



Presentation of Final Budget 2025-2026

April 24, 2025

Dr. Julie Glazer, Superintendent
Karen Bishop-Johnson, Business Administrator



Budget Process



The budget is the financial expression of the district's educational goals – translating the educational visions and needs of the community into dollars.



New Jersey School Boards Association

www.njsba.org



Vision

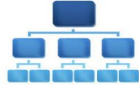
The Watchung Borough School District is committed to inspiring learners to explore, inquire, and collaborate on their joyful journey toward discovery, independent thinking, and creative problem solving. Our culture of acceptance and inclusion provides the foundation for learning and social and emotional growth. Through reflection and ethical decision-making, we continue to learn and grow, embrace differences, and prepare for an increasingly complex, ever-changing world.



Budget Flow Process

District Chain of Command input

Teachers
Principals
Supervisors
Chief School Admin
Board (parameters)



Board: Tentative Approval



Ensures budget supports
Student achievement &
standards

Executive
County
Superintendent



Reviews and
approves budget



Community



Keep informed
and request
input



Board Adoption



Consider community input.
Adopt budget as
advertised or modify
Roll call vote majority of
full Board



Budget Timeline

October - December 2024	Facility Walkthroughs
November 2024	Budget spreadsheets distributed to generate requests
January 2025	Engage in individual meetings with Principals, Buildings/Grounds, IT, District Accountant, WBEA to review budget requests
February 2025	Prioritize budget requests as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Required to open the doors● Basic to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education● What we expect—what we want to have (transportation, clubs, sports, instructional software, technology, PD)● Where we want to grow
January - March 2025	Finance Committee Meetings; Meetings with the BOE



Budget Timeline

February 2025	Governor's Budget address—State Aid announcements—Revenue side development
March 18 2025	Presentation of the 2025 Tentative Budget. Board of Education vote on tentative budget
March 19, 2025	Tentative budget due to county office
April 24, 2025	Public Hearing.
April 26, 2025	User-friendly budget posted on the district website
May 8, 2025	Staff Reappointment Agenda



Data Collection for Expenditures

- Salary Projections
- Employee Benefits (Health Care, Tuition Reimbursement, Pension Contributions, Sick and Vacation Payout, etc.)
- Tuition (Out of district placements)
- Transportation (Out of district students for the school year and the extended school year program (ESY))
- Building Maintenance
- Annual Operating Costs (Utilities, Insurance, Vendor Agreements, etc.)
- Enrollment Projections
- Debt Service
- Leadership / Building budget requests



Budget Objectives

- Support teaching and learning in accordance with the district vision
- Continue to maintain restored fundamental positions and programs cut from previous budgets
- Support the growth and development of programs and operations to prioritize the improvement and enhancement of curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Maintain current class sizes
- Manage budget efficiently and seek to reduce expenditures
- Explore ways to generate surplus and build reserves



Key Decisions to Meet Objectives

- Maintain current class sizes
- Maintain and expand staffing levels within the district budget
- Maintain current level of programming for transportation, clubs, sports
- Continue and expand professional learning and collaboration initiatives
- Prioritize curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve academic outcomes
- Strategic stabilization of operations in addition to staffing, support services, and purchased services



Revenue and Tax Levy

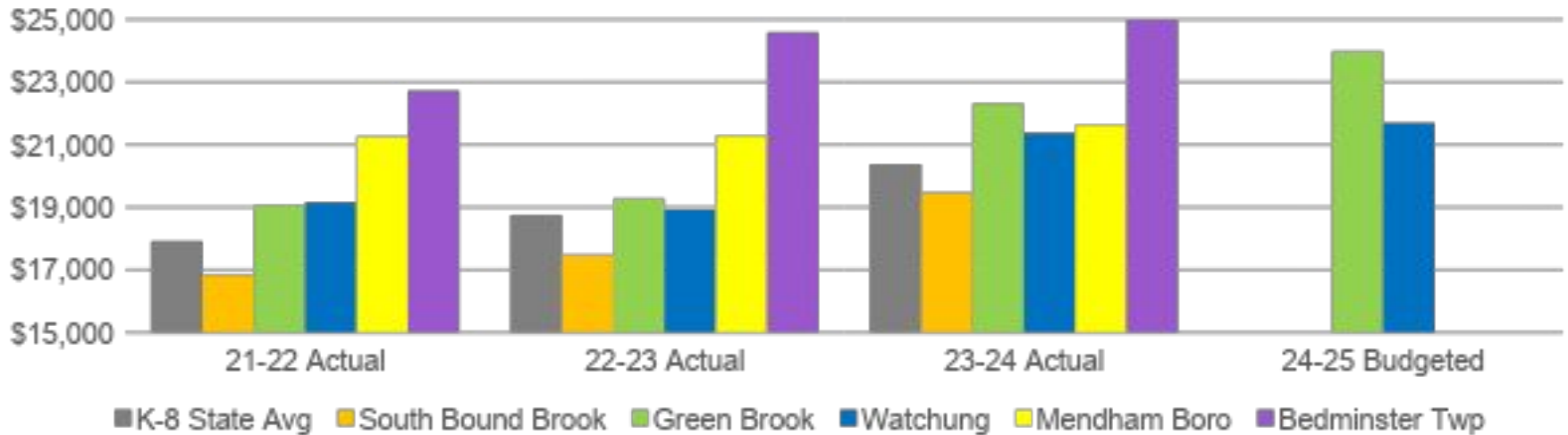
According to statute, the board can increase school tax levy by up to 2%, plus allowable adjustments as determined by enrollment and health care cost increases, plus banked taxing authority.

