



HUNTERDON CENTRAL REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

2025-2026 Tentative Budget

Ms. Jessica Cangelosi-Hade, Superintendent

Mrs. Heather A. Spitzer, Business Administrator

HUNTERDON CENTRAL MISSION STATEMENT

Hunterdon Central is an innovative educational community dedicated to the intellectual, social, and emotional safety and growth of all students. While fostering curiosity and promoting wellness, we aspire to create powerful learning experiences, establish strong partnerships, and serve as contributing members of society.



BOARD BUDGET OBJECTIVES

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 24, 2025

Education

- To implement an innovative program in fulfillment of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, and in compliance with all mandates and requirements determined by the New Jersey Department of Education and other officials and agencies.
- To ensure that each student can access the full range of that program toward the fulfillment of their individual aspirations, through District focus on climate and culture, instructional priorities, inclusive opportunities and community engagement.
- To sustain and nurture staff, and grow capacity through staff development and a structure that best enables our program.
- To sustain and enhance District facilities for security, safety, student and community experience, and our shared natural environment through ongoing maintenance and long-range capital planning.

Fiscal Responsibility

- To advance a responsible and respectful 2025-2026 budget by implementing strategies to balance District needs against expenses and to minimize future tax levy increases.

Academic Priorities

***This budget is successful in maintaining and enhancing programs based on our academic priorities.*

- Expansion of Worked Based Learning coupled with Dual Enrollment
- Add magnet programs
 - Media & Communications
 - Engineering
 - Expand Computer Science
- Continuing programs support by ESSER grant for the second year
- Embraced AI – use responsibly and effectively
- Wellness Curriculum initiative

BUDGETING CHALLENGES

- ❖ State Aid
- ❖ Declining Enrollment
- ❖ HC Vocational School District enrollment increase
 - ❖ Increased tuition costs
 - ❖ Additional bus routes
 - ❖ Loss of State Aid
- ❖ Out of District Tuition projected to increased 27.00%YOY
- ❖ Chapter 44 resulting in increase cost
- ❖ Health Benefits
- ❖ RTPD increased cost of Class III Officers 22.00%YOY
- ❖ Utility costs have increased 49.71% in the last 2 years, projected to increase 20.00%YOY
- ❖ Property and Casualty Insurance projected to increase 15.00%YOY
- ❖ Cyber Insurance is up 30.00%YOY
- ❖ Other employee benefits (unemployment, pension, workers' comp, disability insurance)

STATE AID REDUCTIONS

Year	Aid Received
2018-2019	-\$38,710
2019-2020	-\$163,973
2020-2021	-\$224,082
2021-2022	-\$320,193
2022-2023	-\$257,000
2023-2024	-\$98,605
2024-2025	-\$31,227
2025-2026	\$206,520
Total Reduction over 8 years	-\$927,270

State Aid increased for the first time in 2025-26 by 0.27% of budget

State Aid in 2017-18 was \$5,719,700

State Aid in 2025-26 is \$4,941,482

Since 2017-2018 the district has seen a 13.61% reduction in state aid

ASSA ENROLLMENT HISTORY

Year	# of Student FTEs	# Students Change	% Students Change	Staffing including Sp. Ed & Related Services
15-16	2,990.5	+13.5	+0.45%	373.4
16-17	2,956.5	+34.0	-1.14%	377.4
17-18	2,903.0	-53.5	-1.81%	382.4
18-19	2,796.0	-107.0	-3.69%	379.1
19-20	2,675.5	-120.5	-4.31%	377.1
20-21	2,608.0	-67.5	-2.59%	379.9
21-22	2,554.0	-54	-2.07%	379.9
22-23	2,432.5	-121.5	-4.76%	381.2
23-24	2,338.5	-94	-3.86%	373.2
24-25	2,205.5	-133	-5.69%	367.8

