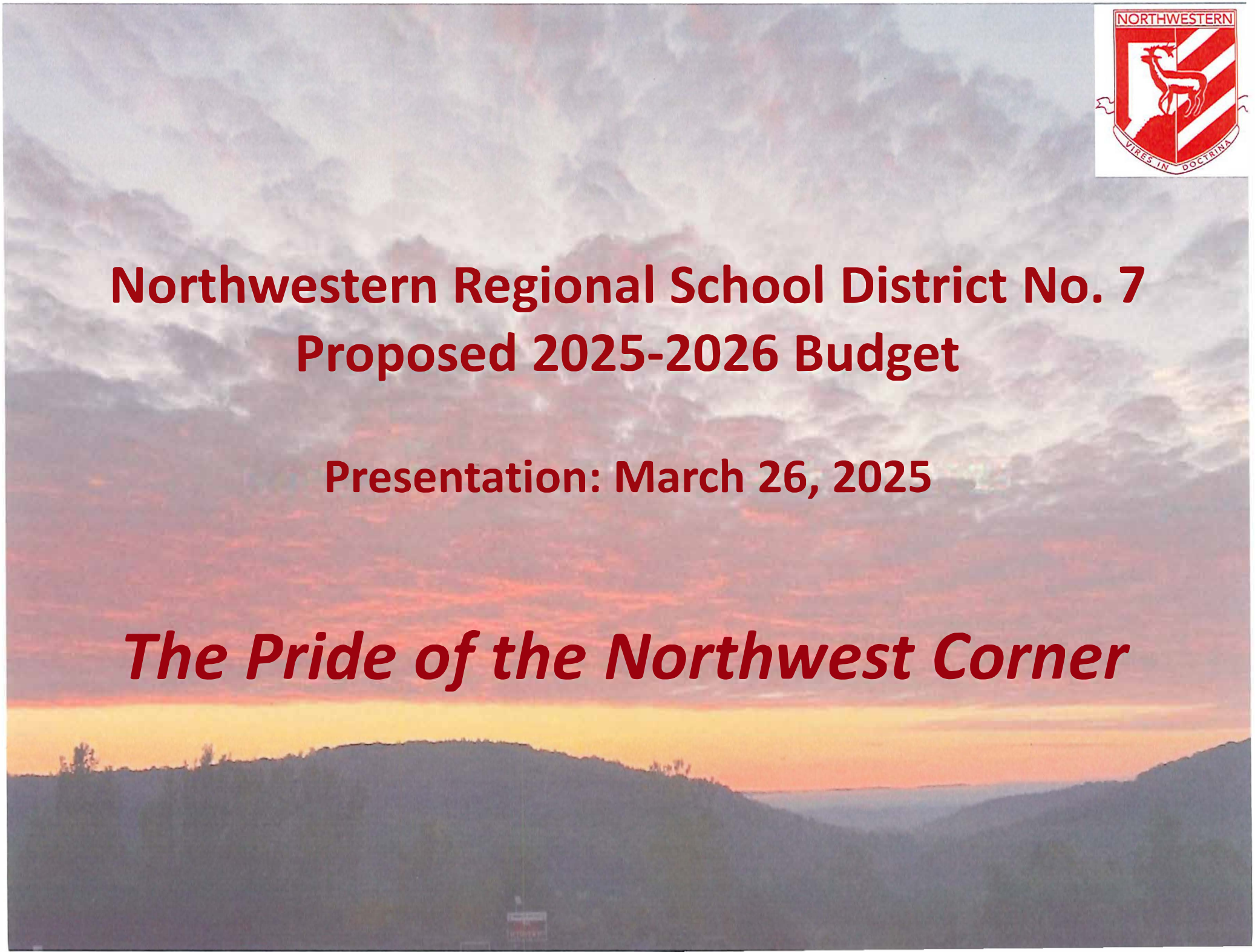
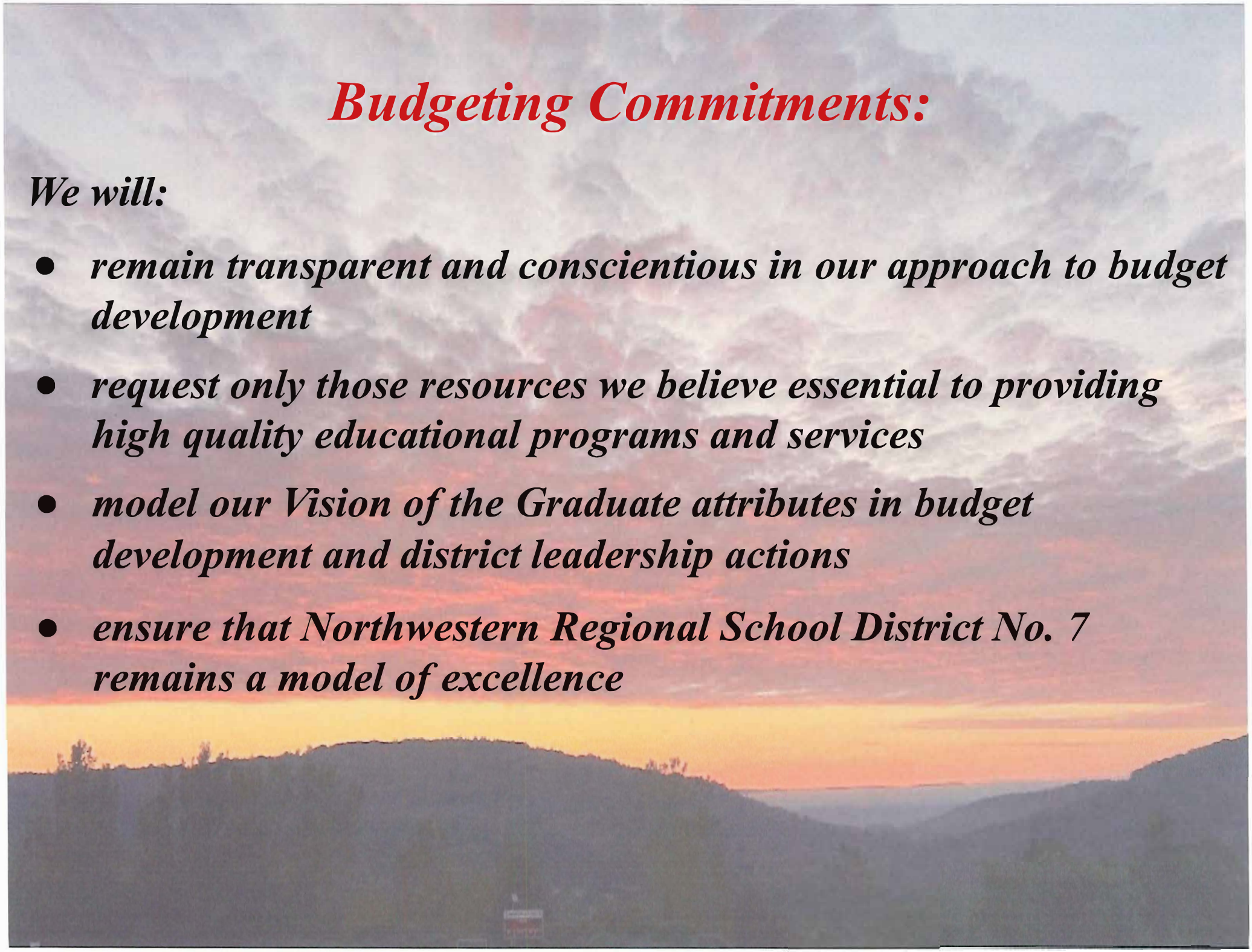


