

KINGSWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

213 Kings Highway
Woolwich, New Jersey 08085
www.krsd.org

2025-2026 TENTATIVE BUDGET IN BRIEF



“Committed to Excellence”

2025-2026 Tentative Budget

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Financial Overview

Budgetary Summary

The Kingsway Regional School District’s tentative budget for the 2025-2026 school year totals \$63,362,094, an increase of \$3,375,275 (5.63%), and is comprised of three primary funds:

- 1. General Fund
- 2. Special Revenue Fund
- 3. Debt Service Fund

General Fund

The general fund, which serves as the district’s primary operating budget, accounts for all financial resources except those required to be allocated to other funds. For FY26, the general fund is projected at \$59,456,000, reflecting an increase of \$4,111,879 (7.43%) from the current year.

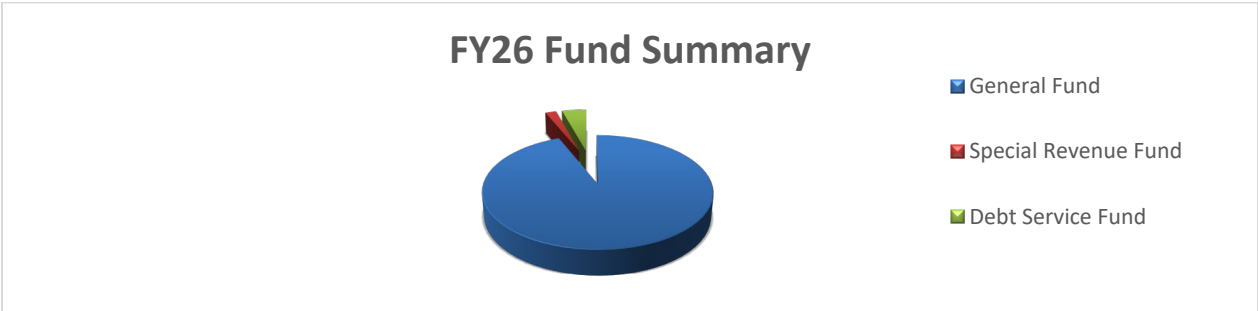
Special Revenue Fund

The special revenue fund manages proceeds from specific revenue sources that are legally restricted for designated purposes. This includes local, state and federal grants-in-aid such as I.D.E.A., and ESSA, as well as student activity and scholarship funds, which are reported in accordance with GASB Statement No. 84. The FY26 special revenue fund totals \$1,213,900.

Debt Service Fund

The debt service fund is designated for the accumulation of resources for, and the payment of, long-term debt, including principal and interest. Revenue sources for this fund include state aid, tax levy contributions, and transfers from capital projects or capital reserves. For FY26, the debt service fund is \$2,693,004.

	Actual			Revised FY25	Proposed FY26
	FY22	FY23	FY24		
General	43,969,022	50,037,019	50,295,894	55,344,121	59,456,000
Special Revenue	3,279,330	1,973,120	1,832,505	1,893,258	1,213,900
Debt Service	3,408,917	3,330,458	3,283,885	2,750,250	2,693,004
	50,657,269	55,340,597	55,412,284	59,987,629	63,362,904



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Revenue Summary

Revenue refers to the funds or income a school district receives from various sources to support its operations and services. Revenues are essential for funding a district's operating budget and ensuring the continued delivery of educational services. They are the financial resources used to cover the appropriations (expenditures) within the budget.

General Fund

The tentative operating budget (General Fund) for FY26 is projected to total \$59,456,000. This fund serves as the primary financial resource for the district's day-to-day operations and is supported by five (5) key revenue sources:

1. **Local Tax Levy** – The largest source of revenue, generated through property taxes, which provides essential funding for district operations and ensures the financial stability of educational programs.
2. **State Aid** – Allocations from the state government, which help offset operational costs and support mandated programs, including special education, student transportation, security, and other district-wide initiatives.
3. **Tuition** – Revenue received from non-resident students attending district programs, including specialized services and shared educational arrangements with other districts (Logan Township).
4. **Fund Balance (Excess Surplus); and capital reserve** – Funds carried over from prior years, including excess surplus and designated capital reserves, which help support financial stability, infrastructure improvements, and emergency expenditures.
5. **Miscellaneous Sources** - Additional revenue streams, including facility rental fees, interest income, student participation fees, and athletic event admission fees, which contribute to the overall financial health of the district.

	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>\$ Inc./ (Dec.)</u>	<u>% Inc./ (Dec.)</u>
Local Tax Levy	26,235,408	27,576,722	1,341,314	5.11%
State Aid	23,579,335	24,421,979	842,644	3.57%
Tuition	3,825,285	4,374,788	549,503	14.37%
Fund Balance/Reserves	1,235,583	2,764,447	1,528,864	123.74%
Miscellaneous	468,510	318,064	(150,446)	-32.11%
Total General Fund	55,344,121	59,456,000	4,111,879	7.43%

Local Tax Levy. The FY26 general fund is primarily supported by \$27,576,722 in local property taxes, reflecting a \$1,341,314 (5.11%) over the current year. This increase includes a health benefits waiver of \$816,606, which allows the district to exceed the 2% tax levy cap due to rising health care costs that will be discussed in another section.

State Aid. On February 25, 2025, Governor Murphy delivered his budget address to a joint session of the Legislature. Two days later, school districts across the state received their preliminary state aid figures for

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FY26. Kingsway is projected to receive \$24,421,979 in state aid, an increase of \$842,644 (3.57%) from FY25, maintaining full SFRA funding.

Tuition. Kingsway receives tuition revenue from Logan Township School District for educating its high school aged students on a per-pupil basis. In FY26, an estimated 261 Logan students will attend Kingsway at a regular education rate of \$13,875 per student. After adjusting for prior-year tuition adjustments and additional costs for students with special needs, total tuition revenue is projected at \$4,374,788, an increase of \$549,503 (14.4%) over FY25.

Capital Reserve. To support critical facility improvements without placing additional strain on taxpayers, the FY26 tentative budget utilizes \$1,656,000 from the district's capital reserve account. This approach allows for long-term financial planning while maintaining district facilities in compliance with safety and educational standards.

Budgeted Fund Balance. The district is allocating \$1,108,447 in budgeted fund balance, consisting of funds from FY24 that exceed the legally restricted unassigned fund balance thresholds. While it provides essential short-term financial flexibility, fund balance is a one-time revenue source, making it unsustainable for recurring expenditures. As a result, the district remains strategic and fiscally responsible, ensuring that long-term financial planning prioritizes stability and sustainability while minimizing future budgetary risk.

Miscellaneous. Kingsway continues to diversify its revenue sources to reduce reliance on local property taxes. The FY26 budget includes:

- **Athletic Registration Fees:** The district's athletic registration fees play a crucial role in maintaining and expanding extracurricular opportunities for student-athletes. For FY26, anticipated revenue from these fees totals \$170,000, directly supporting the costs of coaching stipends, equipment, transportation, uniforms, and facility maintenance. While these fees help offset rising operational expenses, they also ensure that the district can continue offering a wide range of athletic programs without compromising quality. Recognizing the importance of equitable access, the district remains committed to providing financial assistance and fee waivers for families in need, ensuring that no student is denied the opportunity to participate due to financial constraints. By balancing affordability with sustainability, the district can preserve and enhance its athletic programs, benefiting students and the broader school community.
- **Facility Rental Income:** The district actively seeks to maximize the use of its facilities by renting available spaces to community organizations, athletic leagues, and other outside entities. Revenue generated from facility rentals helps offset operational costs and supports student programs. For FY26, the district anticipates \$50,000 in facility rental income, derived from the use of gymnasiums, auditoriums, athletic fields, and meeting spaces. By leveraging these resources, the district not only fosters strong community partnerships but also creates an additional revenue stream that reduces reliance on taxpayer contributions.
- **Athletic Gate Receipts:** Athletic events serve as a vital source of community engagement and school spirit while also generating revenue to help support the district's sports programs. For FY26, the district anticipates \$20,000 in athletic gate receipts, which are collected from ticket sales at various sporting events, including football, basketball, wrestling, and other high-attendance competitions. These funds help offset costs associated with game-day operations, equipment, officiating fees, and facility maintenance. By promoting attendance and enhancing the

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spectator experience, the district aims to maximize revenue while continuing to provide high-quality athletic opportunities for students.

