darien's FY 25 Enrollment
Wilton	\$23,757	\$(8.7)M
Easton	\$24,431	\$(5.5)M
New Canaan	\$24,477	\$(5.3)M
Ridgefield	\$24,822	\$(3.7)M
Darien	\$25,494	
Westport	\$26,652	\$4.9M
Weston	\$27,096	\$6.9M
Redding	\$28,976	\$15.7M
Region 9	\$29,594	\$18.6M
Average	\$26,144	

# Educational Excellence



# Comparison of 2024 Per Pupil Expenditure (PPE) and 2024 Students' SAT Combined Score (Math & ELA)



# K-12 Enrollment FY25-FY30

	K-12 <sup>th</sup>	K-5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>
Year	Total	Total	Total	Total
2024-25	4,572	2,122	1,046	1,404
2025-26	4,570	2,125	1,061	1,384
2026-27	4,553	2,166	1,064	1,323
2027-28	4,590	2,193	1,091	1,306
2028-29	4,644	2,227	1,074	1,343
2029-30	4,665	2,253	1,085	1,327

- Next year's enrollment decreases by 2 students
- Enrollment over the next five years increases by 93 students or 2.0%



# Elementary Enrollment & Class Sizes

## Enrollment

School	ELP	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Hindley		70	66	66	75	79	64	420
Holmes		70	60	72	65	71	58	396
Ox Ridge	108	83	93	85	84	87	95	635
Royle	0	58	63	48	56	63	61	349
Tokeneke	0	71	73	78	75	73	63	433
	108	352	355	349	355	373	341	2233

## Classroom Sections

School	ELP	K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Hindley	0	4	3	3	4	4	3	21
Holmes	0	4	3	4	3	3	3	20
Ox Ridge	9	4	5	4	4	4	4	34
Royle	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
Tokeneke	0	4	4	4	4	4	3	23
	9	19	18	18	18	18	16	116

## Average Class Size\*

School	ELP	K	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Hindley		17.5	22.0	22.0	18.8	19.8	21.3	20.0
Holmes		17.5	20.0	18.0	21.7	23.7	19.3	19.8
Ox Ridge	12.0	20.8	18.6	21.3	21.0	21.8	23.8	21.1
Royle	0.0	19.3	21.0	16.0	18.7	21.0	20.3	19.4
Tokeneke	0.0	17.8	18.3	19.5	18.8	18.3	21.0	18.8

Class Size Guidelines	K	1	2	3	4	5	6-12
	18-22	18-22	19-23	19-23	20-24	20-24	Below 18-24

\* ELP not included in class size average

# Proposed FY26 Budget Increase

<b>FY25 Budget</b>	<b>\$119,864,475</b>	
<b>FY26 Core</b>	<b>\$7,313,101</b>	<b>6.10%</b>
<b>FY26 Growth</b>	<b>\$658,279</b>	<b>0.55%</b>
<b>FY26 Reductions &amp; Efficiencies</b>	<b>\$2,709,991</b>	<b>-2.26%</b>
<b>FY26 Budget</b>	<b>\$125,125,964</b>	
<b>Total Budget Increase</b>	<b>\$5,261,389</b>	<b>4.39%</b>

# Core Expenditures

Salaries	\$3,063,726	2.56%
Benefits	\$1,454,104	1.21%
Special Education Tuition	\$1,296,267	1.08%
Special Education Contracted Services and ESY	\$520,469	0.43%
Non Personnel Contractual Increases	\$448,306	0.37%
ECR	\$318,031	0.27%
Utilities	\$199,082	0.17%
Grant Compression	\$158,827	0.13%
Enrollment	\$(145,711)	-0.12%
<b>Total Core</b>	<b>\$7,313,101</b>	<b>6.10%</b>

# Growth Expenditures

K-3 Reading	\$218,620	0.18%
Uniform Deferral (Athletics)	\$100,000	0.08%
Professional Learning for Staff	\$96,032	0.08%
MMS Facility Study	\$90,000	0.08%
Teen Talk MMS	\$50,000	0.04%
Play-based Learning	\$39,000	0.03%
Website, Boarddocs	\$32,000	0.03%
Psychology Interns	\$13,000	0.01%
Eduplanet21	\$10,627	0.01%
ASPEN Training	\$9,000	0.01%
<b>Total Growth</b>	<b>\$658,279</b>	<b>0.55%</b>



