

Preston Public Schools FY 26 Budget

Engaged! Energized! Evolved!



Megan Gallant, Chair

**Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr., Ph.D.,
Superintendent**

Cindy Varricchio, Director of Finance



CONTEXT: Tradition and the Future!

Recovered? Moving Forward!



OUR COMMUNITY VISION IS
TAKING SHAPE!

- **Fine Motor Skills!!**
 - Normalizing: ***NOT back to Normal***
 - **Mental Health Remains Priority**
 - Technology Mission Critical
 - Curriculum: Continuous Updates
 - Instruction: ***Durable not Fragile***
 - **Power of Resilience**
 - **The Future is Known!**
Let's Plan for It!
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- ❖ **435 students: 454 last year**
- ❖ **201 High School Students/ 8 HS**
- ❖ **16%: 75 504s - 17%: 86 IEPS**
- ❖ **33% Free and Reduced Lunch**
- ❖ **Spanish, Portuguese, German, Arabic, Italian, Farsi, Japanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Polish, and Russian**
- ❖ **15% BIPOC students**



THIS IS WHO WE ARE!

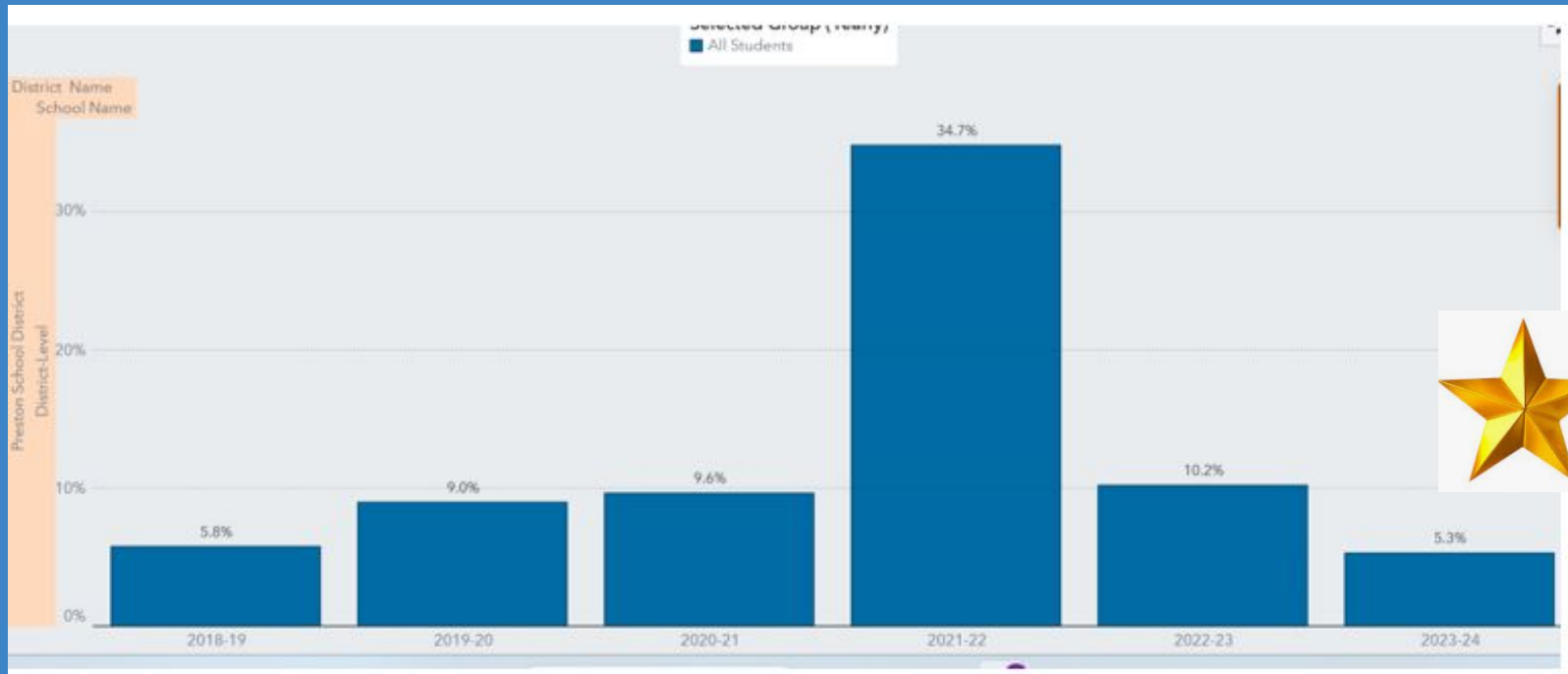
Joint Strategic Plan Goals

Preston Five-Year Joint Strategic Plan

Goal 1	Create and implement an economic development plan that creates new energy and revenue while preserving the town's rural character.
	Residents value a Preston Riverwalk and Poquetanuck Village and along Route 2A area of public-private partnerships for dining, shopping, and recreation while restricting development to these areas.
Goal 2	Create and implement a plan to improve the quality of schools and municipal services.
	Recruitment, retention, and succession of quality staff are essential to solidifying schools, implementing best practices to support educators and support staff in all capacities, and a commitment to class size standards. Strengthen both municipal and district capacity through recruitment and retention and appropriate staffing in all departments.
Goal 3	Conduct a study and implement a plan for the best use of all school/town buildings.
	A community center, senior center, and municipal complex are of high interest to residents and should be a priority <u>along with schools</u> for the municipal facilities committee.
Goal 4	Invest in technology for residents (broadband) and schools/govt (cybersecurity/technology needs)
	Residents seek broadband and high-speed internet, and schools and municipal operations need upgrades.
Goal 5	Validate and Reinvigorate civic pride through communication and community initiative events.
	Some suggest frequent, <u>higher quality</u> publicity of town actions, outreach, and community events. Some suggest a review of government structure - Should the town move to a town administrator/town manager format?



Recovery from Chronic Absenteeism



PILLARS OF PRESTON

