



*Equity and Excellence: FY26 Board of Education  
Budget Hearing*



*April 30, 2025*

# Equity and Excellence: Navigating the Balance

Fiscal  
Responsibility



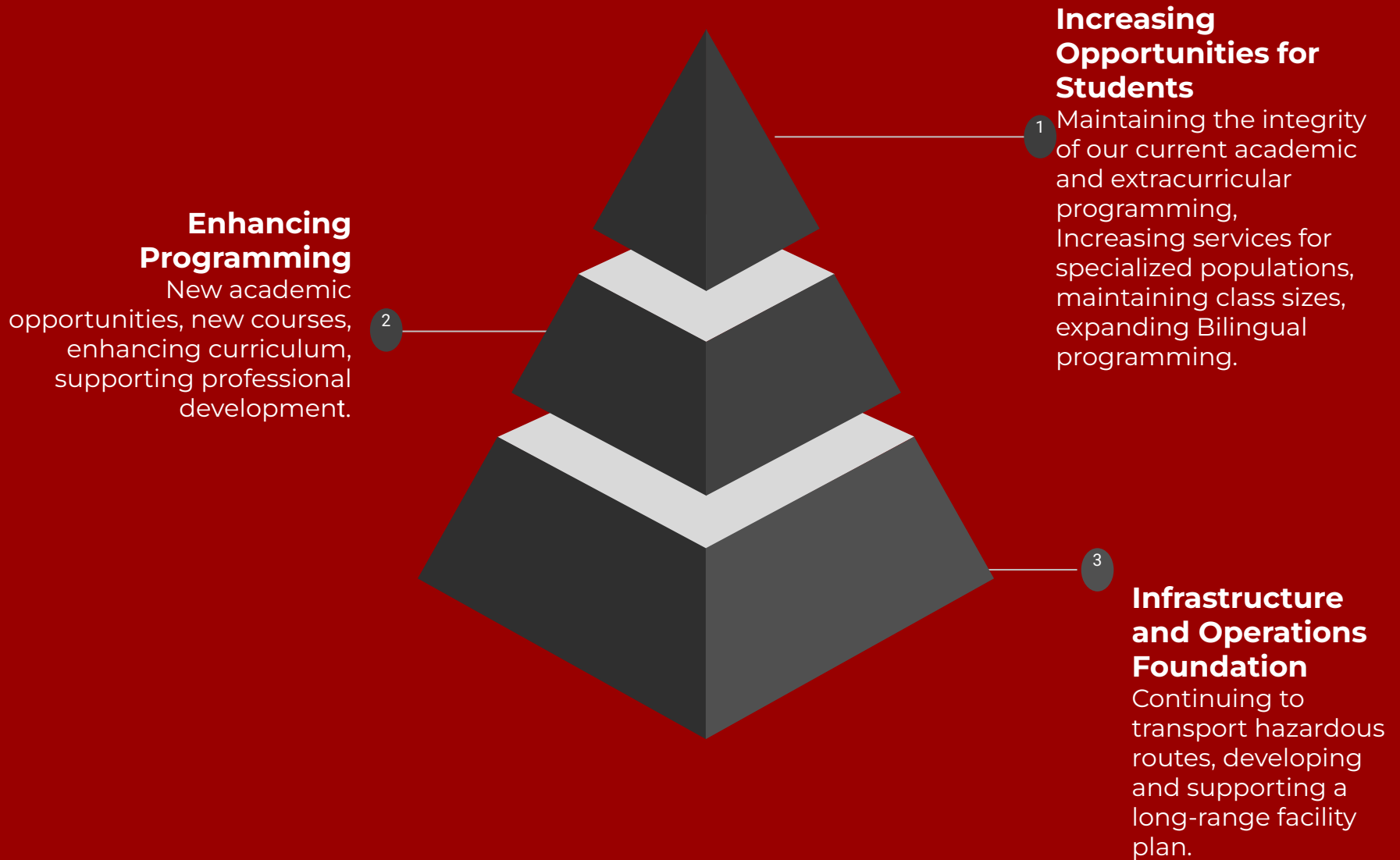
Educational  
Enhancement

The mission of the Somerset Hills Board of Education is to provide an authentic and balanced learning experience for each student by harnessing the power of innovation and an engaged community to create thoughtful and impactful global citizens.