# Legislative Requirements

\$263,170

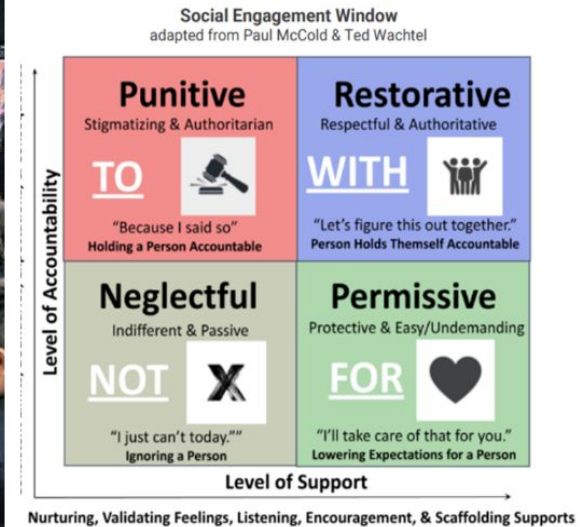
Play-based Learning



K-3 Literacy



Restorative Practices



# Professional Learning & PLCs

**\$96,032**

# Darien Public Schools

## Proposed 2025-2026 School Calendar

### July

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

### August (3)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### September (20)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

### October (22)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

### November (14)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

### December (17)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### January (18)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### February (14)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

### March (22)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### April (16)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

### May (20)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### June (12)

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

*“I have yet to see a school where the learning curves of the adults were steep upward and those of the students were not. Teachers and students go hand and hand as learners...or they don’t go at all.*  
~Roland Barth~

- Provides additional time for teachers to collaborate
- Fosters an environment of continuous learning and growth
- Strengthens educator capacity; calibrate instructional practices
- Increases opportunities for teacher voice in Professional Learning
- Responsive to recommendations of Tri-State Consortium & NEASC Accreditation Visit
- Supports recruitment and retention
- Adds 5 early release days (ELP-Grade 12)
- Adds 3 additional PLC days at the high school



# Efficiencies

Elementary Instructional Paraprofessionals/Student Interns	\$(1,141,246)	-0.95%
Talented & Gifted	\$(469,015)	-0.39%
Completion of 4 to 5 classes at MMS	\$(254,232)	-0.21%
ESY Transportation	\$(200,000)	-0.17%
Technology Deferrals	\$(184,700)	-0.15%
Nursing Services	\$(121,335)	-0.10%
In Sourcing Special Education Staffing	\$(113,245)	-0.09%
Non CIAC Fees	\$(64,244)	-0.05%
Security Reorganization	\$(61,800)	-0.05%
5 Day ELP	\$(61,770)	-0.05%
Athletic Uniform Deferrals	\$(57,500)	-0.05%
Net Operating, Revenue, Substitutes	\$19,096	0.02%
<b>Total Reductions/Efficiencies</b>	<b>\$(2,709,991)</b>	<b>-2.26%</b>

# Idea Gifted Program

**\$(469,015)**

Idea (Interesting Dimensions that Extend Abilities) program serves 237 students

Current programming:

- 3.3 FTEs
- Grades 2-5: Two 45-55 minutes pull-out sessions per 6 day cycle
- Grades 6-8: Two 42 minutes sessions per week during lunch

Other ways of providing services to students:

- Differentiated practices
- Curricular extensions
- School-wide enrichment
- Extracurricular opportunities
- Build teacher capacity through professional learning and PLCs





# Instructional Paraeducators

**\$(1,141,246)**

- Three (3) paraeducators per elementary school
- Primarily assist in Kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms
- Assist with supervision at recess, in the lunchroom, and during arrival/dismissal
- Provide teacher coverage
- Duties will be provided by two (2) student Interns per school



# Salaries



## Increase

Teachers:	\$ 2.3M
Administrators:	\$ 0.24M
Non Certified Staff:	\$ 0.66M
Staff Additions:	\$ 0.18M
Enrollment:	<b>\$(0.14)M</b>
Grant Compression:	\$ 0.08M
ESY	\$ 0.14M
Other*	\$0.04M
Completion of 4 to 5	<b>\$(0.25)M</b>
Staff Reductions:	<b>\$(1.34)M</b>
<b>Total Salaries:</b>	<b>\$1.91M</b>