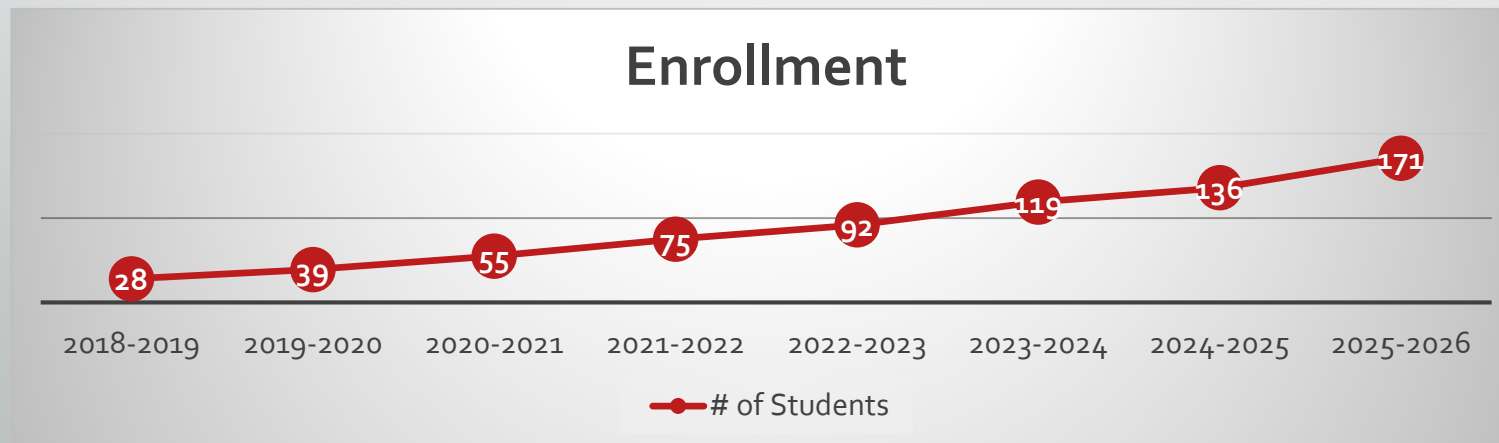
ASSA Enrollment counts share time students as 0.5 FTE

Through 24-25-Student Enrollment is down 785 or 26.25% and Staffing FTE is down 5.6 or 1.50%

HC Vocational School District ACADEMIES

Anticipated enrollment of 171 students

- Students are not included in enrollment
- District responsible for transportation costs
- Impacts adequacy calculation and regional tax allocations
- Each student costs approximately \$100,000



Increase of
511% over 8
years

ANTICIPATED OUT-OF-DISTRICT PLACEMENTS

Other LEA 1 Full Time

Special Education 18 Full Time/ 42 Part Time

General Education 171* Full Time / 85 Part Time

State Facility 3** Full Time

*Students attending the academy programs has increased 35 students or \$356,755 YOY

**Students in state facility placements has increased 2 students or \$171,134 YOY

CHAPTER 44 LAW

Signed July 1, 2020

Intent: To provide a medical and Rx option for employees to select in order to reduce their health benefit contributions. The law establishes two less robust plans (EHP & GSP) where the employee contributes a % of their salary. The assumption was the less robust plan premium would be much less expensive than the legacy plans therefore saving districts and employees money. This law requires the savings to be passed on the taxpayers as a reduction in the tax levy.

Effective 7/1/2020 all new employees must enroll in NJEHP or NJGSP.

Result: The benefit packages for Chapter 44 plans required by law did not result in substantial premium savings, however, the employee contributions were drastically reduced therefore causing additional costs to the district.

The cost comparison for years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 resulted in a loss to the district of \$477,768.

Total loss since implementation of Chapter 44 Law is \$717,799.

Health Benefits

- The district continues to experience relatively low increases in our health benefit costs due to aggressive marketing of plans over several years.
- SEHBP increased rates 15.1% in 2023, increased 6.3% in 2024 and anticipate an increase of 14.0% in 2025 for a total of 35.4% over 3 years
- We are projecting an increase of 9.2% medical, 9.2% Rx and 5.0% dental, due to SHIF.
- Over 3 years the increase with SHIF has been approximately 12.40%, which is less than the SEHBP increase
- Good experience rating and overall health of the plan
- Helped absorb continued cuts in state aid as well as natural budgetary increases year over year

HOW DID WE COME IN UNDER THE 2% CAP?