# FY26 Budget Priorities

- Taxpayer impact: Minimize taxpayer impact while maintaining balance
- Support teaching and learning by implementing NJ Student Learning Standards (“NJSLS”) required by the NJ State Board of Education (“NJSBOE”)
- Maintain class sizes, curricular and extracurricular programs
- Enhance Special Education and Multilingual Learner programming
- Maintain available transportation services to include hazardous routes to the greatest extent possible
- Continue investment in, and maintenance of, our facilities

# FY26 Budget Priorities



# Our SHSD Communities

	<b>Bernardsville</b>	<b>Far Hills</b>	<b>Peapack-Gladstone</b>
Population	7,888	1,047	2,561
White	6,736	880	2,026
Black	63	10	109
Asian	208	28	109
Hispanic	746	113	258

# SHSD Projected Enrollment

<b>SY</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>24-25</b>	86	77	89	81	78	106	95	98	121	191	189	191	195
<b>25-26</b>	94	93	79	89	83	77	106	96	101	186	193	183	189

<b>SY</b>	<b>BES</b>	<b>BMS</b>	<b>BHS</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Pre-K</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>24-25</b>	411	420	766	1597	31	1628
<b>25-26</b>	438	380	751	1569	32	1601

# Our SHSD Projected Enrollment

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Multilingual Learners</b>	<b>Special Education</b>	<b>504</b>
24-25	135	300	139
25-26	130	287	129

*Special Education projections are as of the October 15, 2024 snapshot.*

*We annually classify 30-40 additional students.*

*We anticipate 31 will graduate from BHS and 30-40 additional students district-wide will be classified for Special Education Services.*

# Enrollment Projections

## 2026-2027 through 2028-2029

<b>Year</b>	<b>Bedwell</b>	<b>BMS</b>	<b>BHS</b>	<b>Total Projected</b>
<b>2026-2027</b>	453	365	712	1,530
<b>2027-2028</b>	463	360	677	1,500
<b>2028-2029</b>	483	333	656	1,472

## FY26: Curriculum Budget

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>Change</u>
Curriculum Writing Salaries	\$80,550	\$32,000	-\$48,550
Curriculum Program Development	\$85,000	\$90,000	\$5,000
Professional Development-Curriculum	\$21,000	\$26,000	\$5,000
Teacher Training Contracted Services	\$66,000	\$56,000	-\$10,000
Teacher Training Program Development	\$15,000	\$26,000	\$11,000
Textbook Replacement/Adoption	\$119,000	\$92,500	-\$26,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$386,550</b>	<b>\$322,500</b>	<b>-\$64,050</b>

# **Department of Student Services**

# Student Services: Eligibility Categories Defined

**Autism:** Students have a pervasive developmental disability that may impact their ability to interact socially and communicate, both verbally and nonverbally

**Communication Impaired:** Students with impairments in language

**Emotional Regulation Impairment:** Students whose educational performance is adversely affected by an inability to exhibit appropriate behaviors or feelings