- **Other Local Sources:** In addition to primary funding streams, the district leverages various local revenue sources to support its operating budget. For FY26, the district anticipates \$78,064 in revenue from other local sources, which may include donations, sponsorships, investment earnings, and other community partnerships.

How the State’s School Funding Formula (SFRA) Works

The School Funding Reform Act (SFRA), enacted in 2008, is New Jersey’s formula-based approach to distributing state aid to public schools. It aims to allocate funding equitably, ensuring that each district has the resources necessary to provide a “thorough and efficient” education, as required by the New Jersey State Constitution. The SFRA calculates each district’s funding needs based on student enrollment, demographics, and local wealth, ensuring that aid is distributed fairly amongst the districts.

Key Components of the SFRA Formula

Adequacy Budget

The State of New Jersey determines the adequacy budget, which represents the funding necessary for a school district to provide a thorough and efficient education as required by law. To determine how much the local community should contribute, the state calculates the Local Fair Share (LFS) – the amount it believes the district can raise through property taxes, based on community income and equalized property valuations.

If a gap exists between the adequacy budget and the local fair share, the state is responsible for covering that shortfall through Equalization aid. For FY26, the state has calculated Kingsway’s adequacy budget at \$56,159,001. However, the district’s total adequacy spending, which includes Equalization aid plus the local tax levy, is tentatively set at \$45,633,548. This results in a shortfall of \$10,525,453, meaning Kingsway is will operate at 81.3% of its adequacy budget, falling short of the amount the state deems necessary to provide a fully funded, or thorough and efficient, education.

Local Fair Share (“LFS”)

The district’s tentative budget for FY26 includes a 5.11% increase in the general fund tax levy, amounting to an additional \$1,341,314. This brings the total general fund tax levy to \$27,576,722.

However, according to the state’s calculations, Kingsway’s Local Fair Share – the amount the district should be able to contribute based on property values and income – is \$38,102,175. This means the proposed local tax levy is \$10,525,453 below the state’s expectation, covering only 72.4% of the district’s calculated local fair share. As a result, despite reaching full state aid entitlement, Kingsway remains significantly underfunded compared to what the state defines as necessary for providing an adequate education.

State Aid Distribution

For FY26, Kingsway will receive \$24,151,979 in state formula aid, maintaining 100% of its full SFRA entitlement. This marks a significant improvement from FY19, when the district received only \$9.6 million – just 47.8% of its then un-capped \$20.1 million SFRA allocation. The redistribution of state aid under S2, implemented in 2018, played a crucial role in gradually restoring Kingsway’s funding to its full entitlement, ensuring a more equitable distribution of state resources.

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The Impact of SFRA and S2 on Kingsway Regional

Kingsway Regional School District, like many growing, underfunded districts in New Jersey, was historically shortchanged under the state's school funding system prior to S2 (2018). The School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) of 2008 established a formula-based method to distribute state aid, but Kingsway received significantly less than its full entitlement for years. Prior to FY19, Kingsway faced persistent underfunding due to:

- **Rapid Enrollment Growth** – The student population increased, but state aid did not keep pace.
- **Aid Caps and Adjustment Aid** – SFRA included growth caps, limiting Kingsway's ability to receive its full entitlement. Meanwhile, wealthier districts continued receiving adjustment aid, even while enrollments were shrinking.
- **High Reliance on Local Tax Levy** – Due to insufficient state aid, Kingsway had to rely heavily on local property taxes, while being restricted by New Jersey's 2% tax levy cap, yet still remained below its Local Fair Share (LFS).

S2 was a law passed in 2018 that revised New Jersey's school funding formula, primarily phasing out "adjustment aid" and redistributing state aid to more accurately reflect student enrollment and local fiscal capacity. For underfunded school districts (those receiving less than their full equalization aid amounts under the School Funding Reform Act of 2008, or SFRA), S2 provided increases in state aid over a seven-year period (2019-2025). More specifically, Kingsway benefited in the following ways:

- **2018-19 (Year 1 of S2 Phase-in)** – Kingsway received a \$2,129,970 increase in state aid (22.2%), bringing total SFRA aid for FY19 to \$11,729,113 and raising the district's funding level to 58% of full SFRA funding.
- **2019-20 (Year 2)** – State aid grew by \$1,152,061 (9.8%), increasing Kingsway's total SFRA aid to \$12,881,174 and boosting its funding level to 62.6%.
- **2020-21 (Year 3)** – Kingsway saw a \$683,172 increase (5.3%) in state aid, bringing the district's total to \$13,564,346. However, despite the funding rise, the district's SFRA funding level dipped slightly to 61%.
- **2021-22 (Year 4)** – A substantial \$3,386,946 boost (25.0%) in state aid raised Kingsway's SFRA aid to \$16,951,292, pushing the district's funding level to 74.6%.
- **2022-23 (Year 5)** – State aid surged by \$3,203,251 (18.9%), elevating Kingsway's total to \$20,154,543 and advancing its funding level to 88.5% of full SFRA funding.
- **2023-24 (Year 6)** – With an increase of \$2,551,575 (12.7%), Kingsway's SFRA aid climbed to \$22,706,118, bringing the district closer to full funding at 96.6%.
- **2024-25 (Year 7)** – The final phase-in year saw a modest \$573,217 increase (2.5%), securing Kingsway's total SFRA aid at \$23,279,335 and achieving 100% of full SFRA funding.

While S2 helped Kingsway reach full SFRA funding, the 2% tax levy cap continues to limit the district's ability to fully meet its adequacy budget. Unless policy changes are made to adjust the tax levy cap or eliminate it altogether, Kingsway may continue to face structural deficits, making it difficult to provide the level of education the state deems necessary.

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Potential Legislative Measures to Address Challenges Posed by SFRA

As of March 14, 2025, New Jersey is actively pursuing legislative measures to address the challenges posed by the state's school funding formula, particularly concerning the 2% property tax cap and its impact on districts like Kingsway Regional.

Governor Murphy's Proposed Budget Adjustments

On February 27, 2025, Governor Phil Murphy unveiled his \$58.1 billion budget plan that includes significant changes to the school funding formula. These adjustments aim to stabilize state aid allocations and reduce the volatility that districts have experienced in recent years. His key proposals include:

- **Capping Changes to School Aid** – Introduce limits on the fluctuations in most types of school aid to ensure more predictable funding for districts.
- **Revising Special Education Funding** – Modifies the calculation methods for special education assistance to better reflect current needs.
- **Incentivizing Local Funding Efforts** – Provides additional funding to districts that choose to raise taxes above the state's 2% property tax cap, thereby offering a mechanism to increase local revenue beyond existing limitations.

These proposals are designed to provide districts with a more stable financial outlook and greater flexibility in addressing their unique revenue challenges. For districts like Kingsway Regional, which have historically struggled with underfunding and are constrained by the 2% property tax levy cap, these adjustments could have significant implications moving forward.

Special Revenue Fund

The special revenue fund for FY26 is projected to total \$1,213,900. This fund is comprised of restricted revenues that are designated for specific programs and initiatives, supplementing the district's general operating budget. The special revenue fund is primarily supported by three (3) key sources:

1. Local Sources
2. State Sources
3. Federal Sources

	Actual			Revised	Proposed
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Local	1,000,337	1,108,074	414,693	1,047,258	510,500
State	145,822	-	73,425	99,341	23,400
Federal	2,133,171	865,046	1,344,387	746,659	680,000
Total	3,279,330	1,973,120	1,832,505	1,893,258	1,213,900

Local Sources. Local revenue consists primarily of student activity funds, scholarship funds, and miscellaneous sources such as wellness and security grants. The district projects \$510,500 in local revenue for FY26, a decrease from the previous year due to lower anticipated student activity funds. While student activity revenue fluctuates based on participation and fundraising, it remains a crucial source of funding for extracurricular programs and student initiatives.

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State Sources. State funding includes specialized grants and restricted entitlements that support specific programs. In FY26, the district anticipates receiving \$23,400 from state sources, significantly lower than prior years. This decrease is due to the absence of funding from the SDA Emergent Needs and Capital Maintenance program and the Local Efficiency Achievement Program (LEAP), both of which were available in previous years. Remaining state funds will contribute to restricted program costs associated with nonpublic school districts located within our region.