Enrollment Adjustment	\$0
2% Increase:	\$287,483
Health Care Adjustment	\$278,719

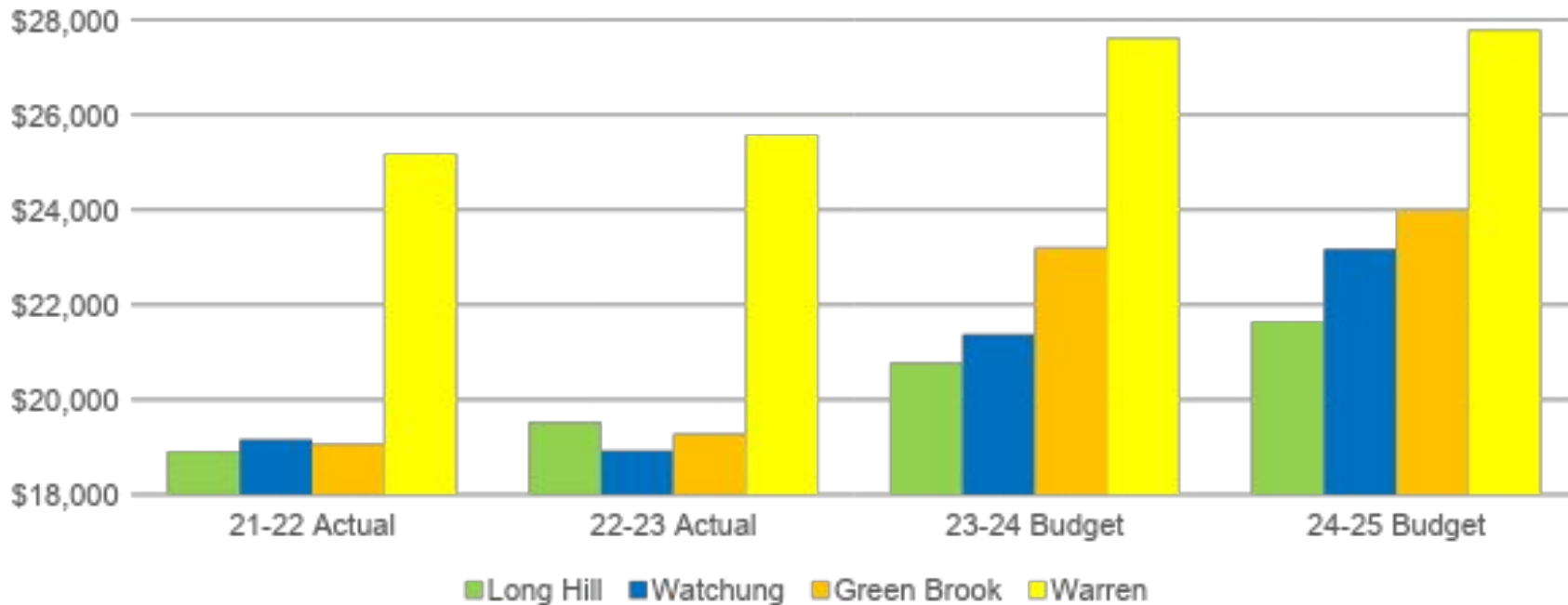


Per Pupil Spending K-8

Per pupil spending represents the total education budget divided by student enrollment.