**Multiply Disabled:** Presence of 2 or more disabling conditions

**Other Health Impaired:** Medical assessment is required, students have a chronic or acute health deficit

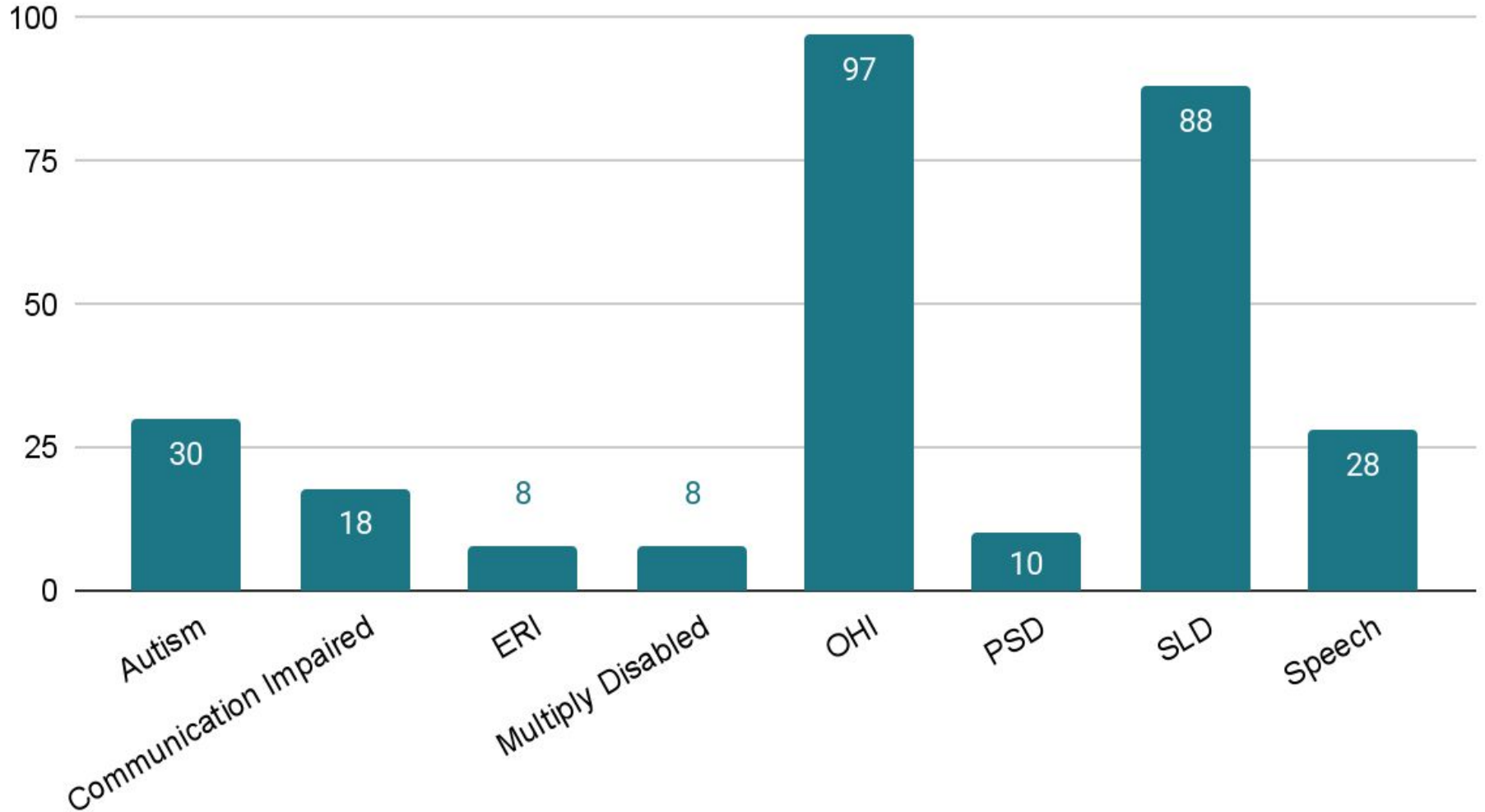
**Preschool Child with a Disability:** A child between the ages of 3 and 5 with a developmental delay