Federal Sources. Federal funding plays a vital role in supporting specialized programs, including special education, supplemental academic services, and student support initiatives. For FY26, the Kingsway Regional School District anticipates receiving \$680,000 in federal revenue, a decline from previous years as pandemic-related funding streams have expired. Federal grants remain a critical component of the district's budget, though anticipated reductions due to national policy changes could impact future funding levels. The district's federal revenue is derived from the following key programs:

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA) Grants:

1. **Title I (\$70,000):** Supports programs for disadvantaged students, including targeted interventions and academic support services. This funding is expected to decrease slightly due to federal budget constraints.
2. **Title II (\$25,000):** Provides professional development for educators, improving instructional quality and leadership effectiveness. Anticipated cuts in federal discretionary spending could further reduce this funding in the coming years.
3. **Title III (\$0):** Previously allocated for English language learners, no funding is anticipated in FY26.
4. **Title IV (\$10,000):** Supports student well-being, safe learning environments, and enrichment programs.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Grants:

1. **IDEA Part B (\$575,000):** This remains the largest source of federal funding, supporting special education services. However, potential federal budget tightening under the current administration may put pressure on future allocations.

Debt Service Fund

The debt service fund for FY26 is projected to total \$2,693,004. This fund is designated exclusively for the repayment of outstanding debt obligations incurred from bonds issued to finance capital projects, including facility renovations, additions, and infrastructure improvements. The debt service fund is primarily supported by three (3) key sources:

- **Local Tax Levy** – A dedicated portion of property taxes collected specifically for debt repayment. This levy is separate from the general fund tax levy and is used to cover principal and interest payments on outstanding bonds.
- **State Debt Service Aid** – Financial assistance provided by the State of New Jersey to help offset the cost of debt service, particularly for state-approved school construction projects. The amount varies based on the district's eligibility and state funding formulas.
- **Other Revenue Sources** – In addition to the tax levy and state aid, school districts may utilize other less common financial mechanisms to support debt service payments, including:

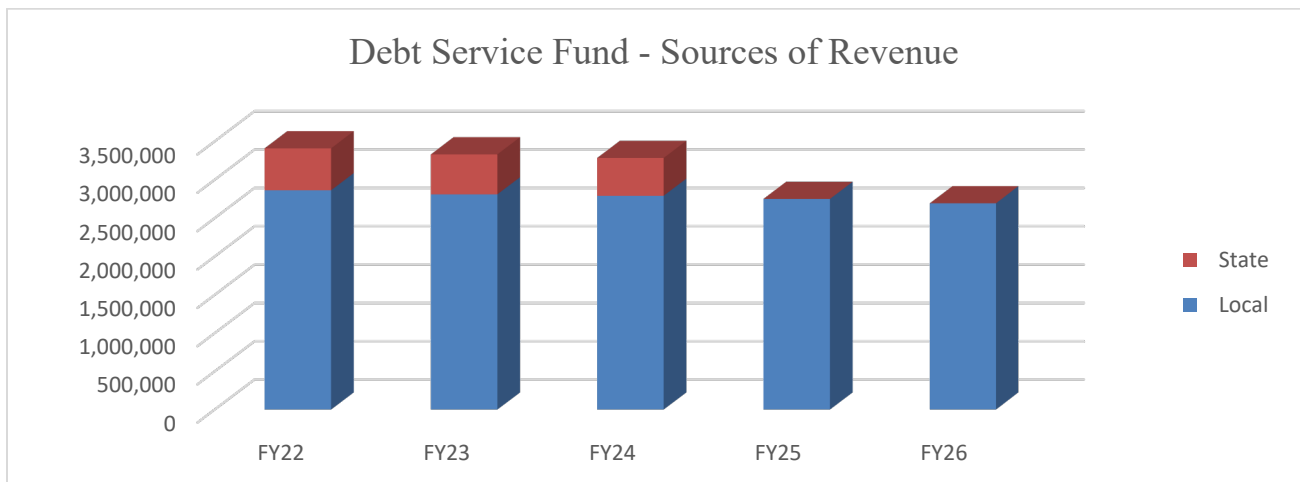
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1. Refunding bonds and refinancing savings – If market conditions allow, a district may refinance existing debt through refunding bonds, which can lower interest costs and result in savings that can be applied to future debt payments.
2. Transfers from Capital Projects Fund (Unspent bond proceeds) – If a district completes a capital project under budget or has remaining unspent bond proceeds, those excess funds may be transferred from the capital projects fund to the debt service fund, subject to legal and regulatory guidelines. These transfers help reduce the outstanding debt burden.

	Actual			Revised	Proposed
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Local Sources					
Local Tax Levy	2,304,528	2,744,191	2,791,048	2,750,250	2,693,004
Transfers from Capital Projects Fund	558,011	-	-	-	-
Total Local Sources	2,862,539	2,744,191	2,791,048	2,750,250	2,693,004
State Sources					
Debt Service Aid Type II	546,376	520,736	492,837	-	-
Total State Sources	546,376	520,736	492,837	-	-
Actual Revenues (Over)/Under Expenditures	2	65,531	-	-	-
Total Debt Service Fund	3,408,917	3,330,458	3,283,885	2,750,250	2,693,004

Local Tax Levy. The FY26 local tax levy for debt service is projected at \$2,693,004, reflecting a reduction of \$57,246 compared to the current year.

Debt Service Aid. Unfortunately, the district's existing debt does not qualify for state debt service aid, meaning 100% of the principal and interest payments must be funded through the local tax levy.



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Appropriation Summary

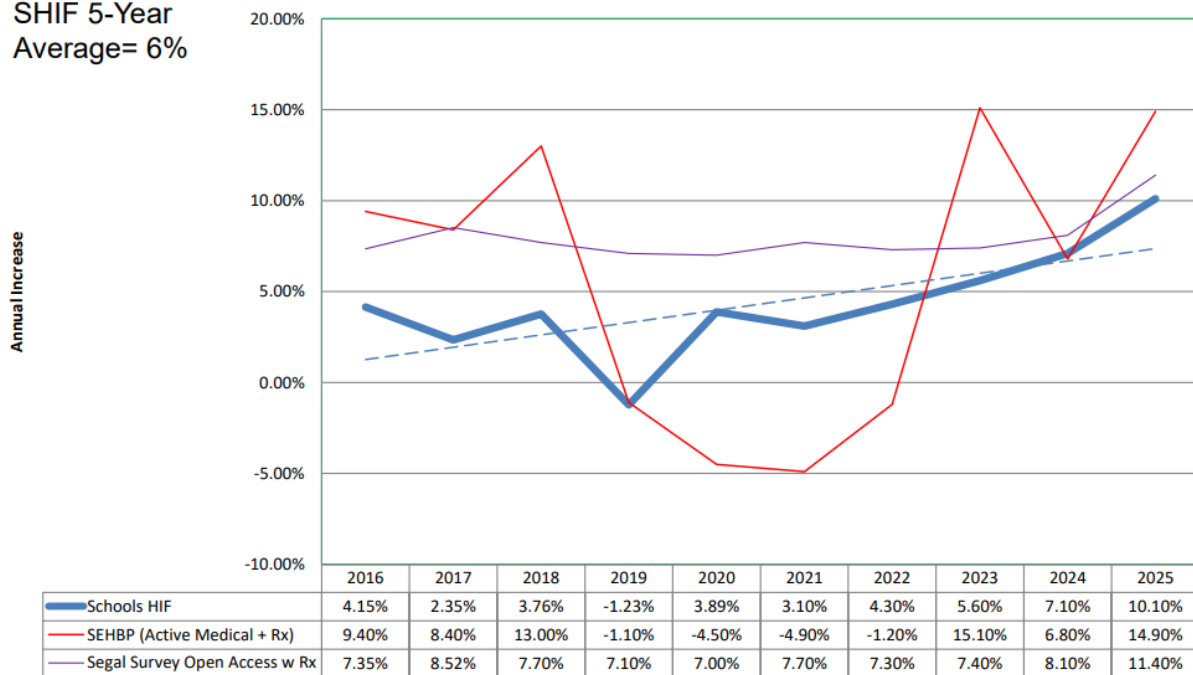
Appropriations refer to the authorized amounts of money that a school district sets aside and allocates for specific purposes within a budget. It represents the legal permission granted to spend funds for particular expenditures, such as salaries, employee benefits, purchased educational services, capital projects, and debt repayments. Each appropriated amount is assigned to a specific function, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently to meet the district's goals and obligations.

In summary, revenues must meet appropriations because the total income the district expects to receive must align with the planned expenditures in the budget. This balanced approach ensures that the district operates within its means and provides services effectively without overspending. The connection between revenues and appropriations is fundamental to maintaining fiscal discipline and ensuring the financial health of the school district.