Northwestern Regional School District No. 7
Proposed 2025-2026 Budget

Presentation: March 26, 2025

The Pride of the Northwest Corner



Budgeting Commitments:

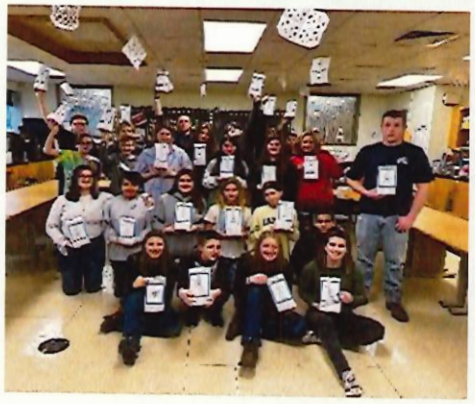
We will:

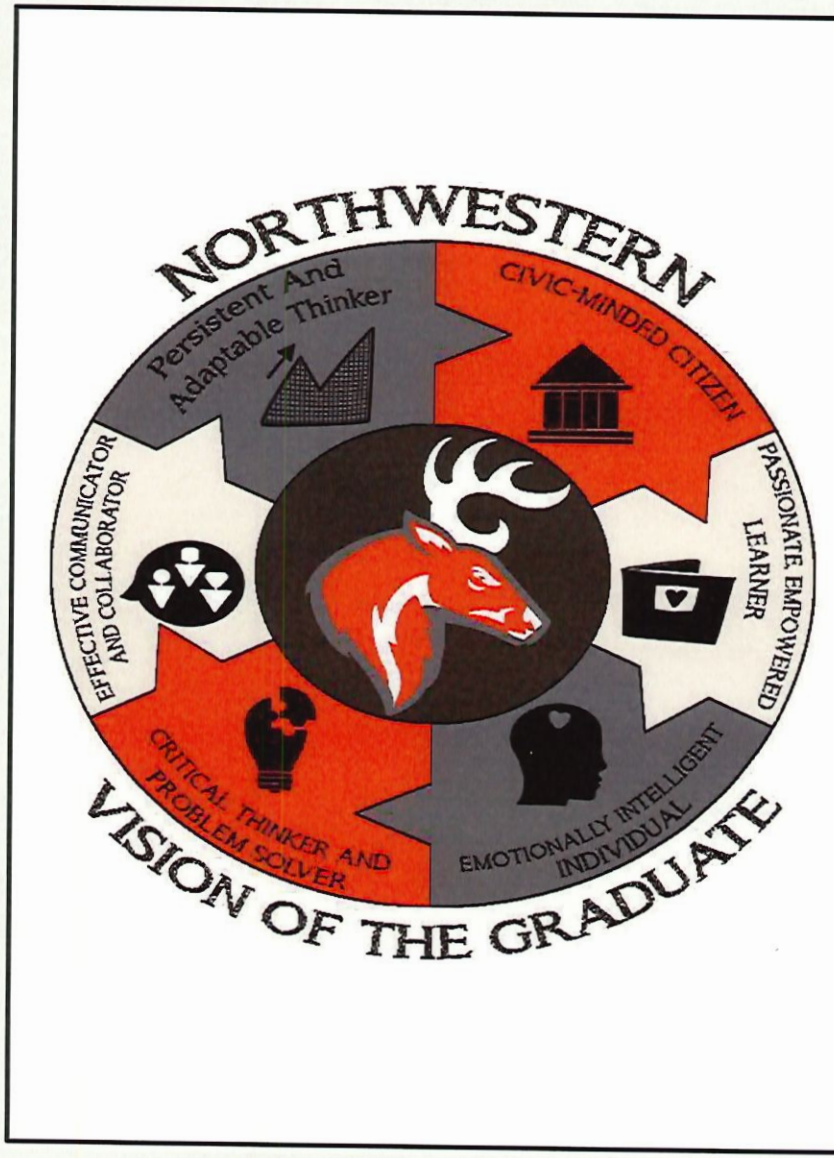
- ***remain transparent and conscientious in our approach to budget development***
- ***request only those resources we believe essential to providing high quality educational programs and services***
- ***model our Vision of the Graduate attributes in budget development and district leadership actions***
- ***ensure that Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 remains a model of excellence***

Northwestern Vision of the Graduate















The Pride of the Northwest Corner

Board's Proposed Budget: Historical Overview (UPDATED 3/12/2025)

Year	Budget	Assessment
• 2019-2020	1.77%	1.54%
• 2020-2021	2.53%	2.49%
• 2021-2022	1.33%	0.38%
• 2022-2023	2.45%	1.97%
• 2023-2024	2.42%	2.79%
• 2024-2025	3.47%	3.78%
• 2025-2026	~~2.97~~ 2.29%	~~4.12~~ 3.31%

Prior 5-Year Average Budget Increase: ***2.44%***

Prior 5-Year Average Assessment: ***2.28%***

7-Year Average Budget Increase: 2.32%

7-Year Average Assessment: 2.32%



Budget Drivers: Seeking the Right Balance
Significant Needs/Finite Resources



Special Education Programming:

- Special Education Outplacements (Decreased impact from current budget, but still a major driver)
- Underfunded State Excess Cost Grant (reduces our offset to high cost outplacement expenses)
- Specialized middle and high school support programs

Regular Education Programming Expenses:

- Significant increases in Medical Benefits renewal at 12%, a 2-year trend of large increases
- Contractual salary and benefits obligations are the primary driver of budget increases
- Need for tiered academic and behavioral intervention and support systems

Budget Mitigation Staffing Reductions:

- Increased Principal/Department Leader collaboration to foster transparency and efficiency
- Filled open positions with high quality educators at the lowest possible cost
- Reduced Capital Projects budget account by $50,000
- Deferred spending on numerous capital needs projects

Northwestern Middle School



















Addressing Middle School Needs

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- There is a growing need to support students who are not on grade level in the areas of math and reading.
  - Many of our students are in need of support in the areas of math and reading.
- Northwestern Middle School has a limited scale intervention program in the areas of math and reading.
  - Our schedule, as well as staffing, create barriers to these supports being universally available.
- With modifications to our schedule and a reallocation of existing staff members, we will be able to provide improved math and reading support to every student in need throughout the year.

Student Mental Health Needs

- Student needs relative to mental health support are increasing each year.
- Social media, increased anxiety and changing societal pressures impact students greatly.
- Outside services are becoming more difficult to access. The school is often serving students at a greater capacity than typical while coordinating outside services.
- Our mental health professionals work each day to navigate complex and sensitive situations.









Highlander Proud!





