**Specific Learning Disability:** A severe discrepancy between current achievement and intellectual ability

**Eligible for Speech-Language Services:** A speech disorder in articulation, phonology, fluency, or voice

# Student Services: Current Enrollment by Category

Classification Data October 15, 2024



# Student Services Programs

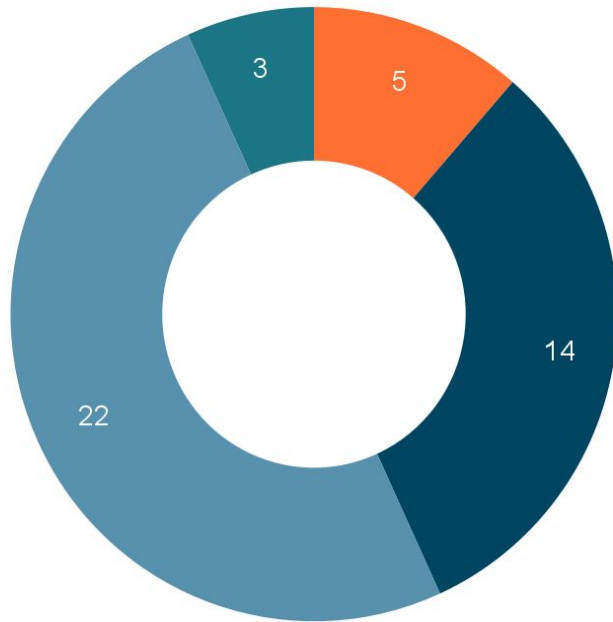
## Current Services

- Full day Preschool
- In-Class Resource
- Resource Replacement
- Special Class Programs (LLD, MD)
- Paraprofessional and Nursing Support
- Related Services (Behavioral, Counseling, OT, PT, Speech, Assistive Technology)

## Multiyear Expansions

- Increase Preschool
- Increase In-Class Resource
  - Bedwell: Language Arts and Math - Grades 2-4
  - BMS: Science and Social Studies Grades 5-8
  - BHS: Academic and Accelerated courses
- Increase Special Class Programs: LLD
- 4 Additional Teaching Staff

# New Referrals 2024-2025 (7/1/24 through 4/1/25)



● Evaluations not warranted ● Pending ● Classified ● Not eligible

## New Referrals

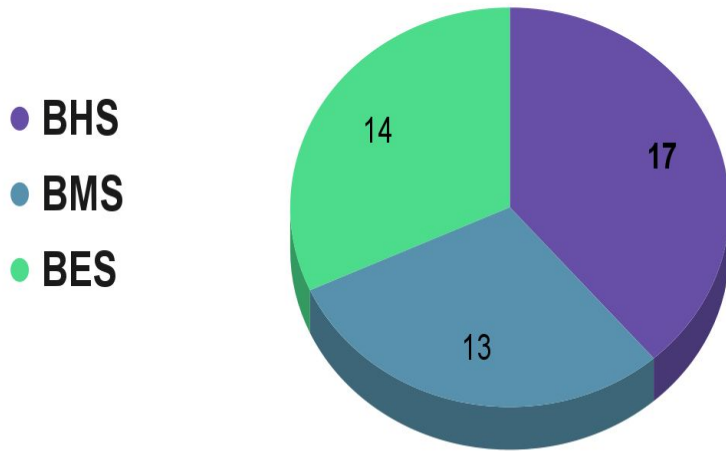
- ☐ 44 total
  - ☐ 22 Classified
  - ☐ 14 Pending

## Re-evaluations to date

- ☐ 83 total

# Student Services: Mental Health

## Crisis Assessments 2024-2025



- 2 Mental Health Counselors
- 1 Student Assistance Counselor
- 7 School Counselors
- 3 School Psychologists
- 2 School Social Workers

Lifelines

care/solace  
Calming the Chaos of Mental Health Care.

# Continued Services

- IDEA grant to assist with OOD tuition funds
- Extended School Year (ESY) program for students who would otherwise regress
- Mental Health Initiatives: Lifelines and Care Solace
- CPR and First Aid Certification
- Assistive Technology
- Home Instruction
- In-class Resource Expansion
- Translation Services and Bilingual Evaluations
- Medical Evaluations
- 1:1 Nursing Services
- Safety Care Training



# FY26: Student Services at a Glance

<b>Item</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>	<b>2025-2026</b>
Salaries	\$3,451,256	\$3,835,743	\$4,105,656
All Tuitions	\$2,095,507	\$1,654,317	\$2,162,464
Transportation	\$1,349,844	\$1,481,760	\$1,107,852
Extended School Year	\$130,000	\$140,000	\$140,000
Other - Supplies, Services, Misc.	\$668,513	\$765,653	\$771,653
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$7,695,120</b>	<b>\$7,877,473</b>	<b>\$8,287,625</b>

# Department of Personnel

# Maintain Current Personnel

In an effort to ensure the integrity of our current programming, the position control roster will be maintained in the FY26 budget.

The District is working closely with its demographer to follow projection trends in comparison with approved new housing in the District. As our enrollment is projected to decline over time, the size of our staff at all District schools may, as well, if warranted.

# FY26 Additional Staffing

A Bilingual teacher at Bedwell, a Special Education teacher at Bedwell, a District Child Study Team member and a District Behaviorist are included in the FY26 budget.