- Inflation is causing a substantial rise in income interest rates
- Analytic review of all department budgets
- Declining enrollment will influence staffing due to retirements
- Relatively low increases to health benefit costs
- Administrative Reorganization
- Transportation

Administrative Costs



Reorganization of Administrative Roles

- Overall elimination of one administrator upon retirement
- Breakage on eliminating Assistant Superintendent position and replacing with Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Breakage on replacing Administrative position changes
- Reduced expenses while enhancing capacity with realignment of Administrative positions.

Decrease of \$180,243 in Administrative Costs

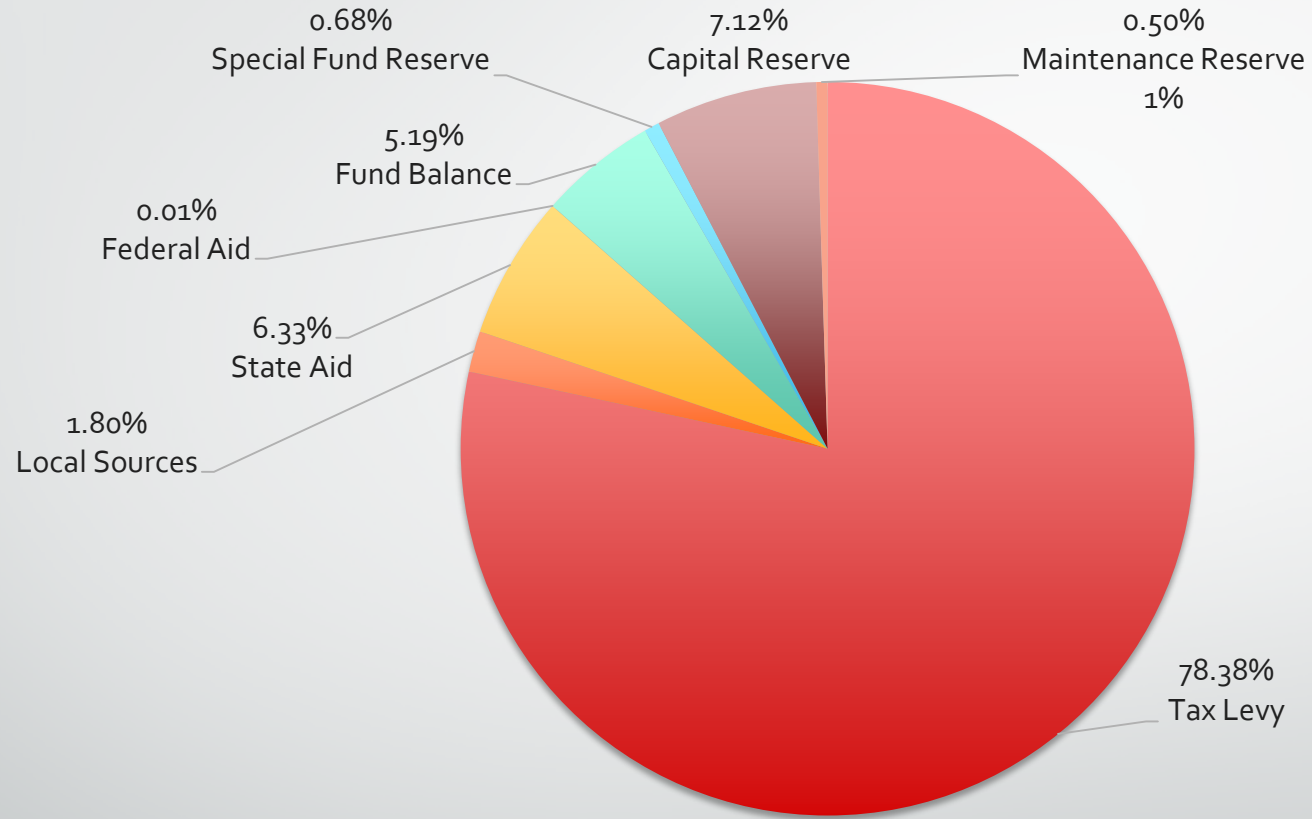
Transportation

- Reconfigured HC routes to maximize efficiency and eliminate contracted routes.
- Through shared services discussions we expect to keep a tiered approach to maximize efficiency for HC and our sending district for routes we provide.
- Overall reconfiguration has resulted in approximately at a saving of \$475,000.