Northwestern High School

Rigorous and Expanded Opportunities

A Wide Variety of Course Offerings

- **Agricultural Education**
  - Aquaculture
  - Greenhouse & Nursery Production
  - Exotic and Endangered Animal Science
- **Art**
  - Digital Design Studio
  - Art Classroom Mentorship
- **Business**
  - Advanced Personal Finance
  - Business Classroom Mentorship
- **Education**
  - UConn ECE: If You Love It, Teach It
- **English**
  - Journalism II
- **PE/Wellness**
  - UConn ECE: Exercise and Wellness for Everyone
- **Science**
  - Zoology
  - UConn EMT Training
  - Astronomy
- **Social Studies**
  - History of Rock and Roll

Summary of Northwestern's Advanced Placement Test Performance from 2018-2024

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of AP Classes Offered	12	11	11	11	13	13	14
Total AP Students	102	115	108	99	106	83	93
Number of Exams	164	183	175	161	168	137	166
% of Total AP Tests with Score of 3+	**88%**	**90%**	**90%**	**83%**	**86%**	**84%**	**84%**

- ***12 UConn ECE Courses will also be offered next year***
- ***76 Students Currently enrolled in UConn Courses***
- ***Hundreds of college credits earned while in high school***
- ***Hundreds of thousands saved in college tuition by families and students.***

PSAT COMPARATIVE 11TH GRADE

	Mean Score	Mean ERW Score	Mean Math Score
Class of 2026	1001	506	495
Class of 2025	**971**	**494**	**477**
Class of 2024	1016	517	499

SAT DATA COMPARATIVE

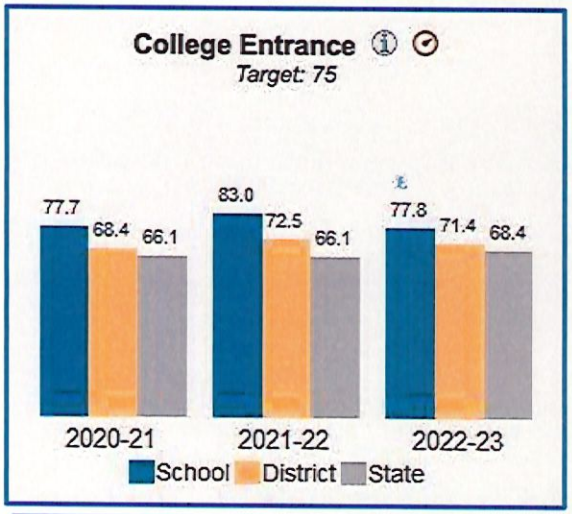
	Ave. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
Class of 2025	**1020**	**521**	**499**
Class of 2024	1060	532	528
Class of 2023	1023	523	500

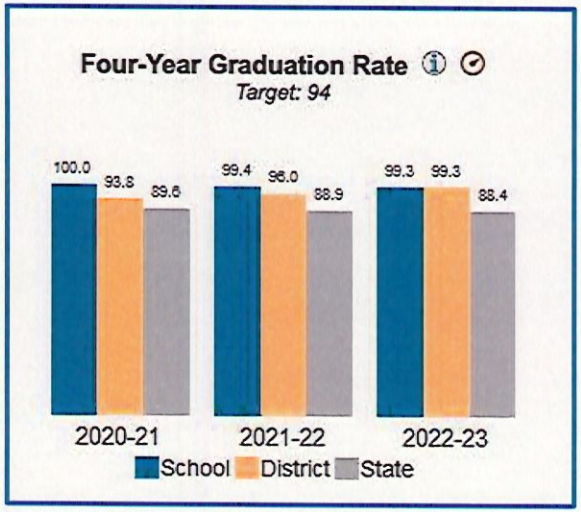


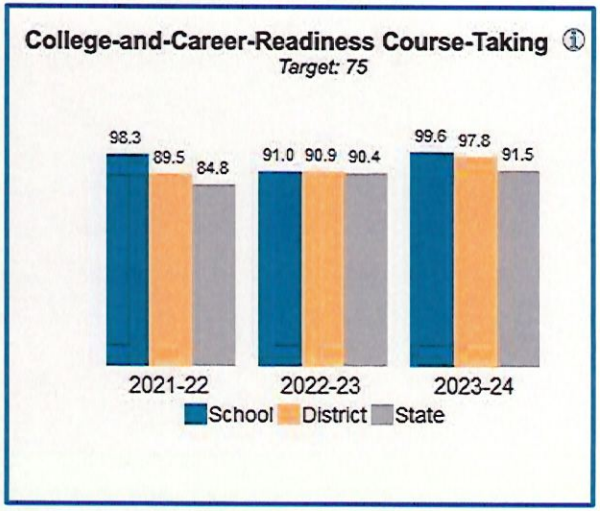
SAT DATA – CLASS OF 2025 STATE COMPARATIVE

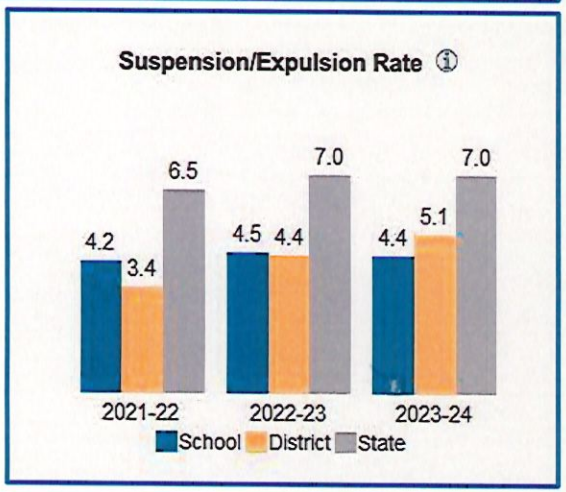
Group	Avg. Test Score	ERW Score	Math Score
NWR7 Class of 2025	**1020**	**521**	**499**
State of CT	962	491	471