There is not a Reduction in Force in the FY26 budget.

# Facilities and Operations

## Bernards High School

Performing Arts Center Audio Upgrades

Performing Arts Center Curtain

Retaining Wall

LED Lighting Installation - Olcott Field

Funding Source: Capital Reserve

# Facilities and Operations

## District

Door Access Upgrades of Wiring and Hardware

Phase I Tennis Courts @ Polo Grounds

Funding Source: Capital Reserve

# Healthcare Adjustment Waiver FY26

NJDOE permits a healthcare adjustment for districts that have costs going above projections.

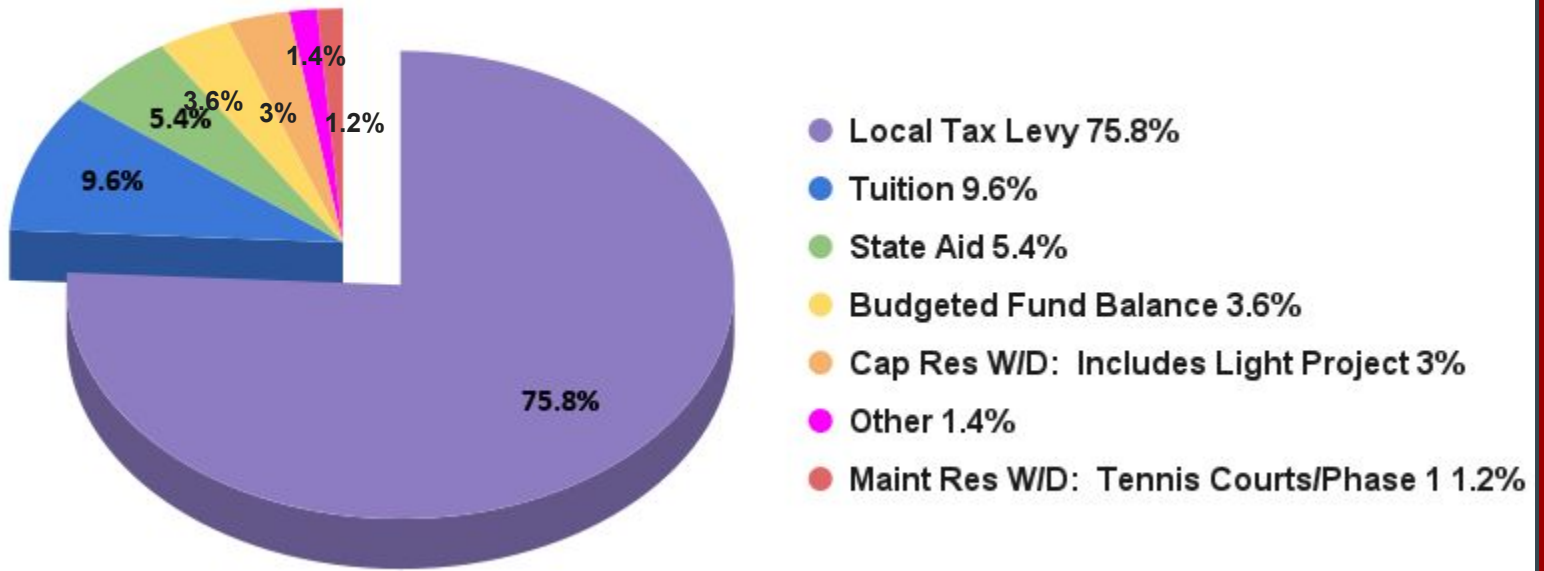
FY26 includes a healthcare adjustment of \$397,108 that is being added to the tax levy

Using the healthcare adjustment of \$397,108 in FY26 will not result in an addition of 2% on that figure in our budget for FY27.