Per Pupil Spending - Sending Districts



Revenue Tax Cap

Current Tax Levy		\$14,374,143
Enrollment Adjustment		\$ -
Subtotal		\$14,374,413
2% Increase	\$287,483	
Health Care Adjustment	\$278,719	
Requested Banked Cap	\$250,000	
Requested Tax Levy		\$15,190,345
Unused Banked Cap		\$257,199
Maximum Tax Levy Cap		\$15,447,544



General Fund Revenue Projections

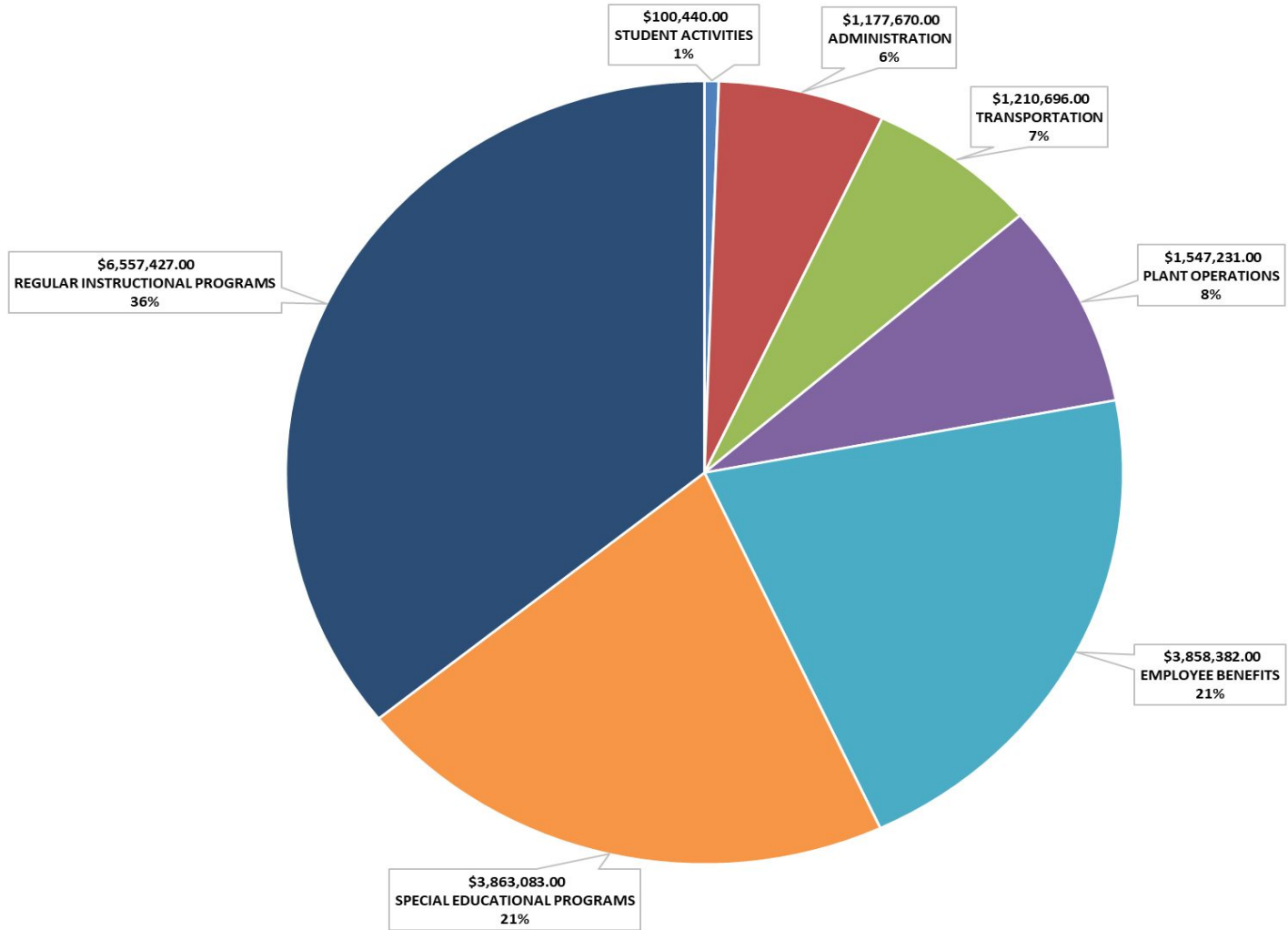
General Fund Budgeted Revenues (Fund11)