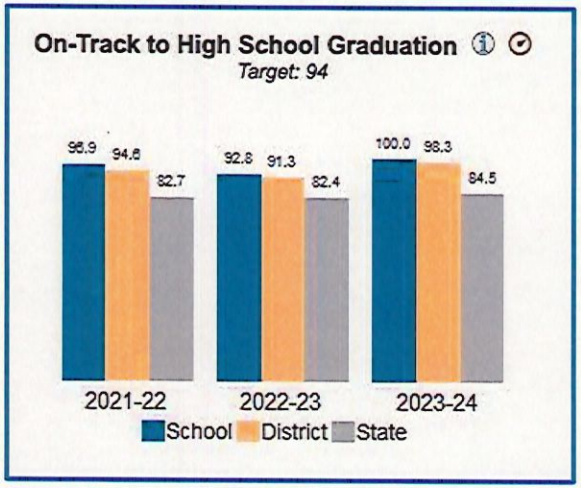
Accountability Indicators

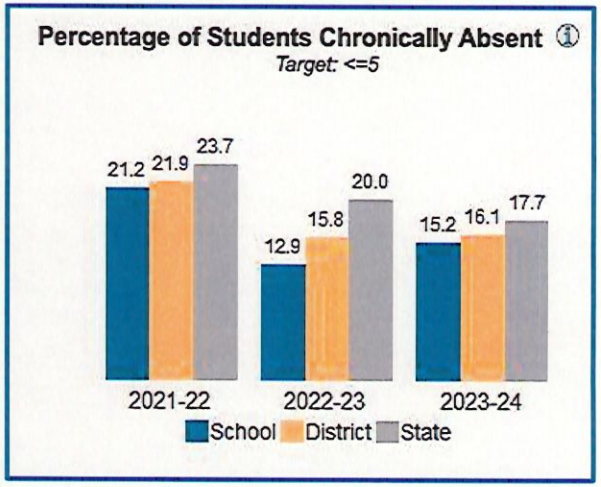


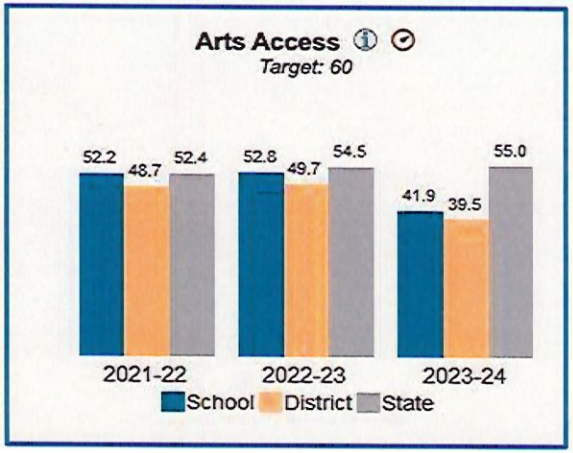










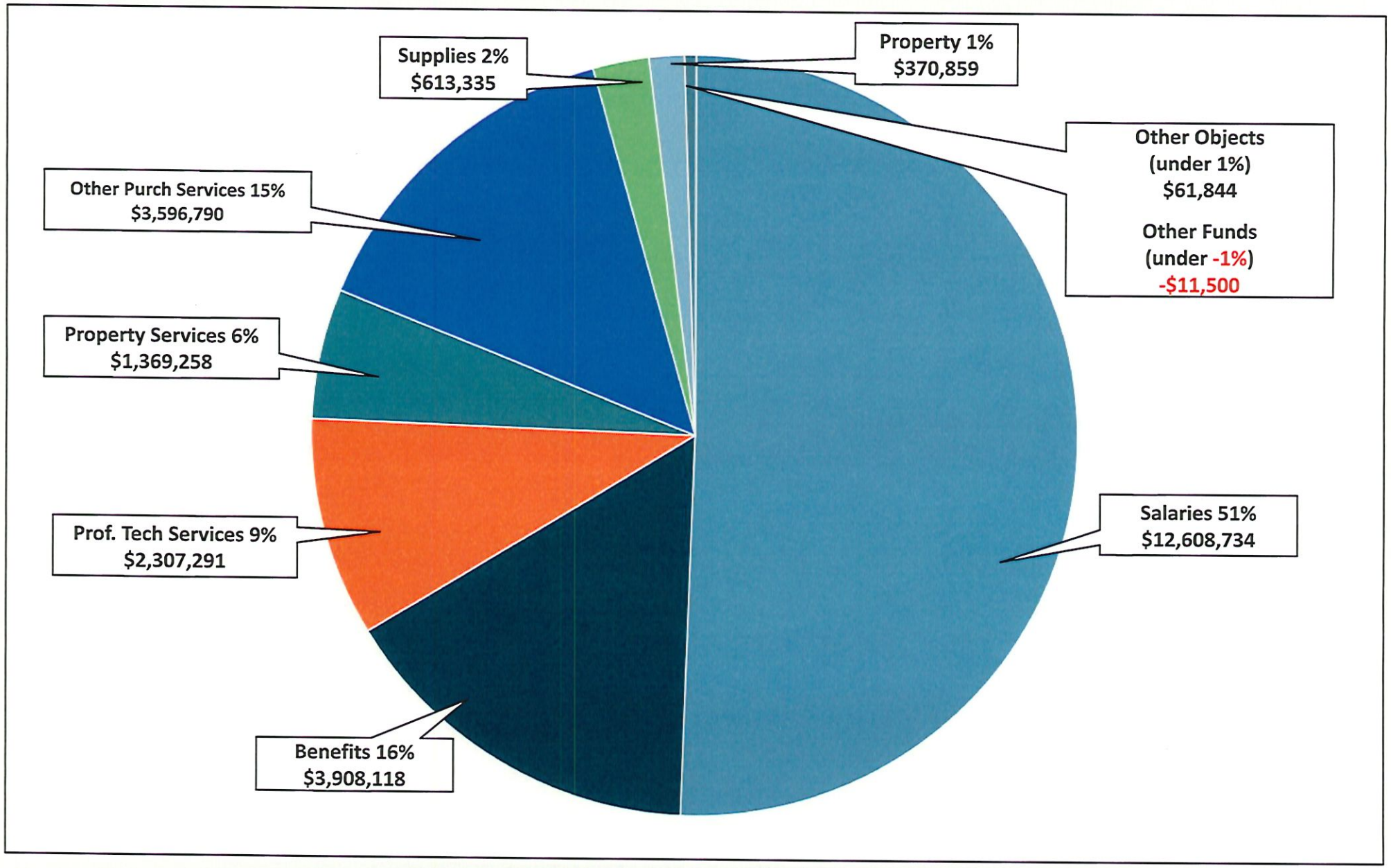


Budget Overview

Looking at the Big Picture…



2025-2026 Budget by Object



Budget Total $24,824,729

* Values above are rounded to the nearest whole.

100 Salaries

Increase of $298,438 or 2.42%

Increases:

- Contractual Salary Increases

Budget Mitigation Factors/Actions:

- Replace retiring Art teacher with a more novice (lower salary) teacher
- **Reduction of 1 non-certified position**
- School based mental health grant - Used to fund SEL/Academic Support in middle and high school

Benefits

Increase of $330,286 or 9.23%

Increases:

- Medical Health Insurance Renewal: 12.0% increase for 25/26 (Increased 10.95% in 24/25)

Budget Mitigation Factors/Actions:

- Retirement Savings
- Life Insurance Renewal at 3%
- Unemployment Renewal at 0%
- Workers' Compensation Insurance Renewal at 0%

300 Professional/Technical Services
Increase of $253,224 or 12.33%

Increases:

- Realignment and consolidation of technology/software accounts into this object from other budget objects
- Excess Cost offsets significantly underfunded by the state
- Shared Services Assessment increase **4.5%**
- Created Special Programs account to allocate funding for STEP, LINKS, AIM, HTA. (Formerly funded from revenue to fund some of these programs, but that is no longer an option. No new programs created, just funding existing programs)

Budget Mitigation Factors/Actions:

- Many accounts held to current funding levels
- **Use of $22,539 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Shared Services Expenditures**
- Use of $25,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education Professional and Technical Services

400 Property Services
Increase of $59,184 or 4.52%

Budget Mitigation Factors/Actions:

- Most accounts held to 0%
- **Energy, Fuel, and Utilities Increases (Electric up ~10%**, Refuse Collection up 35%)
- Snow Removal/Ice Management Increase (Increase of 11%)

500 Other Purchased Services

Decrease of -$370,125 or -9.33%

Budget Mitigation Factors/Actions:

- Reduced high cost Special Education Outplacements
- Most accounts held to 0% increase
- **Negotiation of new bus contracts with a net reduction of $40,000**
- Use of $25,000 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education Transportation
- Use of $238,508 in Excess Cost Grant to offset Special Education Outplacements
- Instructional Technology moved to 300 Object

600 Supplies

Increase of $17,581 or 2.95%

Increases:

- Natural Gas (Projected increase of 20%)
- Athletic Equipment (Volleyball)

Budget Mitigation Factors/Actions:

- Departments held to 0% increase or reallocated within the department budget
- Audiovisual supplies reduced
- English textbooks reduced

700 Property

Decrease of -$39,167 or -9.55%

Increases:

- Timpani Drum Set $11,000 (current timpani drums are between 24-33 years old and failing to tune)

Decreases:

- Reduced Capital Outlay by $50,000

800 Other Objects

Increase of $4,216 or 7.32%

- No new borrowing since 2012
- Adjustments to dues/fees accounts

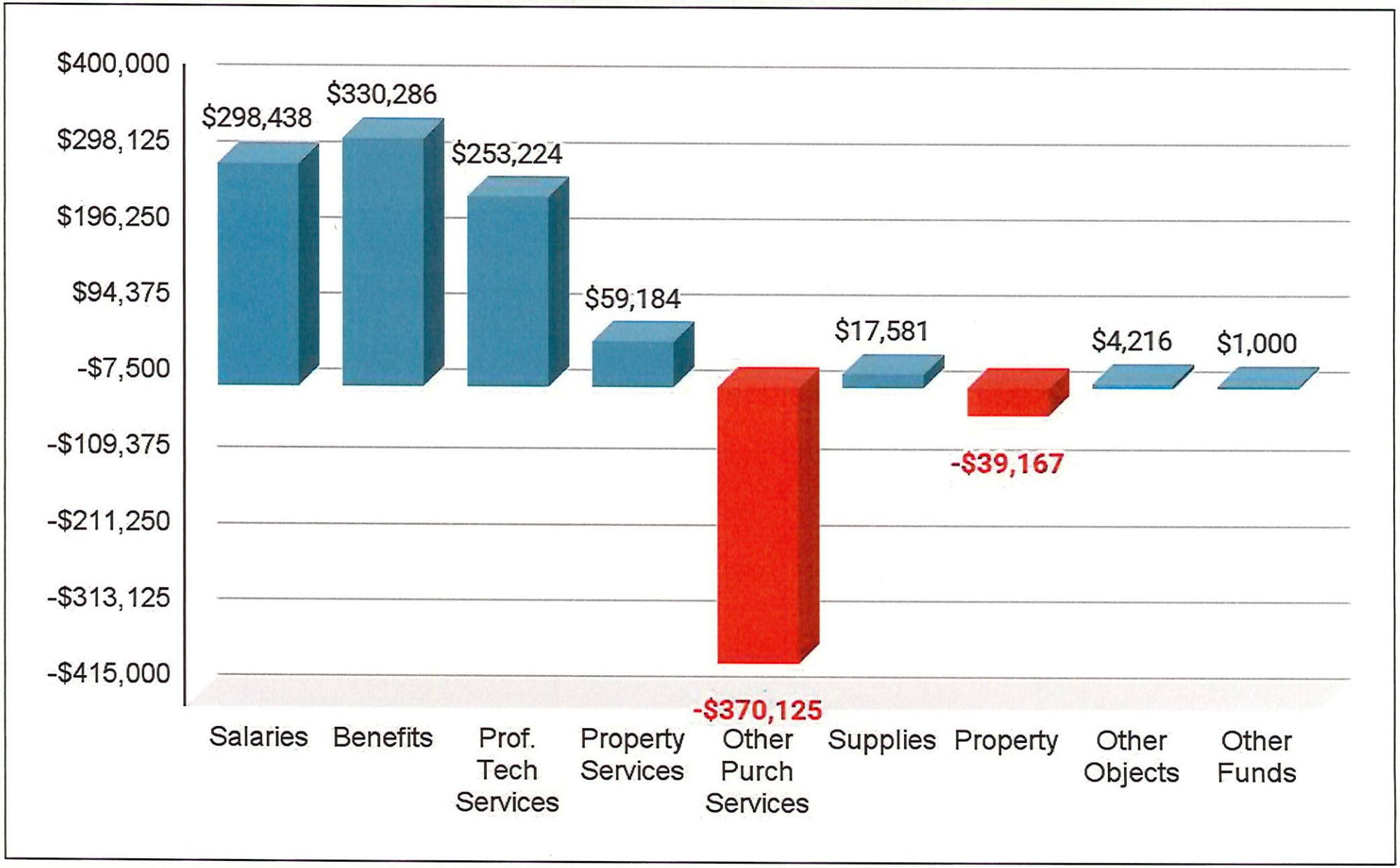
900 Other Funds

Increase (decreased offset) of $1,000 or 8%

No New Borrowing

- Reduction of anticipated gate receipts of $1,000 (Reduction in anticipated funds from $12,500 to $11,500)

2025-2026 Proposed Budget
Increase of $554,637



Excess Cost Expenditure Offset

Code	Description	2024-2025	2025-2026
325	Shared Services	$30,000	$22,539
326	Professional/Tech Services	$50,000	$25,000
511	Transportation-Special Education	$53,800	$25,000
562	Tuitions – Special Education (H.S. & M.S.)	$420,000	$238,508
	TOTAL	$553,800	$311,047

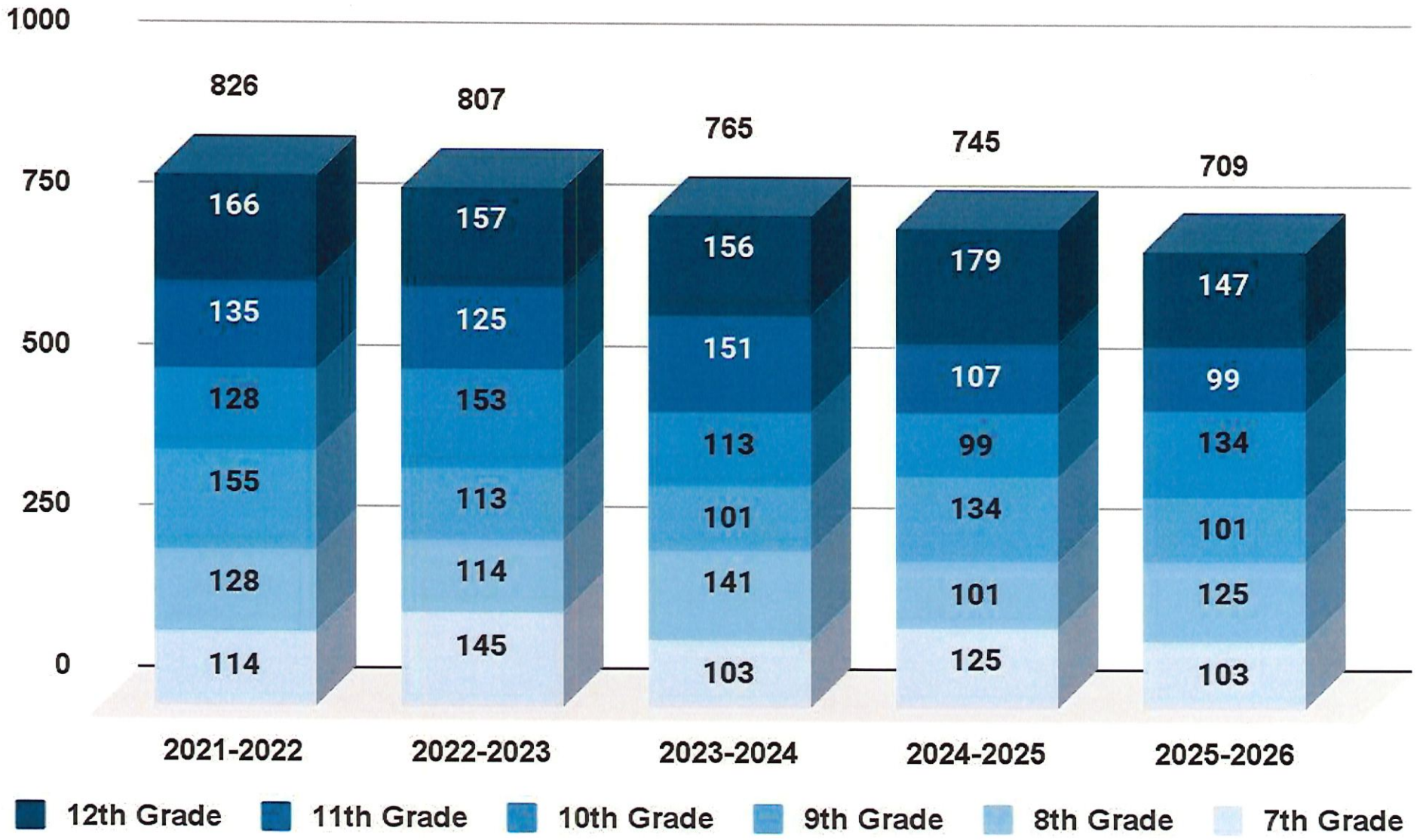
- Districts are reimbursed by the state for the expenses associated with educating special education students with a cost above 4.5x the per pupil expenditure, which will be $29,079* next year. For us, the excess cost isn't a consideration until we surpass $130,856*. If a student's educational costs **do not** reach that threshold, the district pays the full amount.
- **Despite the fact that Northwestern should be receiving 88% of our excess costs back, t*he Appropriations Committee habitually underfunds this critical grant.***
- ***In the current budget, we had budgeted 71% expecting at least that amount. If legislation is approved, we will meet budget expectations, but it is currently funded at a level for us to receive only 62%!***
- Given the state's consistent pattern of underfunding the excess cost reimbursement, we have only budgeted **69%** in the proposed 2025-2026 budget.