Revenue

General Fund	Revised 2024-2025	Budget 2025-2026	Change
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$3,974,385	\$4,051,342	\$76,957
Local Tax Levy	\$59,991,751	\$61,191,586	\$1,199,835
Other	\$1,283,949	\$1,406,984	\$123,035
Total Local Funds	\$61,275,700	\$62,598,570	\$1,322,870
State Aid	\$4,734,962	\$4,941,482	\$206,520
Federal Aid	\$38,920	\$5,564	-\$33,356
Total General Fund	\$70,023,967	\$71,596,958	\$1,572,991
Special Revenue Fund	\$705,425	\$529,069	-\$176,356
Adj. Prior Yr Encumbrances	\$1,609,810	\$0	-\$1,609,810
Reserves			
Capital Reserve Withdrawal	\$7,628,191	\$5,561,229	-\$2,066,962
Maintenance Reserve Withdrawal	\$0	\$387,139	\$378,139
Emergency Reserve Withdrawal	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Reserve Withdrawal	\$7,628,191	\$5,939,368	-\$1,688,823
TOTAL REVENUES	\$79,967,393	\$78,074,395	-\$1,892,998

REVENUE SOURCES



■ Tax Levy ■ Local Sources ■ State Aid ■ Federal Aid ■ Fund Balance ■ Special Fund Reserve ■ Capital Reserve ■ Maintenance Reserve