Local tax levy (5.68%)		\$15,190,345
Other local revenues		\$ 365,663
Budgeted fund balance (from FY24)		\$ 1,224,847
State aid (decrease of \$39,780)	\$ 1,286,213	
Transportation aid	\$488,086	
Special education	\$692,472	
Security aid	\$105,655	
Extraordinary aid	\$ 300,000	

Total General Budget		\$18,367,068
Special Revenue (Grants) (Fund 20)	\$ 208,677	
Debt Service (Fund 40)	\$ 1,128,369	
Total Revenue (All Funds)		\$19,704,114



2025-2026 EXPENDITURES



Significant Increases Impacting the Budget

Salaries	TBD
Anticipated/adjusted positions	\$255,000
Health benefits	\$293,232
Textbook Adoption, Professional Learning & Curriculum Development	\$219,350
Transportation 3.57% (CPI)	\$ 44,000
Facilities	\$124,000
Contracted paraprofessionals	\$137,196



Fixed Cost Drivers: Unavoidable Expenses Impacting the Budget

- Contractual Salary Increases
- Insurance – Health Care, Property, Cyber, Workman’s Comp, SS, PERS
- Plant Maintenance Contracts – Boilers, Grounds, OSHA, HVAC
- Utilities – Gas, Electric, Water, Sewer, Phones, Internet
- Out of District Tuition Charges
- Student Transportation Costs
- Contracted Services – Nurses, Aides, Substitutes
- Technology– Site Licenses, Educational Subscriptions
- Legal Fees



Strategic Cost Management: Areas of Local Control and Savings

- Shared Services – Watchung Borough, WHRHS, Nearby Districts
- Utilize Brokers for Expert Advice - Joint Insurance Fund, Schools Health Insurance Fund, ACES
- Tiered Busing, Rebid OOD Transportation Yearly
- Utilize Aides As Efficiently As Possible
- Negotiate With Vendors Where Possible
- Coop Purchasing - SCESC, HCESC, NJESC
- Best Price/Purchase Needs Only
- Contracted Services – Monitor For New Companies



Investing in Academic Excellence: Budget Priorities That Directly Support Student Learning

- Instructional Leadership
- Strategic Staffing Enhancements
- Curriculum Development & Professional Learning
- Curriculum Resources
- Instructional Technology
- Student Support Services
- Enrichment and Extracurricular Programs
- Staffing and Class Size



Prioritizing Academic Excellence: Budget Investments That Drive Student Success

- Supervisor of Instruction (Improve Student Academics, Grant Writing)
- World Language Teacher
- .5 Basic Skills (Restore)
- .4 Custodian (Will Reduce Overtime)

- K-8 Mathematics Textbook adoption, Curriculum Alignment and Development, and Professional Learning
- K-4 ELA Resources, Curriculum Alignment and Development, and Professional Learning

\$212,000 + \$219,350 = \$431,350



This Budget Maintains

\$115,440

Valley View Sports

Valley View Clubs

Bayberry Clubs



Total Banked Cap Request

2% Tax Levy \$287,483

Remaining required to balance the budget:
\$528,715

Health Care Waiver \$278,719

Total Banked Cap Request 2026 \$250,000

Banked Cap remaining for use 2027 \$257,199



Total 2025-2026 Revenues

Description	FY25 Revised Budget	FY26 Proposed Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Fund 10 (General)	\$17,263,878	\$18,367,068	\$1,103,190	6.39%
Local Tax Levy	\$14,374,143	\$15,190,345	\$816,202	5.68%
Tuition Received	\$252,000	\$228,000	\$-24,000	-9.52%
Interest	\$205,000	\$117,663	\$-87,337	-42.60%
Miscellaneous Income	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0	-
Prior Year Encumbrance	\$9,579	\$0	\$9,579	-100.00%
State Aid	\$1,601,914	\$1,586,213	\$-15,701	-.98%
General Fund Balance	\$801,242	\$1,224,847	\$423,605	52.87%
Fund 20 (Special Revenue)	\$416,428	\$208,677	\$-207,751	-49.89%
Federal Aid	\$303,795	\$133,677	\$-170,118	-56.00%
Other Sources	\$112,633	\$75,000	\$-37,633	-33.41%
Fund 40 Debt Service (Referendum)	\$1,206,539	\$1,128,369	\$-78,170	-6.48%
Total Revenues	\$18,886,845	\$19,704,114	\$817,269	4.33%