- I. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- II. Effective Communication
- III. Innovation and Creativity
- IV. Global Citizenship





National Association of Educators of Young Children - National Accreditation



State Finalist!



U.S. National
Science
Foundation



Snapshot: Student Performance *after* Grade 8

- **60-72% in Honors or High Honors**
- Sports and *ESports*
- Plays and the Arts
- Community Service
- Reflective Leadership
- Senior Projects
- Students in AP Calculus
- **98% Graduation Rate/State 89%**

Much more to do to prepare for the coming years...



Restore and Accomplish!

Adjusting to a 33% change in staff over the last four years;

Three new administrators in three years;

Two new programs - Reading and Math;

Forming a New Joint Strategic Plan;

New district - wide scheduling

New Math and Spanish testing for High School Credit!

Championship and Runner Up basketball teams!

D.A.R.E.

Senior Lunches





Boats for Kids - Sea Perch

Clubs and Sports: 4 Championships in One Year!


Sports Offered:

- **Cross Country**  
- **Soccer** 
- **Basketball** 
- **Track & Field** 
- **Volleyball** 
- **Softball** 
- **Golf** 

Music Programs:

- **Band**   (For students interested in instrumental music)
- **Chorus**   (For students singing and vocal performance)

Clubs Available:

- **Unified Club**  (Promotes inclusion and teamwork)
- **Tech Club**  (Exploring technology and innovation)
- **Newspaper Club**  (School journalism and writing)
- **Yearbook Club**  (Documenting memories and school events)
- **Student Leadership**  (Building leadership and community involvement)
- **Spanish Club**   (Celebrating Spanish language and culture)

Band and Chorus





**SPORTS: Four State
Championships in
One Year!**

Science: The Connecticut **state average** for Smarter Balanced (SBAC) Grade 8 Science, with a "Target 75" score, was **64.5%**

Grade 8



78%

GRANTS that support US! FY 26: \$3,515,075

Title I	\$82,698	Ed Cost Sharing	\$2,952,496
Title II	\$11,673	ECS	\$150,000
Title III	\$809	Right to Read	\$20,000
Title IV	\$10,000	Mental Health	\$83,821
IDEA 611	\$135,903	REAP	\$41,620
IDEA 619	\$4,603	Adult Ed	\$22,452



01/17/2025

Connecticut State Department of Education Announces Study to Explore Rate Setting for Outplaced Special Education Services

(Hartford, CT) — The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) today notified the State Board of Education on the status of its ongoing study to better understand annual rate-setting by providers for special education services to students who are outplaced by school districts. This initiative, initiated by Commissioner Charlene M. Russell-Tucker in 2024, aims to address the financial unpredictability associated with these specialized services and help districts better manage their budgets.