# Budget Summary Revenues

<u>REVENUES</u>	Original Budget <u>2024-25</u>	Proposed Budget <u>2025-26</u>	\$ Increase (Decrease)	Percent Change
<u>General Fund:</u>				
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$ 1,687,403	\$ 1,723,081	\$ 35,678	2.11%
Cap Res Withdrawal	\$ 1,720,600	\$ 1,435,000	\$ (285,600)	-16.60%
Maint Res W/D: Tennis Courts	\$ -	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	100%
<b>Local Tax Levy</b>	\$ 35,484,310	\$ 36,559,827	\$ 1,075,517	3.03%
Tuition	\$ 4,935,800	\$ 4,642,000	\$ (293,800)	-5.95%
Other	\$ 587,220	\$ 655,695	\$ 68,475	11.66%
Total Local Funds	\$ 44,415,333	\$ 45,615,603	\$ 1,200,270	2.70%
State Aid	\$ 2,442,478	\$ 2,589,027	\$ 146,549	6.00%
Total General Fund	\$ 46,857,811	\$ 48,204,630	\$ 1,346,819	2.87%
Total Restricted Grants/Entitlements	\$ 1,087,597	\$ 848,217	\$ (239,380)	-22.01%
<u>Debt Service Fund:</u>				
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$ 114,058	\$ -	\$ (114,058)	-100.00%
Local Tax Levy	\$ 2,679,932	\$ 3,083,516	\$ 403,584	15.06%
State Aid	\$ 172,880	\$ 173,254	\$ 374	0.22%
Total Debt Service Fund	\$ 2,966,870	\$ 3,256,770	\$ 289,900	9.77%
Total Revenue Budget	\$ 50,912,278	\$ 52,309,617	\$ 1,397,339	2.74%

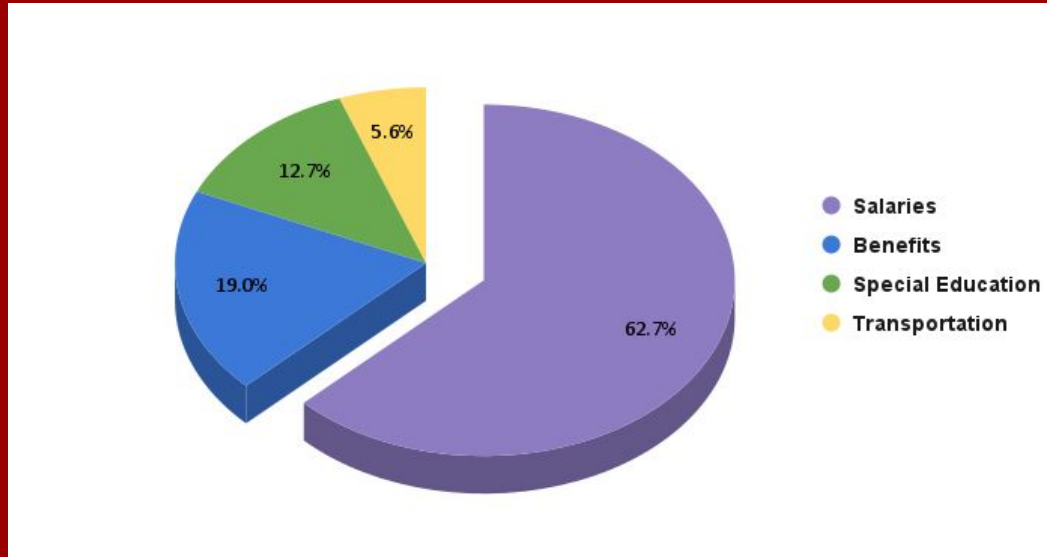
# General Fund Revenues



# Budget Summary Expenses

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>Original Budget 2024-25</b>	<b>Proposed Budget 2025-26</b>	<b>\$ Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Current Expense	\$ 44,963,992	\$ 46,649,784	\$ 1,685,792	3.75%
Capital Outlay	\$ 1,893,819	\$ 1,554,846	\$ (338,973)	-17.90%
Total General Fund	\$ 46,857,811	\$ 48,204,630	\$ 1,346,819	2.87%
Total Restricted Grants/Entitlements	\$ 1,087,597	\$ 848,217	\$ (239,380)	-22.01%
Debt Service Fund	\$ 2,966,870	\$ 3,256,770	\$ 289,900	9.77%
<b>Total Expense Budget</b>	<b>\$ 50,912,278</b>	<b>\$ 52,309,617</b>	<b>\$ 1,397,339</b>	<b>2.74%</b>

# General Fund Expenses



Salaries (62.7%) and Benefits (19%) equal \$38.1 million and represent 81.7% of the General Fund Budget.