\*Other includes substitutes, curriculum development, salary savings, Intramurals, Part Time Custodial,

# Special Education

	<u>Growth</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
Special Education Tuition	\$1,296,267	1.08%
BCBA, OT, BCaBA Reduction, and Contracted Services	\$119,480	0.10%
ESY Transportation	\$(56,567)	-0.05%
Total Special Education Increase:	\$1,359,180	1.13%
<hr/>		
Excess Cost	\$318,031	0.27%
<hr/>		
Total Special Education Increase:	\$1,677,211	1.40%

# Health, Benefits & Retirement



Health Rate Increase:	11.9%
Health & Benefits:	\$1,454,104
New Hires	\$71,176
Position Reductions	\$(729,794)
Total Health & Benefit Increase	\$795,486

---



Pension/OPEB/FICA	\$85,585	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$881,071</b>	<b>0.74%</b>



# Personnel Requests (-20.57 Net FTE Increase)

	Changes	Changes	Changes	Changes
	Enrollment	Special Education	Grant Compression	Reductions
Social Studies-DHS	-0.40			
English-DHS	-0.20			
Elementary Enrollment	-1.00			
Wellness Coordinator			0.33	
Idea Gifted				-3.30
Elementary Instructional Paraprofessionals				-15.00
Nurse				-1.00
Occupational Therapist		1.00		
BCBA		1.00		
BCaBA		-1.00		
Director of Security				-0.50
Floating SSO				-0.50
<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>-1.60</b>	<b>+1.00</b>	<b>+0.33</b>	<b>-20.30</b>
<b>Total Net Staffing</b>	<b>-20.57</b>			

# Budget Highlights

## **Strategic Plan Goal 1: Enhancing Teaching & Learning**

- DHS Course Electives (Astronomy, Cybersecurity, American Sign Language 3)
- K-3 Reading & Play-based Learning
- 5 Day Early Learning Program
- MMS Theater Club
- Special Education staffing and tuition

## **Strategic Plan Goal 2: Fostering a Culture that Promotes Wellness, Diversity & Inclusion**

- School Psychology Internship Program
- MMS Teen Talk
- Restorative Practices
- Wellness Center Coordinator

## **Strategic Plan Goal 4: Expanding Professional Capacity of Staff**

- Teacher & Administrative Contracts
- Professional Learning for Teachers

## **Strategic Plan Goal 5: Developing & Enhancing Systems to Promote Effective Communication**

- Boarddocs
- ASPEN
- Website

## **Strategic Plan Goal 6: Improving School Facilities for Student Safety and Access Learning**

- Capital Improvements (HS, MMS, Tok, District)
- MMS Facility Study
- School Security Redeployment

## **Strategic Plan Goal 7: Improving Technology to Support Teaching & Learning**

- Eduplanet21

# Not Included in FY26 Budget

Special Education Transition Program  
\$(288,168)



Reduction in original PLC proposal  
\$(122,968)



Facility Study (DHS & TOK)  
\$(110,000)



# Capital Improvement Projects

- **Darien High School**

\$687,000

- LED lighting fixture upgrades
- Resurfacing blacktop
- Green Roof waterproofing
- Replacement doors



- **Middlesex Middle School**

\$38,400

- School radio replacement



- **Tokeneke**

\$318,000

- Bus loop and parking lot paving
- Security enhancements



- **District**

\$295,750

- Window replacements
- Sidewalk replacement
- Vehicle replacement (2012 Truck & 2015 Suburban)
- Lawn Mower
- Custodial Floor Scrubber



**Total**

**\$1,339,150**



# Proposed FY 26 Budget Increase

<b>FY25 Budget</b>	<b>\$119,864,475</b>
<b>FY26 Budget</b>	<b>\$125,125,964</b>
<b>Total Budget Increase</b>	<b>4.39%</b>

# Budget Calendar

- Presentation of Superintendent's Budget January 2
- BOE & Administrative Review January 4
- BOE Meeting January 14
- BOE, BOF, RTMs ED, & F&B Meet January 17
- Public Hearing on BOE Budget February 4
- BOE Approval of **Recommended** Budget February 11



- Board of Finance Review March 4
- Board of Finance Public Hearing March 11
- BOF Votes on Budget April 3
- RTM Votes on Budget May 12