Total 2025-2026 Expenses

Expense Categories	Amount	Expense Categories	Amount
Regular Programs-Instruction	\$5,096,201	Instructional Staff Training	\$66,825
Special Ed - Instruction	\$2,603,332	General Administration	\$386,317
Basic Skills/Remedial Instruction	\$137,340	School Administration	\$389,788
Multilingual	\$116,503	Business and Other Services	\$299,799
Co/Extra Curricular Activities/Athletics	\$100,440	Administration Technology	\$101,766
Out-of-District Tuition	\$448,433	Maintenance & Operations	\$1,584,364
Health Services	\$260,648	Transportation Services	\$1,210,696
Speech, OT/PT, Related Services	\$411,779	Employee Benefits	\$3,858,382
Guidance Services	\$212,470	Debt Service Assessment	\$47,138
Child Study Team	\$399,539	Interest Capital Reserve	\$5,000
Instructional Supervision & Development	\$333,771	Federal/State Fund Programs	\$208,677
Educational Media/Library Services	\$248,412	Debt Repayment	\$1,128,369
Attendance	\$48,125	Total Operating Expenses	\$19,704,114

Total 2025-2026 Expenses

Expense Categories	FY25 Amount	FY26 Amount	\$ Change	% Change
Regular Programs-Instruction	\$4,682,250	\$5,096,201	\$413,951	8.84%
Special Ed - Instruction	\$2,510,794	\$2,603,332	\$92,538	3.69%
Basic Skills/Remedial Instruction	\$99,725	\$137,340	\$37,615	37.72%
Multilingual	\$114,027	\$116,503	\$2,476	2.17%
Co/Extra Curricular Activities/Athletics	\$97,440	\$100,440	\$3,500	%
Out-of-District Tuition	\$598,667	\$448,433	\$-150,234	-25.09%
Health Services	\$258,181	\$260,648	\$2,467	.96%
Speech, OT/PT, Related Services	\$410,494	\$411,779	\$1,285	.31%
Guidance Services	\$206,240	\$212,470	\$6,230	3.02%
Child Study Team	\$373,820	\$399,539	\$25,719	6.88%
Instructional Supervision & Development	\$222,210	\$333,771	\$111,561	50.21%
Educational Media/Library Services	\$238,966	\$248,412	\$9,446	3.95%
Attendance	\$45,152	\$48,125	\$2,973	6.58%

Total 2025-2026 Expenses

Expense Categories	FY25 Amount	FY26 Amount	\$ Change	% Change
Instructional Staff Training	\$63,722	\$66,825	\$3,103	4.87%
General Administration	\$483,531	\$386,317	-\$97,214	-20.11%
School Administration	\$368,114	\$389,788	\$21,674	5.89%
Business and Other Services	\$277,111	\$299,799	\$22,688	8.19%
Administration Technology	\$89,668	\$101,766	\$12,108	13.50%
Maintenance & Operations	\$1,369,269	\$1,584,364	\$215,095	15.71%
Transportation Services	\$1,154,747	\$1,210,696	\$55,949	4.85%
Employee Benefits	\$3,456,517	\$3,858,382	\$401,865	11.63%
Debt Service Assessment	\$47,138	\$47,138	\$0	-
Interest Capital Reserve	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	-
Federal/State Fund Programs	\$416,428	\$208,677	-\$207,751	-49.89%
Debt Repayment	\$1,206,539	\$1,128,369	-\$78,170	-6.48%
Total Operating Expenses	\$18,886,845	\$19,704,114	\$817,269	4.33%

Calendar Year Tax Impact (January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025)

Calendar Year	Rateables	Total Tax Levy	Tax Rate Per \$100	Average Assessed Property Value	Estimated School Tax
2024-2025 Without Referendum	\$2,157,727,700	\$13,580,479	0.00629	\$856,136	\$5,388.42
2025-2026 Without Referendum	\$2,346,484,000	\$14,782,244	0.00630	\$936,443	\$5,899.35
INCREASE					\$510.93
2024-2025 With Referendum	\$2,157,727,700	\$14,178,726	0.00657	\$856,136	\$5,625.79
2025-2026 With Referendum	\$2,346,484,000	\$15,485,124	0.00660	\$936,443	\$6,179.86
INCREASE	\$188,756,300			\$80,307	\$554.07

The tax levy includes the second half of 2024-2025 school year and the first half of the 2025-2026 school year.

If you own an average Watchung home (\$936,443 assessed value in 2025) your calendar year tax including the referendum debt will be about \$6,180. That is an increase of approximately \$554, or \$46 a month.

Multiply your assessed home value by .00059 to find your approximate tax increase. For example, a \$400k home would see a \$237 increase. A \$1M home would see a \$592 increase.

**Thank you for your continued support of the
education of our children!**

If you have any questions please contact

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