# Tax Impact

	<b>Original Budget 2024-25</b>	<b>Proposed Budget 2025-26</b>	<b>\$ Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b><u>TAXES</u></b>				
General Fund Tax Levy	\$ 35,484,310	\$ 36,559,827	\$ 1,075,517	3.03%
Debt Service Fund Tax Levy	\$ 2,679,932	\$ 3,083,516	\$ 403,584	15.06%
Total Tax Levy	\$ 38,164,242	\$ 39,643,343	\$ 1,479,101	3.88%

# Tax Levy Impact By Town

(CALENDAR YEAR 2025)

Bernardsville	\$30,225,015
Peapack-Gladstone	\$ 6,775,456
Far Hills	\$ 1,903,322

# Estimated School Tax Rate

(CALENDAR YEAR 2025)

<u>Borough</u>	<u>Tax Rate per \$100</u>
Bernardsville	1.167
Peapack-Gladstone	0.780
Far Hills	0.395

## EXAMPLES for School Tax estimates:

Bernardsville - \$600,000 home x 1.167 divided by 100 = \$7,002

Peapack-Gladstone - \$600,000 home x 0.780 divided by 100 = \$4,680

Far Hills - \$600,000 home x 0.395 divided by 100 = \$2,370

# ***NJDOE Taxpayer Guide to Education Spending (23-24)***

Schools are grouped based on student enrollment and educational spending is assessed within a cohort.

SHSD Cohort: “K-12 Districts with between 0 and 1,800 students”

Cohort includes some of the following Districts: Bogota, Cresskill, Midland Park, Waldwick, Florence, Audubon, Haddon Heights, Wildwood, Glen Ridge, Weehawken, South Hunterdon, Dunellen, Spotswood, Manasquan, Mountain Lakes, Point Pleasant Beach, Manville, and Kenilworth

# ***NJDOE Taxpayer Guide to Education Spending (23-24)***

Budgetary Cost Per Pupil: 39 of 50

Total Classroom Instruction: 35 of 50

Total Support Services: 34 of 50

Total Administration: 24 of 50

Total Operations: 38 of 50

Total Extracurricular: 44 of 50

Ratio of Students to Teachers and Median Classroom Salary: 42 of 50

Ratio of Faculty to Administrative Personnel: 38 of 50

# Taxpayer Guide to Education Spending

## Implications

High property tax reliance; low allocations from state/federal sources

Above cohort average pupil support costs (classroom costs, salary, benefits, textbooks, purchased professional services)

Lower administrative costs, salaries, and legal costs

Cohort average operations and maintenance costs

Cohort average student to teacher and ESP ratio; low student to administration ratio

# Priorities Delivered in FY26

- ✓ Maintenance of class sizes
- ✓ Special Education: In-class Resource expansion at Bedwell
- ✓ Multilingual Learners: Bilingual class in First Grade
- ✓ Curriculum and Instruction/Professional Development: Delivering support and curricula
- ✓ School Security: Door access upgrades, including wiring enhancements
- ✓ Transportation: Maintaining hazardous routes
- ✓ All necessary capital projects funded and plans for future projects (tennis)
- ✓ Balancing equity and excellence/acknowledging needs of taxpayer
- ✓ District website platform

# District Goals: Our Compass and Report Card

- ✓ Devise grade appropriate K-12 opportunities to explore career choices, including access to experiences beyond the walls of the classroom. Solidify current academic pathways, considering summer programming, complementary professional development and tiered systems of support.
- ✓ Solidify the District's K-12 vision for Social-Emotional Learning, identifying additional growth opportunities for co-curricular outreach and opportunities among groups and buildings.
- ✓ Develop a budget plan to support the installation of LED lights.
- ✓ Support a strategic communication process to solidify the District's favorable public image through the implementation of a new website.

# A Look Ahead to FY27 and Beyond...

Monitoring the fiscal cliff

Instruction, and achievement processes

Continued K-12 Student Services programming

Examining enrollment projections and impacts

Security enhancements

Replacing expiring debt

Balancing equity and excellence/acknowledging needs of taxpayer