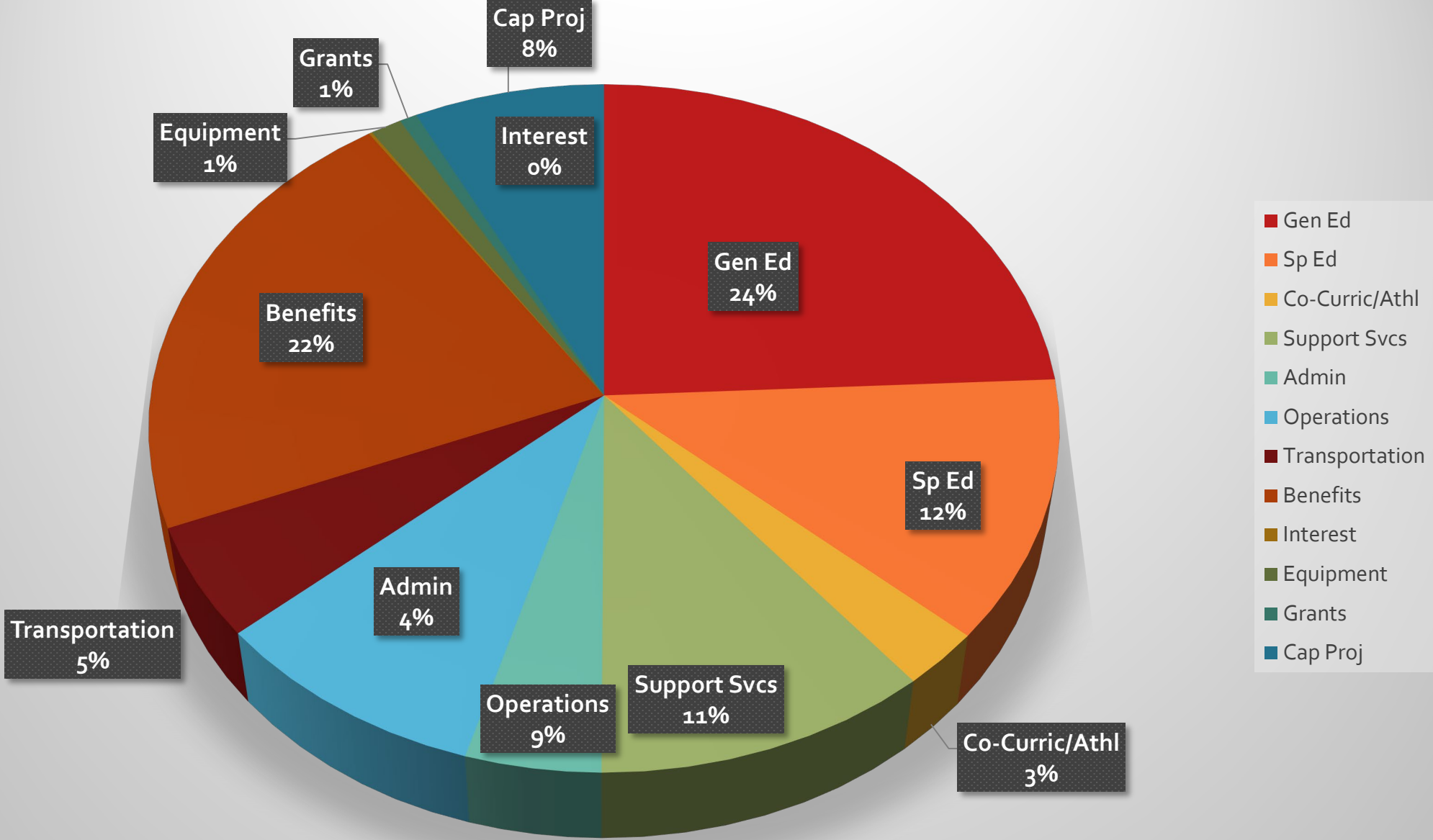
EXPENSES INCLUDED IN GENERAL FUND

- **Regular Instructional Programs**
- **Special Education Programs**
- **Instructional Support Services:**
 - Library, Counseling Services, Health Office, Curriculum Supervisors, Staff Training
- **Administrative Expenses:**
 - Superintendent, Principal, Human Resources, Business, and Information Technology Offices
- **Operations:**
 - Maintenance, Custodial, Grounds, Security
- **Transportation**
- **Employee Benefits & Taxes**
- **Equipment (>\$2,000)**
- **Capital Projects**
 - Funded by Capital Reserve
- **Maintenance Projects**
 - Funded by Maintenance Reserve