General Fund Appropriation Highlights and Cost Drivers

Employee Benefits. Kingsway is a proud member of the Schools Health Insurance Fund (SHIF), a self-funded, cooperative health benefits program designed specifically for New Jersey school districts. By participating in SHIF, Kingsway benefits from a shared-risk pool, which allows districts to collectively manage and control health insurance costs more effectively than traditional insurance models. Below is a comparison of SHIF's annual premium increases versus the State Employee Health Benefits Program (SEHBP):

SHIF 5-Year
Average= 6%



The SHIF employs multiple strategies to control healthcare costs while maintaining high-quality coverage. These strategies focus on risk management, negotiated pricing, cost-sharing, and administrative efficiencies. The SHIF operates as self-funded health insurance program, meaning districts pay for actual claims rather than fixed premiums to a commercial insurer. Surpluses, when claims are

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lower than expected, are retained and used for rate stabilization, rather than generating profits for an insurance company.

Projected Increase in Health Benefits (2025/26 Budget)

SHIF projects a 10.1% overall increase in the 2025/26 health benefits budget. The primary cost drivers include:

Medical and Prescription Claims:

- Medical Claims – Projected to increase 9.1%, from \$577.7M to \$630.3M.
- Prescription Claims (Net of rebates) – A significant 24.4% increase, from \$60.6M to \$75.4M.
- High-cost claimants - The number of claimants exceeding \$50k in annual claims has increased by 33%, contributing to rising expenses.
- Prescription drug cost drivers:
 - Weight loss medications: +177% year-over-year increase
 - Dermatology treatments: +57% year-over-year increase
 - Inflammatory condition drugs +41% year-over-year increase

Impact on District Assessments:

SHIF applies differentiated rate increases based on plan selection and loss ratios:

- Educator Health Plan (EHP) / Garden State Plan (GSP) - Medical: +7.1%
- Legacy Plans: Medical: +12.0%
- EHP/GSP - Prescription: +20.4%
- Legacy Prescription Plans: +27.0%
- Average district renewal (Medical and Prescription combined): +12.0% increase

In addition to the +12.0% increase, Kingsway will be facing an additional 2.5% assessment due to higher-than-average loss ratios over the past 24 calendar months. The total projected increase for Kingsway's health benefits is outlined in the table below:

Plan Year Carrier	July 2024 -June 2025		July 2025 -June 2026		% variance	\$ variance
	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual		
ACTIVE - SHIF/AHA	\$527,636	\$6,331,632	\$594,194	\$7,130,328	12.61%	\$798,696
ACTIVE- SHIF/Express Scripts	\$102,959	\$1,235,508	\$131,039	\$1,572,468	27.27%	\$336,960
ACTIVE- SHIF /Delta Dental	\$18,045	\$216,540	\$18,690	\$224,280	3.57%	\$7,740
ACTIVE Total Plan Gross Costs	\$648,640	\$7,783,680	\$743,923	\$8,927,076	14.69%	\$1,143,396

Financial Impact on Kingsway's Budget

The total increase of nearly \$1.2 million represents a major budgetary challenge for Kingsway. As one of the district's largest fixed expenditures, rising health insurance premiums continue to outpace revenue growth, limiting flexibility in other crucial areas. As Kingsway continues to navigate these rising

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expenses, we remain committed to evaluating cost-saving measures while ensuring our employees receive comprehensive, high-quality healthcare coverage.

Special Education. In New Jersey public schools, specialized programs and out-of-district placements for special education students represent some of the most significant cost drivers in our budget. Among these, Private schools for students with disabilities (PSSDs) play a vital role in serving students whose unique and complex needs cannot be adequately met within their home district. These state-approved schools provide specialized educational programs tailored to address severe cognitive, behavioral, physical, and medical disabilities, ensuring students receive the necessary support to succeed.

However, placements in PSSDs come with substantial financial implications, making them one of the most significant expenditures within our budget. The chart below provides a detailed breakdown of all tuition-related expenses, including those associated with these placements:

	Actual			Revised	Proposed
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Tuition to Other LEAs within the State - Reg Ed	25,756	23,390	16,189	17,500	20,000
Tuition to Other LEAs within the State - Sp Ed	44,554	31,100	57,501	119,000	35,000
Tuition to County Vocational School District - Reg Ed	604,330	557,157	515,722	487,280	515,970
Tuition to County Vocational School District - Sp Ed	89,487	101,138	108,357	97,710	100,448
Tuition to County Special Services School District	813,779	1,473,114	1,249,730	992,440	1,167,599
Tuition to Private Schools for the Disabled in State	1,010,849	1,094,541	1,022,795	1,901,097	2,078,105
Tuition to Private Schools for the Disabled out of State	39,924	43,000	-	-	-
Tuition - State Facilities	-	4,500	4,499	41,897	45,000
Tuition - Other	-	-	-	-	-
	2,628,679	3,327,940	2,974,793	3,656,924	3,962,122

Tuition costs for county special services school districts and private schools for students with disabilities are projected to rise significantly, increasing by \$352,167, or 12.2%. This substantial growth reflects the rising demand for specialized educational services, increased enrollment in out-of-district placements, and escalating tuition rates. These expenditures remain a critical component of our special education budget, ensuring that students with complex needs receive the appropriate support and resources necessary for their success.

In addition to the rising tuition costs, transportation expenses for these students are also experiencing a significant increase. Factors such as travel distance, fuel prices, increased demand for specialized transportation services, and rising contract rates for vendors all contribute to the growing financial impact. Ensuring safe and reliable transportation for students with disabilities remains a priority, but these escalating costs continue to place additional strain on the budget. The chart below provides a detailed breakdown of all student transporting costs, including those associated with specialized transportation services:

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	Actual			Revised	Proposed
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Salaries of Non-Instructional Aides	33,873	24,386	21,259	58,535	32,959
Salaries (Between Home & School) - Reg Ed	565,644	456,094	441,065	500,165	436,793
Salaries (Between Home & School) - Sp Ed	35,999	34,287	30,274	29,475	25,368
Salaries (Other than Between Home & School)	48,779	83,409	138,972	95,000	100,000
Unused Vacation Payment to Terminated/Retired Staff	-	3,226	-	-	-
Other Purchased Professional and Technical Services	458	3,599	1,335	3,625	8,125
Cleaning, Repair, and Maintenance Services	2,358	-	-	2,500	7,500
Lease Purchase Payments - School Buses	51,501	103,002	103,002	103,002	-
Aid in Lieu of Transportation - Non-Public Schools	186,912	183,872	240,199	253,425	264,000
Contracted Services (Home & School) - Vendors	1,383,765	1,868,105	2,304,844	2,600,561	2,695,375
Contracted Services (Other than Home & School) - Vendors	175,133	104,247	67,127	83,950	46,500
Contracted Services (Sp Ed Students) - Vendors	75,348	235,864	291,296	1,777,535	2,192,455
Contracted Services (Sp Ed Students) - Joint Agreements	8,691	25,647	25,314	22,065	25,000
Contracted Services (Reg Ed Students) - ESCs	265,158	404,315	207,516	67,485	25,000
Contracted Services (Sp Ed Students) - ESCs	987,440	1,100,964	1,353,895	131,470	-
Miscellaneous Purchased Services	50,042	76,656	89,436	101,670	105,575
General Supplies	4,992	1,548	2,947	17,000	5,000
Transportation Fleet Supplies	132,479	150,897	153,611	320,000	325,000
Other Objects	-	-	275	1,000	1,000
	4,008,572	4,860,118	5,472,367	6,168,463	6,295,650

Capital Projects. The district remains committed to advancing its five-year [Long-Range Facility Plan](#), ensuring that our schools and grounds continue to meet the evolving needs of our students, staff, and community. In FY26, we will allocate \$2,155,000 toward critical improvements and upgrades across our district facilities, funded through a combination of a capital reserve withdrawal (\$1,656,000) and \$500,000 from the capital budget.

This investment will support a range of essential projects, including the replacement of aging hot water heaters at both schools to enhance energy efficiency and reliability, the installation of a new rooftop HVAC unit for the Middle School east gymnasium to improve climate control and air quality, and corridor upgrades in an aging section of the high school to modernize learning spaces and enhance accessibility. Additionally, we will address necessary infrastructure improvements such as sidewalk and asphalt repairs to ensure safer and more navigable campus grounds.

By prioritizing these facility enhancements, we aim to create a more sustainable, efficient, and conducive environment for teaching and learning while maintaining the long-term integrity of our district's assets.