* Most current information available (3/4/2025)

Revenues & Assessments

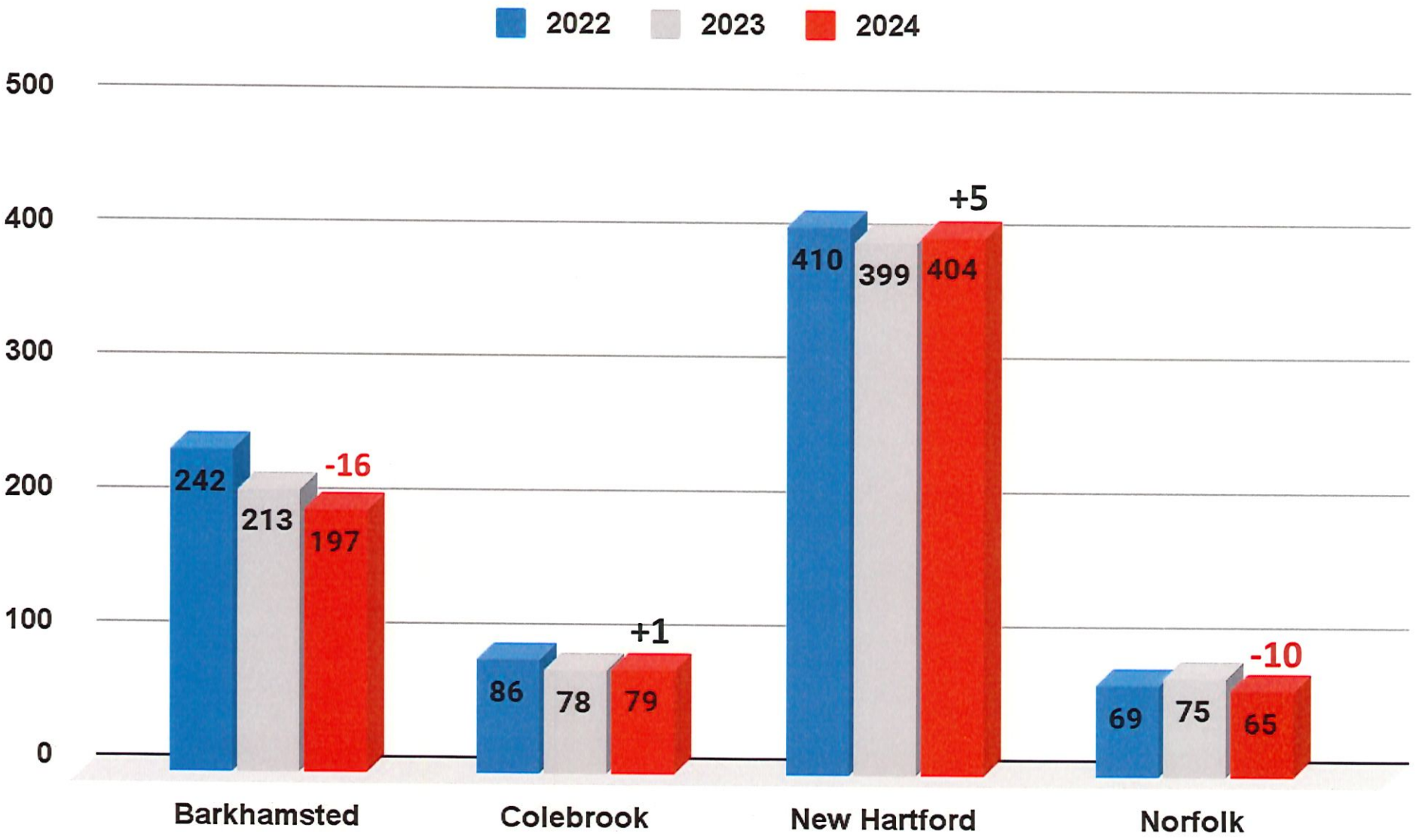
Description	2024-25 Budget	2025-26 Estimated	Difference
Tuition-Regular	$540,480	**$436,185**	**($104,295)**
Tuition-Special Ed	$0	$0	$0
Tuition – Ag Ed	$185,979	$237,420	$51,441
Rental Income	$10,500	$10,500	$0
Interest Income	$15,000	$15,000	$0
Ag Ed Grant	$793,500	**$752,706**	**($40,794)**
Subtotal Revenues	*$1,545,459*	***$1,451,811***	***($93,648)***
Budget Variance	$819,700	$743,654	($76,046)
Subtotal with Offset	$2,365,159	**$2,195,465**	**($169,694)**
Budget	$24,270,092	**$24,824,729**	**$554,637**
Assessments (Budget minus Subtotal with offset)	$21,904,933	**$22,629,264**	**$724,331**