Expenditures

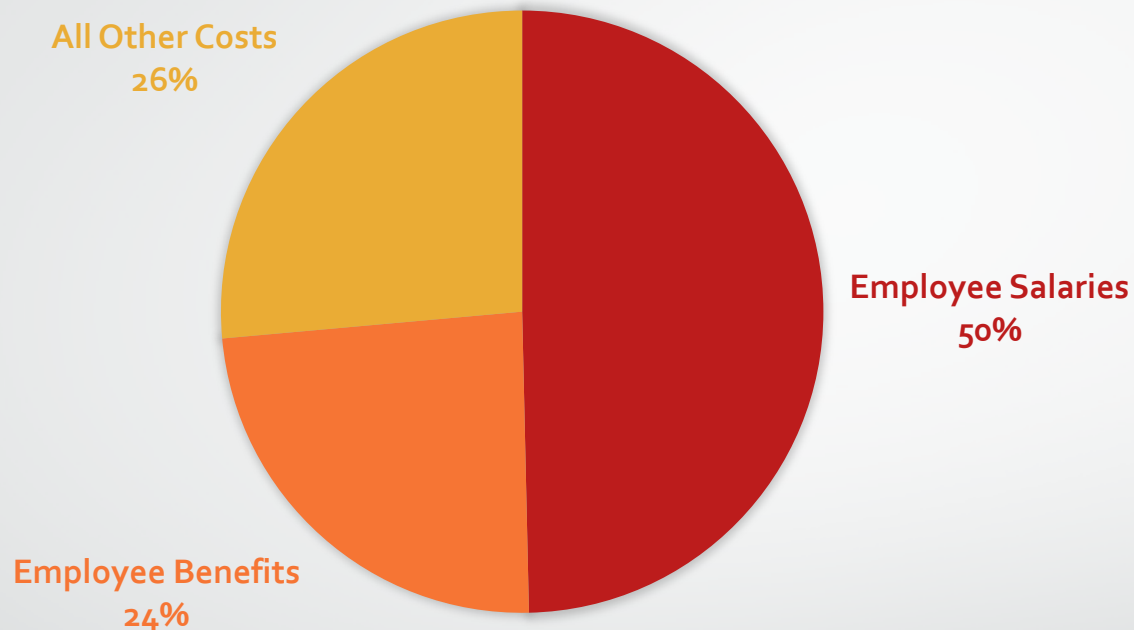
Category	Revised Budget 2024-2025	Proposed Budget 2025-2026	Dollar Change
Regular Instructional Programs	18,690,304	18,929,331	239,027
Special Education Programs +tuition	8,484,314	9,552,367	1,068,053
Instructional Support Services (Library, CST, Guidance, Nurse, Curriculum, Staff Training)			
Co-Curricular Programs	2,066,167	2,064,397	-1,770
Administrative Expenses (General, School, HR, Business, and IT Offices)			
Facility Maintenance, Custodial, Grounds, and Security	6,844,003	7,159,120	315,117
Transportation	4,549,215	4,073,447	-475,768
Employee Benefits	16,126,200	16,922,157	795,957
Total Operating Fund Budget Accounts	69,006,353	70,692,441	1,686,088
Capital Projects and Equipment Purchases (> \$2,000)	10,158,615	6,755,885	-3,402,730
Total General Fund Budget	79,164,968	77,448,326	-1,716,642
Interest	97,000	97,000	0
Total Grant Fund Budget	705,425	529,069	-176,356
Total Debt Service Fund Budget	0	0	0
TOTAL BUDGET:	79,967,393	78,074,395	-1,892,998

Expenses by Category



EDUCATION IS A PEOPLE BUSINESS ...

73.6% OF THE DISTRICT'S GENERAL FUND EXPENSES COVER SALARY AND BENEFITS



	2025-2026 Budget Amount	% of General Fund Budget
Employee salaries	\$35,091,965	49.6%
Employee benefits	\$16,922,157	23.9%
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$52,014,122	73.6%

*excludes capital reserve

RESERVE FUNDS

DISTRICT'S LONG TERM PLANNING FUND

Capital Reserve

Maintenance Reserve

For projects in the Long-Range Facilities Plan

For Maintenance projects not included in the General Fund budget

The balance of each account is limited by State Law and the use of these funds does not impact the tax levy

2025-2026 CAPITAL RESERVE NEW PROJECTS

Project Description	Project Cost
9/10 Roof Replacement 300's Wing (ROD)*	\$853,065.00
9/10 Auditorium Roof Replacement (ROD)*	\$570,713.00
9/10 Replace Carpet Auditorium	\$386,063.00
IMC & Music Building Roof Coating (ROD)*	\$1,622,025.00
Repaving Transportation Lot	\$1,623,113.00
11/12 Locker Upgrades	\$300,000.00
11/12 Nurse Emergency Exit Door	\$25,000.00
11/12 College Career Offices & Conference Room	\$143,750.00
11/12 Acoustical Privacy Life Skills Room	\$37,500.00
Total	\$ 5,561,229.00

*Projects funded at 40% of eligible cost by Regular Operating District (ROD) Grant

GENERAL FUND TAX LEVY

- *New Jersey State Law mandates that annual Tax Levy increases cannot exceed 2.00%*
- Proposed HCRHS 2025-2026 Tax Levy:
\$61,191,585
- **Proposed Tax Levy Increase: 2.0%**
- From 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 there is a total of \$263,234 in banked CAP that can be used in the future.