Curriculum & Instruction. A strong, cohesive focus on well-developed curricula and effective instructional delivery is at the core of high-achieving educational institutions. Excellence in student achievement is directly correlated to a formidable curricular foundation that is robustly developed, properly implemented, and accurately assessed. To ensure that curricular and instructional practices are advantageous, the district emphasizes ongoing academic and professional growth, vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment, and the effective use of resources.

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As with many other areas of school and district operations at Kingsway, budgetary constraints and the pandemic have drastically impacted district initiatives related to academic teaching and learning. Although we continue to grow our academic offerings, recent academic performance reports indicate a needed focus on student growth and academic achievement; the results of our strategic plan note this as a priority. This requires a deeper dive into understanding individual students' needs, subgroup populations' needs, programmatic areas of strength and weakness, tiered and targeted instructional practices, and the use of data for instructional decision-making.

Our efforts focus on: Maintaining Our School System, Raising Standards and Expanding Opportunities, Building Professionalism, and Planning for the Future. In addition, our initiatives support the implementation of the nine New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) areas: Math, Science, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Career Readiness & Life Literacies, Visual and Performing Arts, Comprehensive Health & Physical Education, World Languages, and Computer Science & Design Thinking.

This section highlights key budgetary allocations for middle and high schools that support our district's academic improvement goals. Developed collaboratively with teacher leaders, department supervisors, principals, and other key personnel, these objectives align with the [district's strategic plan](#), [curriculum writing and resource adoption schedule](#), and the advancement of our [Six Programs of Study](#). This narrative reflects our commitment to maintaining our school system, raising standards and expanding opportunities, building professionalism, and planning for the future. The proposed 2025-2026 budget addresses mandated educational improvement plans and aligns with the nine NJ Student Learning Standards. Through strategic investments in curriculum development, professional growth, data-driven instruction, and specialized programs, the district is poised to enhance student achievement, close opportunity gaps, and build a sustainable foundation for continued success.

Overview of Instructional Programs

Math (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

In the 2024-2025 school year, following our five-year curriculum cycle, a new math resource was adopted and the curriculum was rewritten to align with the new 2023 Mathematics NJSLS. The curriculum prioritizes standards alignment and student-centered learning that accommodates learner diversity. Teachers collaborated in professional learning teams throughout the year to further develop curricular units, integrate differentiated instruction, and establish interdisciplinary connections and technology integrations. MAP assessments for Math will be administered in the fall, winter, and spring to establish baselines, tailor instruction, monitor progress, and evaluate both curricula and classroom instruction. Tier 3 interventions, such as Math Lab classes, will continue to provide time dedicated to closing skill gaps and accelerating learning for students identified in need of intensive support. The core math resource will be supplemented with iXL to support at-risk learners with concept and skill development to close gaps and meet success with grade-level content.

Science (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

In the 2025-26 school year, science curricula aligned to the 2020 NJSLS will be implemented for all students in grades 7-12. Over the summer of 2025, the district will undertake a comprehensive rewrite of its core science curricula to ensure robust alignment with current standards and instructional best practices. This process will integrate disciplinary core ideas, performance expectations, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts with an emphasis on scientific modeling, reasoning, and three-dimensional assessments. The district will continue using Gizmos for high school and STEMscopes for middle school as key supplemental resources to support inquiry-based learning and hands-on

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exploration, complemented by enhanced laboratory instruction with purchased supplies. Additionally, the district proposes the adoption of SIMTIC—a concise, online interactive platform offering immersive, skills-based healthcare training—to further enrich the School of Health Professions curriculum.

English Language Arts (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

Throughout the year, teachers collaborated in professional learning teams to plan lessons and student learning activities to further develop curricular units aligned to the new 2023 ELA New Jersey Learning Standards (NJSLs). Differentiated instruction was incorporated, as were interdisciplinary connections, technology integrations, and course resources. MAP assessments for ELA were administered in the fall, winter, and spring to gather specific starting points, tailor instruction, monitor progress, and evaluate curricula and classroom instruction. Emphasizing writing and literacy development, students engaged in varied writing assignments, peer review sessions, and critical text analyses to enhance communication skills and prepare them for complex, grade-level content. Tier 3 interventions, such as ELA Lab classes, provided dedicated time to close skill gaps and accelerate learning, while the core ELA resource was supplemented with iXL to support at-risk learners. These proven strategies and practices will be sustained and further developed in the next school year to ensure continuous growth in student achievement.

Social Studies (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

Throughout the 2025-2026 school year, the district will continue to implement social studies curricula aligned with the 2020 NJSLs. The curriculum for grades 7-12 is a dynamic framework designed to engage students across a variety of topics and course levels, including electives and Advanced Placement options. Viewing our curriculum as a living document, educators continuously update and refine course content to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Central to our approach is the cross-curricular support for writing and literacy, with teachers integrating historical document analysis, primary source reading, and structured writing tasks to develop essential communication skills. Instruction is informed by student achievement data from NJSLA, NWEA MAP Growth assessments, AP/PSAT data, and local assessments, with instructional adjustments to address any curricular gaps. Additionally, our social studies courses emphasize civics education and comply with state mandates (P.L.2021, c.32), while incorporating key historical perspectives such as the African slave trade (N.J.S.A. 18A 52:16A-88), Asian American and Pacific Islander history (P.L.2021, c.416), and the Holocaust (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-28). This integrated approach not only deepens students' historical understanding but also enhances their literacy and critical thinking skills across the curriculum.

21st Century Life and Careers (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

During the 2025-26 school year, the district continues to implement a freshmen course at the high school, *College and Career Seminar*, which serves as a graduation requirement for all Kingsway students in nonspecialized programs. This course integrates a number of the new 2020 career readiness, life literacies, artificial intelligence literacy, and key skills outlined in the 2020 NJSLs. Ongoing curriculum development is carried out within professional learning teams, using locally developed assessments aligned with the NJSLs, and the curriculum is structured around nationally recognized career clusters to help students connect coursework with future career opportunities. The Six Programs of Study also aim to help students make career decisions, identify how specific courses correspond to specific careers, improve students' skills, and increase their potential for employment and further training and education. The school counseling curriculum will continue to deliver student-centered lessons around 21st-century life and careers.

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World Language (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

For the 2025-2026 school year, the world language curricula for students in grades 7-12—aligned to the NJSLs—will be implemented using courses that are rewritten over the summer. These rewrites ensure the inclusion of current best practices in differentiated instruction, interdisciplinary connections, and technology integration. The updated curriculum aims to engage students in relevant storylines and continues to integrate authentic world language practices. High school students continue to have the opportunity to earn the New Jersey State Seal of Biliteracy through the administration of the STAMP assessment. This designation, noted on diplomas, recognizes students who have attained proficiency in an additional language beyond English, showcasing their 21st-century skills to employers and universities. In the middle school level, all students in grades 7 and 8 will be exposed to two different languages. The district will continue to offer P.L.A.C.E. testing for heritage language speakers, with expanded opportunities for 8th-grade students to demonstrate proficiency and gain access to upper-level language courses in their freshman year. Pathways are outlined to fulfill graduation requirements for multilingual students enrolled in ESL courses while ensuring that diverse perspectives and multicultural content are consistently integrated.

Visual and Performing Arts (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

The visual and performing arts curricula, aligned to the NJSLs, are implemented for students in grades 7-12. The district will continue its work to integrate diverse perspectives and multicultural content throughout these programs, assessing them through the lens of contributions, additive approaches, transformation, and social action (Banks, 2010). Extensive elective offerings across multiple levels, including recent additions such as Guitar II and Music Technology II, provide students the opportunity not only to be introduced to new areas within the arts but also to develop their talents to high levels. These electives encompass a wide range of performance, production, and creative expression options, ensuring that every student can engage deeply with the arts and cultivate their skills in a supportive, dynamic environment.

Comprehensive Health & Physical Education (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

The Health and Physical Education curricula are aligned with the NJSLs and will be implemented for all students in grades 7-12. This includes the integration of disciplinary concepts and core ideas related to personal growth and development; pregnancy and parenting; emotional health; social and sexual health; community health services and support; movement and concepts; physical fitness; lifelong fitness; nutrition; personal safety; health conditions, disease, and medications; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; and, dependency, substances disorders, and treatment. Comprehensive health and PE practices and all related legislation will also be included. Additionally, the district will continue to administer the BASC- 3 BESS as a universal screener for behavioral and emotional screening twice a year in PE & Health classes.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (New Jersey Student Learning Standards)

The district infuses related computer science and design thinking throughout 7-12 courses. Recent course offerings provide in-depth studies of programming languages, supported by Library Media Specialists and Instructional Coaches who assist teachers in integrating technology into instruction. This focus on technology literacy, digital citizenship, and media literacy ensures that students are equipped to manage, evaluate, and synthesize information for personal, academic, and professional success.