"Establishing a predictable and transparent process for special education costs is essential to ensuring that districts can focus their resources on providing the best educational opportunities for all students," **said Commissioner Russell-Tucker**. "This initiative represents an important step toward addressing a long-standing challenge, and we are committed to working with our partners to develop a framework that supports financial sustainability."

Many states, including Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont, have implemented annual rate-setting processes for private special education providers.

"...aims to address the financial unpredictability associated with these specialized services..."

"...we are committed to working with our partners to develop a framework that supports financial sustainability..."

"...Maine, Maryland, Mass, NJ, NY and Vermont have implemented..."

Economic Growth Factors: What is the Impact?

- PRA - River Walk
- Great Wolf Lodge
- YMCA Development
- “Glamping” Park Development
- Heritage Trail & Poquetanuck
- Electric Boat - Groton
- Home Build and Exchange
- **Investigating a New Middle School**



Potential Budgetary Impacts Outside of our Control

Unfunded mandates - close to 300

Federal Funding is Uncertain

Title I-IV

IDEA

New Students - Tuitioned or Special Education

New Vehicle Tax Laws

New Veterans Relief



SBB - Acceptable Risks - Savings with caution

- ❑ Reduced .5 FTE bus driver
- ❑ Reduced health care qualifying event
- ❑ Reduced plant operations
- ❑ Reduced secondary tuition
- ❑ Reduced salaries using grant offsets
- ❑ Reduced student services tuition
- ❑ Consideration of a Retirement Incentive
- ❑ Continuously examining options

\$341,679

Budget Drivers: Fixed Costs 90%+



Salaries	\$7,216,134	46%
Health	\$2,341,500	15%
Special Education	\$2,236,830	14%
Secondary Tuition	\$2,537,231	15%
		90%

FY 26: Very Little New!

NOT Doing!:

- Not increasing PE
- Not proceeding with curriculum review
- Not increasing custodial support
- No succession planning

Doing!:

- 3-Sports Teams
- .5 bus driver
- .2 FTE Gifted and Talented
- Focus Academically Talented
- Redesign of middle schedule and math instruction pathway
- Expanded virtual and instruction access for advanced courses



Budget Summary: \$16,020,069

Budget Summary with Adjustments
2025-2026
WORKING COPY

Budget Category	2024-2025	2025-2026			
	Approved Budget	Budget Request	Adjustments	Net Budget Request	\$ Change
Salaries	\$ 6,978,232	\$ 7,183,761	\$ 32,373	\$ 7,216,134	\$ 237,902
Employee Benefits	2,168,800	2,380,028	(38,528)	2,341,500	172,700
Plant Operations	198,075	266,033	(47,000)	219,033	20,958
Utilities	258,044	324,850		324,850	66,806
Administrative Support	298,092	298,092		298,092	-
Secondary Tuition	2,331,958	2,571,329	(34,098)	2,537,231	205,273
Operational Support	255,354	267,832	(3,250)	264,582	9,228
Transportation	189,200	204,200	(10,000)	194,200	5,000
Student Services and Tuition	2,003,089	2,236,830		2,236,830	233,741
Supplies	82,148	82,148		82,148	-
Instructional Technology	268,534	291,544	13,925	305,469	36,935
Total	\$ 15,031,526	\$ 16,106,647	\$ (86,578)	\$ 16,020,069	\$ 988,542



Further Analysis and Reduction

Salary Update	\$ 19,846
Tuition	\$ 47,250
Census Change	\$ 35,029
Total Further Adjustments:	\$ <u>102,125</u>



Board of Finance Final Request: **\$15,917,944** 5.9% (down from 6.5%)

Change in Dollars: **\$ 886,417**



THANK YOU

for your time & attention



860-889-6098

HOW TO KEEP OUT THE NOISE! LISTEN!



Keep out noise and help to sleeping

ROY M. SEITSINGER, Jr., Ph.D.