TAX RATE CALCULATION

Equalization &
Enrollment

% Share of Levy
for each
Municipality

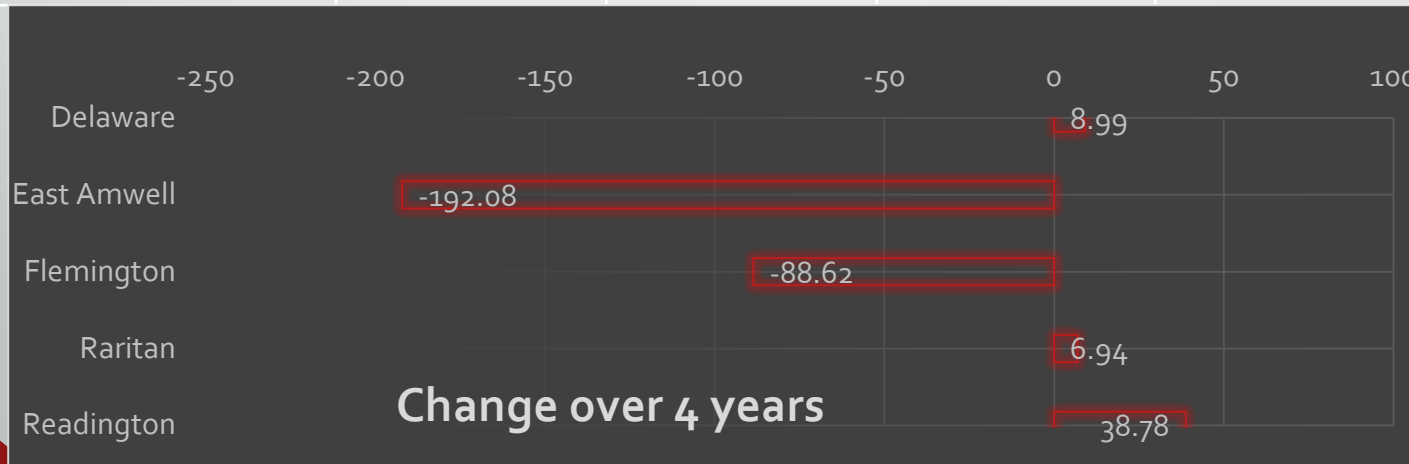
Tax Levy divided
by the
Municipality
Ratable=Tax Rate

Equalization and Enrollment

Municipality	Equal Value of Municipality	Elementary Enrollment	Regional Enrollment	Elementary %	Elementary Equalized Valuation	Regional Equalized Valuation	2025-2026 % Share
Delaware	1,202,897,387	344.00	131.50	72.34	870,175,970	332,721,417	8.3831031
East Amwell	989,926,561	328.00	93.50	77.82	770,360,850	219,565,711	5.5320815
Flemington	564,823,260	694.00	301.50	69.71	393,738,295	171,084,965	4.3105819
Raritan	6,124,484,615	2,469.00	1,037.50	70.41	4,312,249,617	1,812,234,998	45.6602794
Readington	4,591,114,157	1,380.00	626.50	68.78	3,157,768,317	1,433,345,840	36.1139541
Hunterdon Central Reg.	13,473,245,980	5,215.00	2,190.50		9,504,293,048	3,968,952,932	100.00

Tax Rate Estimate for 2024

Municipality	2024-2025 per \$100,000 of Assessed Value	2025-2026 per \$100,000 of Assessed Value	2025-2026 Change	4 year Change
Delaware	581.40	628.38	46.98	\$8.99
East Amwell	552.72	501.65	-51.07	-\$192.08
Flemington	423.22	415.72	-7.50	-\$88.62
Raritan	662.35	657.25	-5.10	\$6.94
Readington	599.98	637.31	37.33	\$38.78



2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

Next steps:

- March 17, 2025 Tentative budget introduction & approval
- March 19, 2025 Tentative budget to DOE
- April 24, 2025 Advertise budget in newspaper
- April 28, 2025 Public hearing & adoption
- April 30, 2025 Budget presentation on HCRHS website
Communicate budget information to municipal representatives
- May 19, 2025 Certify tax levy to County Board of Taxation