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Priority Items for 2025-2026

As we enter year three of the district's strategic plan, improved student achievement with a focus on accelerating learning for underperforming students is a core focus. The information below notes continued priority items for which the 2025-2026 curriculum and instruction budget was developed, with each aligned to the strategic plan. Although not a comprehensive list of budgeted items, each priority item aims to provide insight into some major purchases and/or initiatives that require support for the upcoming school year.

I. Data, Assessment & Instructional Technology

As effective use of assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle, the district will continue to implement MAP assessments as a benchmark to yield immediate performance feedback for use at the classroom, school, and district levels. The district will continue to seek strategic implementation of MAP data to guide instructional conversations and pedagogical practices. The district will continue to use LinkIT! to store its data and to assist with the triangulation of multiple data sets to guide a data-driven decision related to student achievement. The district is also committed to expanding the use and LinkIT! to administer progress monitoring assessments and classroom assessments to empower educators with data-driven insights to make instructional decisions.

- MAP Testing 7-10 (ELA & Math): MAP Assessments are norm-referenced and adaptive to get the best measure of student readiness as a baseline as well as growth over time because of instruction. MAP will be administered three times per year in the fall, winter, and spring.
- LinkIT! Warehouse: The use of LinkIt! as our data warehouse helps to provide easy access to data (MAP, grades, course assessments, SAT/PSAT, & AP) for all faculty (teachers, CST, guidance, school leaders, administrators) to best understand students' needs, to facilitate dialogue with families, to make decisions for placement, and to measure program/curricular success and areas of improvement.
- Instructional Technology: The FY26 budget includes a sustained investment in the district's use of technology to enhance instruction. Kingsway will continue to utilize Schoology as its learning management system (LMS) to support learning and instruction across various environments. In conjunction with Schoology, selected instructional technology (ReadWrite, Turnitin, Gimkit, IXL, etc.) aids in student engagement, timely feedback, and the use of assessment to guide instruction. Adapting to the current trends in education, to foster authentic learning, requires purposeful access to instructional technology resources for all teachers and students. This is noted as a strategic plan aim intends to effectively blend learning to improve teaching and learning.

II. Professional Development

For the 2025-26 school year, our professional development initiatives will directly support our strategic plan through a focused implementation of the New Jersey Tiered Systems of Support (NJTSS). This framework underpins our commitment to both academic growth and social/emotional wellness by emphasizing data literacy and evidence-based instructional strategies. Key priorities include:

- Data-Driven Tier 1 Instruction: In the third year of NJTSS implementation, we will continue to examine and refine Tier 1 instruction through regular data reviews by dedicated data teams in both the middle and high school. These teams set SMART goals that inform our instructional practices and ensure alignment with Strategic Plan Priority 1: High-Quality Teaching and Learning; Aim 1: Improving student performance in Math and English/Language Arts, with a specific focus on reducing existing gaps. Our target is for at least 80% of classroom observations

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to reflect consistent use of research-based strategies within the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework by the 2027-28 school year.

- **Comprehensive Professional Development**: The budget supports ongoing efforts to build faculty capacity through targeted professional development. This includes job-embedded opportunities led by two instructional coaches who provide classroom-level support, structured professional dialogues, and peer observations. These efforts ensure that teachers are equipped to implement evidence-based strategies that address both academic and behavioral/SEL needs.
- **Integrated Support for All Learners**: Our approach extends beyond Tier 1 by laying the foundation for effective Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. Strengthened Tier 1 practices facilitate targeted Tier 2 small-group instruction, while Tier 3 supports—such as academic labs, 1:1 tutoring, and specialized interventions like Wilson Reading—ensure that students requiring more intensive assistance receive equitable, evidence-based support.

This integrated framework is designed to provide all students with the necessary supports to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, in alignment with our strategic priorities and long-term educational goals.

III. Curriculum Writing & Special Programs

As stated above, we will continue to implement [our curriculum writing and textbook adoption schedule](#) that has been developed to ensure a balance between core curricular areas and those of non-core subjects. As a result, the following will be engaged in the Curriculum Writing Cycle and prepare for the Program Evaluation Phase during the 2025-26 school year. During the summer months, courses of study for all core science and all world language courses will be rewritten under the guidance and direction of the department supervisors. Summer work focuses on developing learning progressions and outlining learning objectives/topics and skills. Curricula will also establish essential questions/enduring understandings, and common assessments for each course of study. Finally, grade-level aligned interdisciplinary connections, technology standards, and Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills (21st Century Themes & Skills) are determined for each course.

Specialized Programs:

- **Business Leadership Academy (BLA)**: We will continue to budget for an incoming cohort of 50 students in the BL Academy. Specifically, these costs will be reflected in the additional purchasing of BLA polo's and DECA participation requirements, including dues, registration fees, field trips, lodging for district and state conferences, etc.
- **Navy JROTC**: As we enter year three of Navy JROTC, continued investment is needed to ensure we supply students with the required equipment and uniforms for the program. The expected number of NJROTC is nearing 50 students for the 25-26 school year. Like BLA, STEM, and the SHP, NJROTC aims to secure cocurricular experiences that support and expand the students' experiences in the program. As a result, co-curricular opportunities will be an integral part of the program.
- **School of Health Professions (SHP)**: The SHP will continue to infuse [Squads Abroad](#), a supplemental virtual component of the program that allows students to interact, in real-time, with international medical relief organizations. These online programs create engaging experiential learning environments by leveraging tele medical tools and in-country medical teams to involve students in real patient cases and healthcare work. Like BLA, STEM, and NJROTC, the SHP

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aims to secure co-curricular experiences that support and expand the students' experiences in the program. [HOSA \(Future Health Professionals\)](#) is a global organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education the Department of Health and Human Services and several federal and state agencies. HOSA provides a unique program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for students enrolled in health science education or students who have an interest in pursuing careers in health professions.

- STEM Academy: We will continue to budget for an incoming cohort of 50 students in the STEM Academy. Therefore, we will continue to need supplies relative to freshman year's STEAM night, STEM apparel as well as co-curricular opportunities related to field trips and Sci/Bio Olympiad participation.
- Team Scholastics: As in previous years, PD is being budgeted for costs associated with teacher summer training relative to AVID. Funds will also be used to support the continued use of the AVID curriculum, resources, training videos, etc., which are the foundation for the Team Scholastics Program.

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Informational Overview

Enrollment

Middle school enrollment is projected to decline to 896 students for the 2025-26 school year, a decrease of 41 students from the current year. Similarly, the High school anticipates a reduction of 73 students, bringing its 9th-12th grade population to 1,891. Overall, the district enrollment is expected to decrease by 114 students, bringing the combined total enrollment to 2,787 students.

	Current SY '25	Projected SY '26	Inc./Dec From SY25
7 th	446	450	+4
8 th	491	446	-45
Sub Total (MS)	937	896	-41
9 th	477	434	-43
10 th	459	477	+18
11 th	521	459	-62
12 th	507	521	+14
Sub Total (HS)	1964	1891	-73
District Total	2901	2787	-114

Staffing Levels

In public education, employee compensation and benefits represent a significant portion of the operation budget, accounting for 65% of total expenditures. For FY26, total employee compensation is projected at \$28,764,714, while employee benefits are expected to total \$10,008,096. Specifically, compensation makes up 49% of the overall operating budget, and employee benefits contribute 16%. The FY26 tentative budget also reflects a net decrease of 8.0 full-time equivalent positions as compared to FY25. This reduction in positions is part of ongoing efforts to manage budget constraints and declining enrollments while ensuring the district continues to provide an excellent education for our student population.