Straight Line ADM - Member Towns



* Based on October 1, 2024

Change in Average Daily Membership by Town



* Based on October 1, 2024 CSDE

A Look at Total District Enrollment

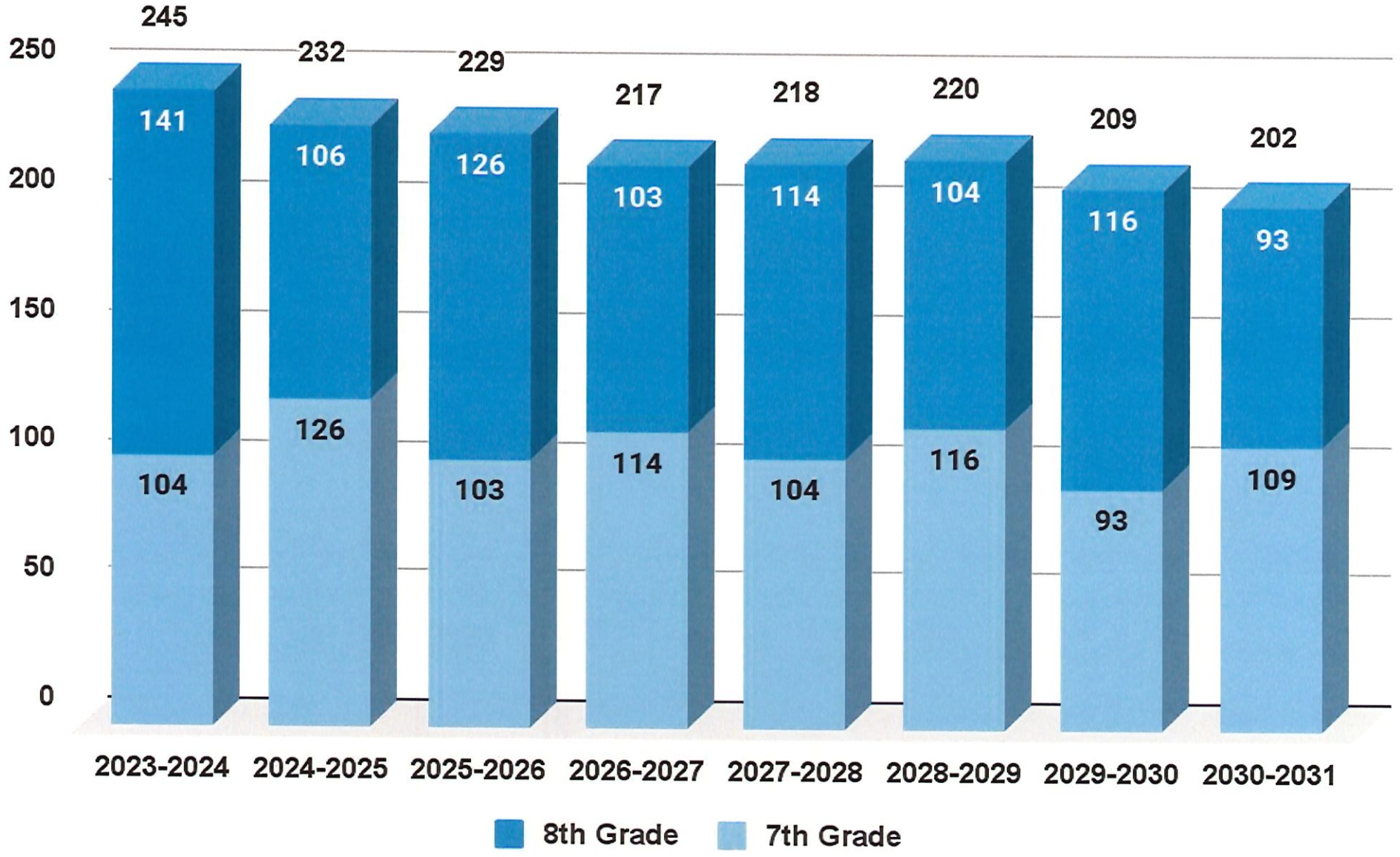
October 1, 2024

Grade 7:	126
Grade 8:	106
Grade 9:	150
Grade 10:	116
Grade 11:	126
Grade 12:	184
HTA:	17
Total:	825

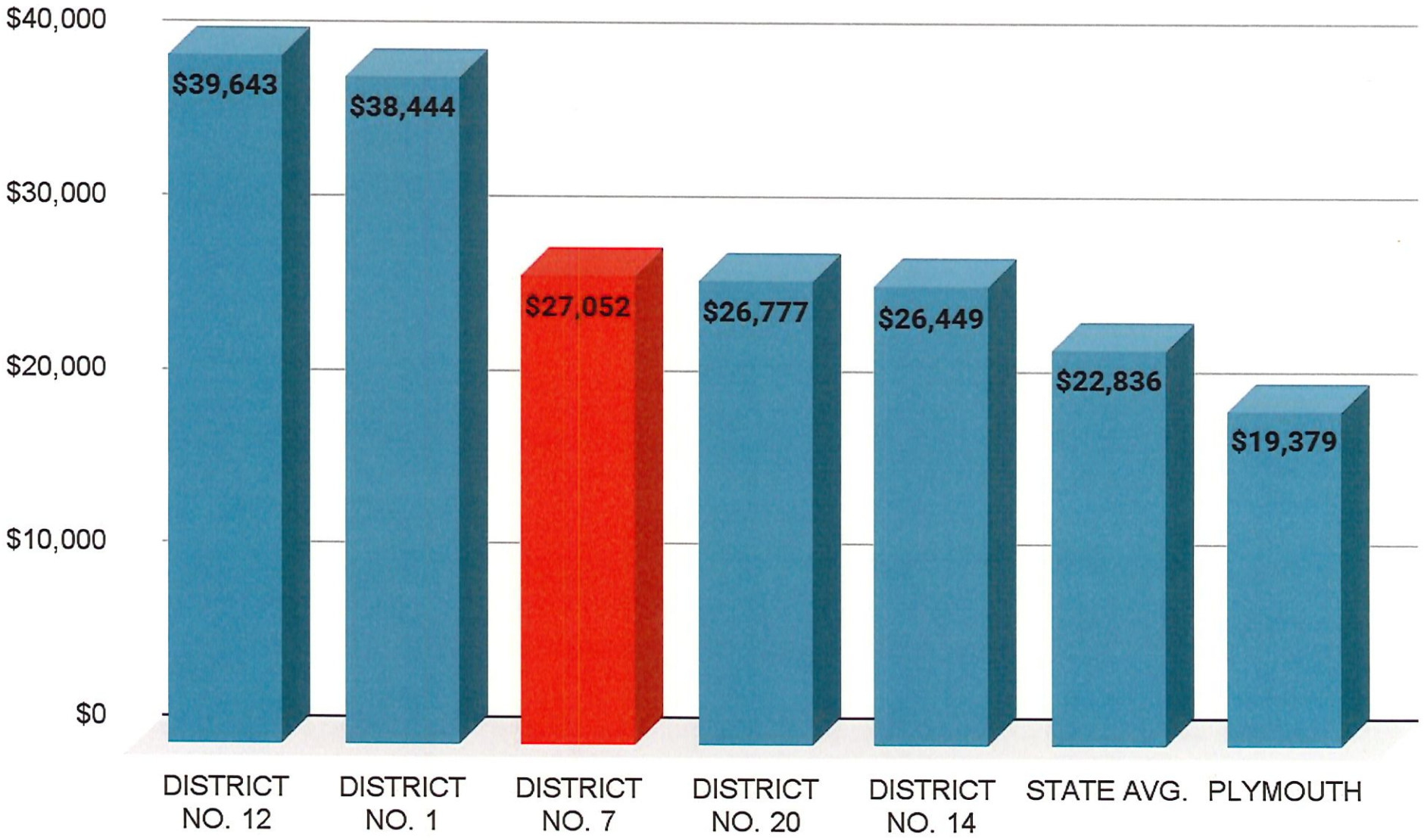
Our member town students are joined by Agricultural Education and tuition paying students from: Canton, Granby, Hartland, Plymouth, Torrington, and Winsted.

Total includes out of district magnet schools (7) and outplacements (8).

Middle School Enrollment Outlook



Range of Net Current Expenditures Per Pupil
Berkshire League *



* Data for Gilbert unavailable

Source: CSDE 03/19/2024

Budget Highlights Summary

2024-2025 Budget: $24,270,092

2025-2026 Budget: $24,824,729

Total Budget Increase: $554,637

Budget Increase Percentage: 2.29%

Salary & Benefits Increases:

$628,724

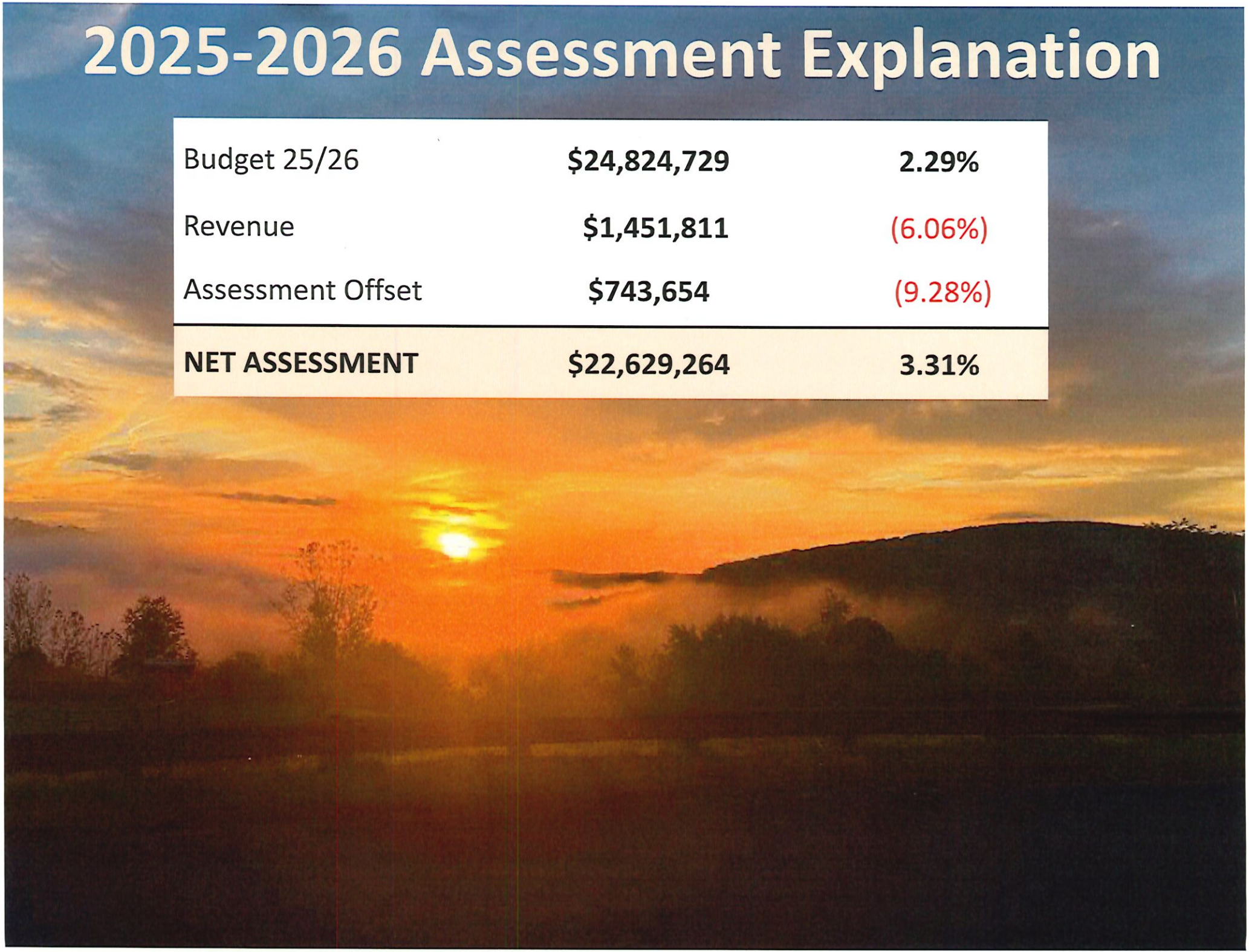
Net Reduction of <u>All Other Accounts</u>:

-$74,087

We continue to assess staffing levels and take advantage of opportunities to consolidate when appropriate. The administrative team has a plan to reduce several certified staff members through attrition over the next 3 years, while keeping educational opportunities and continued excellence as our north star.

2025-2026 Assessment Explanation

Budget 25/26	**$24,824,729**	**2.29%**
Revenue	**$1,451,811**	(6.06%)
Assessment Offset	**$743,654**	(9.28%)
NET ASSESSMENT	**$22,629,264**	**3.31%**



Region 7 has the second lowest Proposed Budget in DRG C, and the 4th lowest in the entire state as of 3/24/2025.

District:	DRG	SUPT Proposed	BOE Appr.
Andover Public Schools	C	8.70	8.70
Barkhamsted	C	3.47	
Canton	C	6.45	6.45
Columbia Public Schools	C	3.48	3.48
Ellington Public Schools	C	3.18	2.89
Granby Public Schools	C	5.67	
Hebron Public Schools	C	5.75	5.75
Mansfield Public Schools	C	3.24	3.24
Marlborough Public Schools	C	3.90	3.90
New Hartford Public Schools	C	8.86	4.99
Oxford Public Schools	C	4.70	4.44
Pomfret Community School	C	6.90	4.90
Regional School District #07	C	2.29	2.29
Regional School District #08	C	4.36	2.60
Regional School District #10	C	3.95	
Regional School District #12	C	2.44	2.08
Regional School District #13	C	5.17	
Regional School District #17	C	3.70	
Regional School District #18	C	7.99	7.39
Regional School District #19	C	4.98	
Salem Board of Education	C	7.17	6.77
Somers Public Schools	C	5.72	5.68
Suffield Public Schools	C	8.34	6.59
DRG C Average:		5.41	4.59
State Average:		5.51	5.50
State Mode:		4.95	4.49

Historical Perspective on Assessments

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	5 Year Average
Barkhamsted	**5.24%**	0.01%	0.65%	-3.66%	-1.89%	**0.07%**
Colebrook	4.01%	**8.37%**	2.79%	-0.70%	7.36%	**4.37%**
New Hartford	-2.12%	1.20%	3.69%	6.55%	**7.41%**	**3.35%**
Norfolk	-5.41%	6.43%	5.26%	**18.95%**	-7.97%	**3.45%**
Total Assessment Increase:	0.38%	1.97%	2.79%	3.78%	3.31%	**2.45%**
5-Year Average of Total Assessment Increase ~ 2.45%						
Total Expenditure Increase:	1.33%	2.45%	2.42%	3.47%	2.29%	**2.39%**
5-Year Average of Total Expenditure Increases ~ 2.39%						

Balancing Efficiency With Growth Through Challenging Times

Social Security COLA increases from 2020-2024 have averaged 4.32%, compared to NWR7's average budget increase of 2.44%, and assessment increase of 2.28% during the same time period.

Prior to 1975, Social Security benefit increases were set by legislation.

Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

Year	COLA	Year	COLA	Year	COLA
1975	8.0	1995	2.6	2015	0.0
1976	6.4	1996	2.9	2016	0.3
1977	5.9	1997	2.1	2017	2.0
1978	6.5	1998	1.3	2018	2.8
1979	9.9	1999 [a]	2.5	2019	1.6
1980	14.3	2000	3.5	2020	1.3
1981	11.2	2001	2.6	2021	5.9
1982	7.4	2002	1.4	2022	8.7
1983	3.5	2003	2.1	2023	3.2
1984	3.5	2004	2.7	2024	2.5
1985	3.1	2005	4.1		
1986	1.3	2006	3.3		
1987	4.2	2007	2.3		
1988	4.0	2008	5.8		
1989	4.7	2009	0.0		
1990	5.4	2010	0.0		
1991	3.7	2011	3.6		
1992	3.0	2012	1.7		
1993	2.6	2013	1.5		
1994	2.8	2014	1.7		

[a] The COLA for December 1999 was originally determined as 2.4 percent based on CPIs published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Pursuant to Public Law 106-554, however, this COLA is effectively now 2.5 percent.









Regional School District No. 7 is a carefully and caringly led school district.

We strive to make a positive impact in our students' lives by ensuring a high quality, well-rounded educational and extracurricular experience for every student.

Supportive and caring relationships are at the core of our positive Northwestern culture.

Our programs allow every student to learn, grow, and develop into the young adults they aspire to become.

Northwestern graduates are well prepared for whatever opportunity they wish to pursue on their life journey after NWR7.

Regional School District No. 7

The Pride of the Northwest Corner







Celebrating the successful end of a memorable Northwestern Regional journey. Let the next adventure begin!



District Budget Meeting

MAY 5, 2025
NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL SCHOOL
Dr. Roberta Ohotnicky Little Theater
7:00 PM

BUDGET REFERENDUM

MAY 6, 2025
Town Polling Locations
Hours may vary by town

For budget details, visit:
www.nwr7.com
(Select: Board of Education-Budget)

Thank You for Your Support!