Full Time Equivalent Positions

	Actual			Current	Proposed
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Instruction	241.00	240.00	248.00	252.00	246.00
Support Services	133.84	143.68	142.68	145.68	143.68
Administration	31.00	33.00	29.00	29.84	29.84
	405.84	416.68	419.68	427.52	419.52

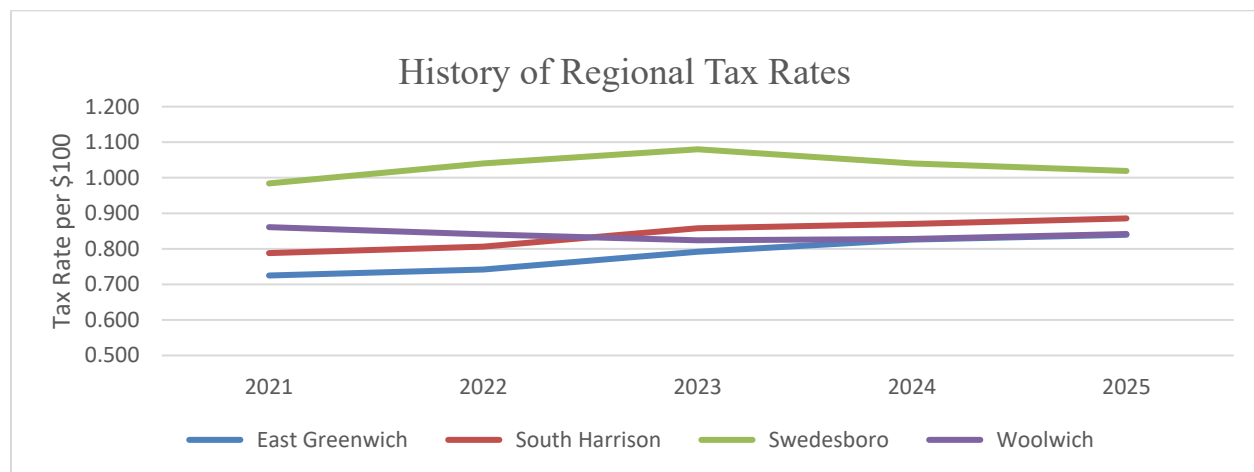
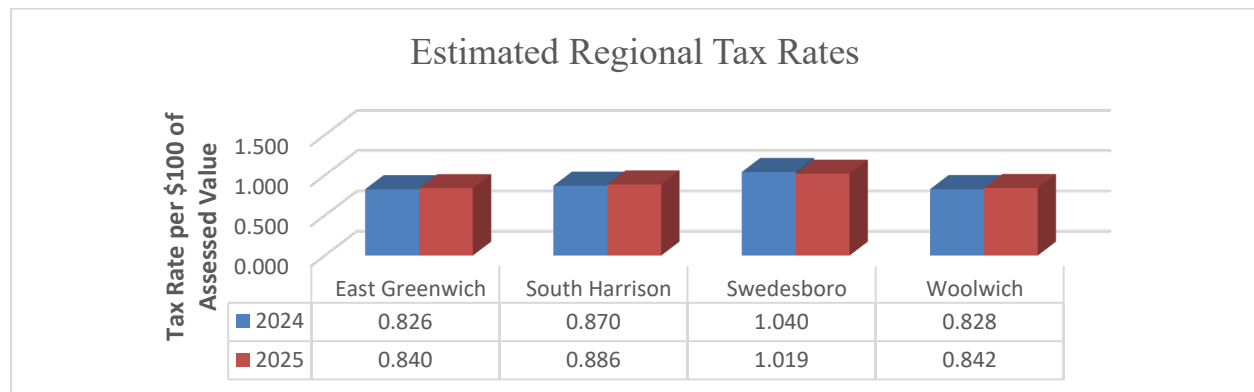
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Tax Levy Analysis

The FY26 tentative budget is supported by \$30,269,726 in local property taxes, reflecting an increase of \$1,284,068, or 4.43%. The proposed tax levy includes an increase beyond the 2% cap due to the district qualifying for waiver of \$816,606 based on rising employee health benefit costs. As a result, the proposed tentative tax levy would lead to an increase in the tax rate for three out of the district's four regional communities. The following charts illustrate the impact of the proposed tax levy on the tax rates for each municipality within the region, calculated on a calendar year basis:

Impact on Tax Rate

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
East Greenwich	0.725	0.742	0.792	0.826	0.840
South Harrison	0.788	0.806	0.858	0.870	0.886
Swedesboro	0.984	1.040	1.080	1.040	1.019
Woolwich	0.861	0.841	0.824	0.828	0.842



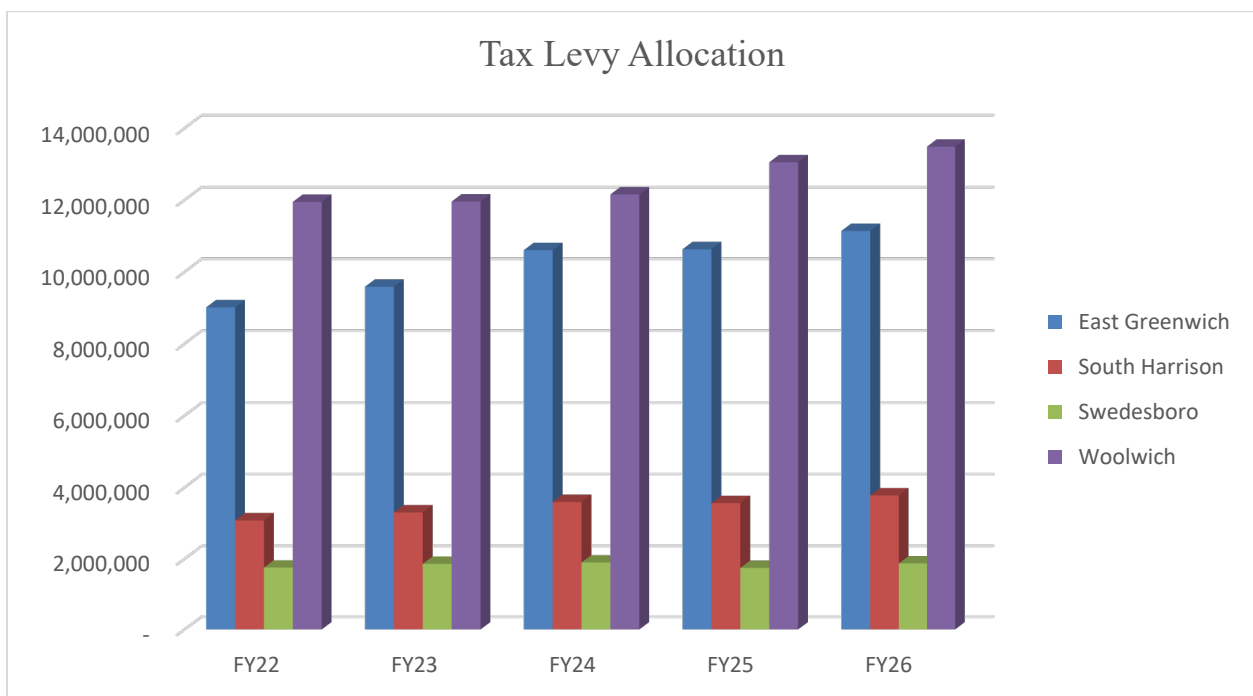
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Regional Tax Levy Allocation

As a regional school district, tax rates vary on a municipality-by-municipality basis. Several factors are considered by the State when determining how to allocate the tax burden across each municipality. These factors include:

1. **Equalized Value (EV)** – A standardized measure of property valuation used for comparative purposes.
2. **Total Enrollment** – Enrollment figures for the elementary and regional school district, broken down by municipality.
3. **Distribution of EV** – The allocation of equalized value is based on the distribution of elementary and regional school district enrollment.

	Actual			Revised	Proposed
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
East Greenwich	9,013,024	9,585,800	10,603,765	10,629,585	11,139,197
South Harrison	3,082,302	3,303,419	3,593,135	3,562,873	3,777,201
Swedesboro	1,753,708	1,859,150	1,897,831	1,743,878	1,869,759
Woolwich	11,946,715	11,956,865	12,154,941	13,049,322	13,483,569
Total Tax Levy	25,795,749	26,705,235	28,249,673	28,985,658	30,269,726

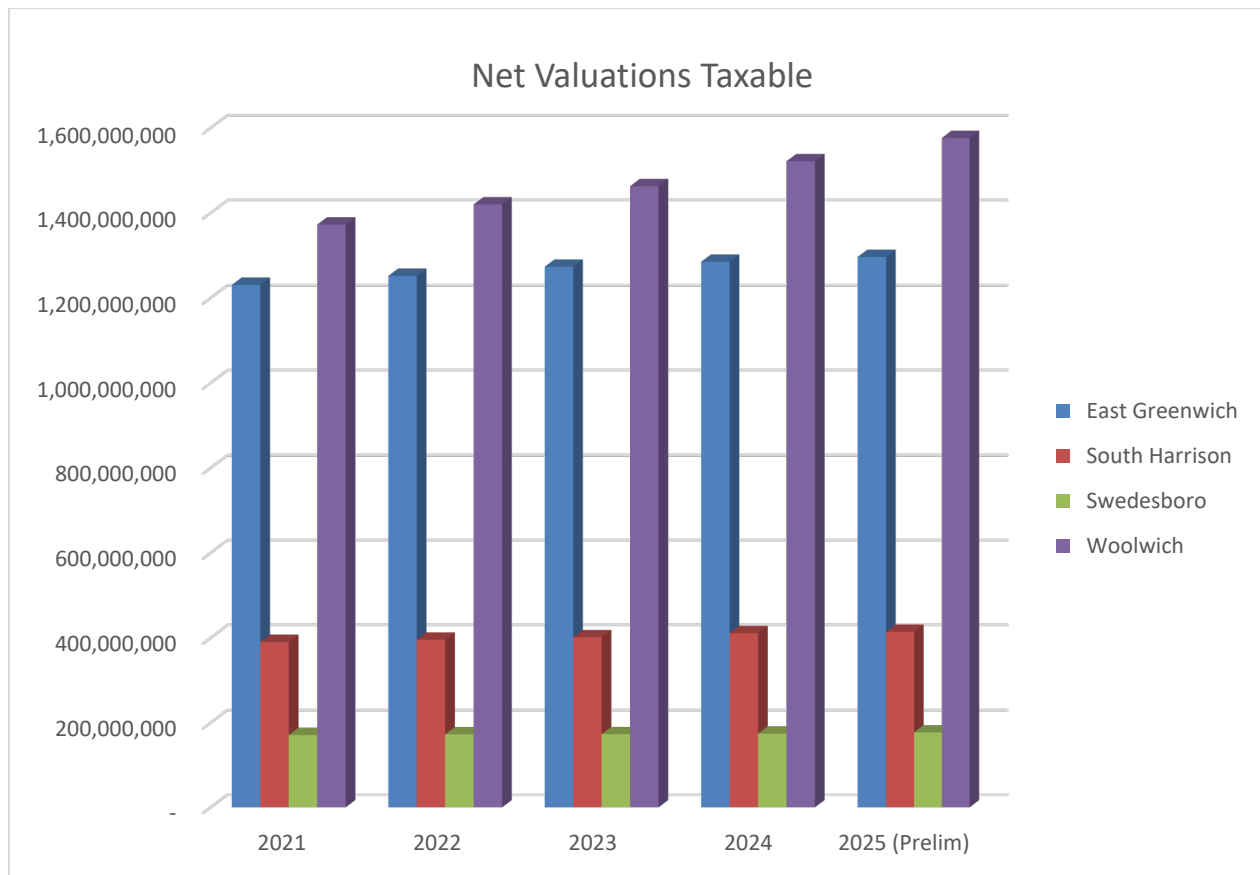


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Net Valuation Taxable by Town

In addition to the municipal percentage shares, the Net Valuation Taxable (NVT) of each municipality also play a crucial role in determining individual tax rates. The following charts illustrate the changes in NVT over a five-year period, highlighting the variances and their impact on each town's tax burden.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (Prelim)
East Greenwich	1,230,842,600	1,251,892,500	1,273,439,300	1,285,077,525	1,296,506,700
South Harrison	390,482,800	395,866,900	401,526,500	411,191,900	414,412,800
Swedesboro	171,101,300	172,831,100	173,175,400	174,308,500	177,339,200
Woolwich	1,372,654,610	1,420,257,010	1,462,961,510	1,521,692,810	1,576,497,010

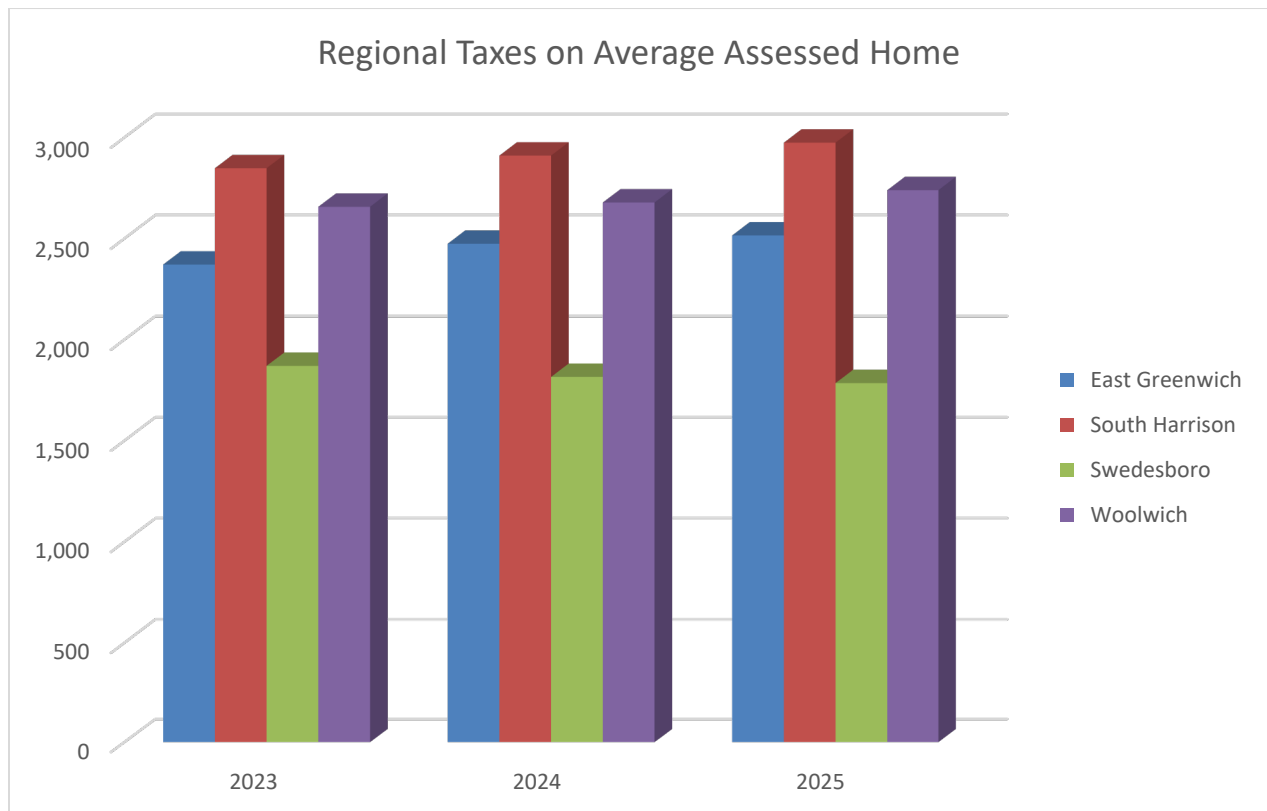


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Annual Regional School Taxes on Average Assessed Home Values

The annual regional school taxes are calculated by multiplying the assessed value of a property by the corresponding tax rate and dividing by 100.

	2023	2024	2025	\$ Inc/(Dec)
East Greenwich	2,371	2,474	2,515	41
South Harrison	2,848	2,911	2,975	64
Swedesboro	1,870	1,816	1,785	-31
Woolwich	2,657	2,678	2,740	61



Average Home Assessments

	2023	2024	2025
East Greenwich	299,405	299,559	299,631
South Harrison	331,935	334,545	335,876
Swedesboro	173,165	174,581	175,203
Woolwich	322,477	323,481	325,554

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Long-Term Debt

The district currently has two (2) outstanding bond issues. The majority of the remaining balance stems from bonds issued in 2012 following the 2011 voter-approved referendum for additions and renovations to the middle and high schools. The 2016 refunding bonds are set to mature in 2031, while the 2020 refunding bonds will remain active until 2037.

As of June 30,	Actual			Revised	Projected
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
2012 Refunding Bonds	1,175,000	590,000	-	-	-
2014 Refunding Bonds	2,160,000	1,070,000	-	-	-
2016 Refunding Bonds	8,170,000	8,170,000	8,170,000	6,965,000	5,770,000
2020 Refunding Bonds	16,325,000	15,385,000	14,410,000	13,430,000	12,440,000
	27,830,000	25,215,000	22,580,000	20,395,000	18,210,000

