



June 16th, 2025

The 2025-2026 budget for the Saint Joseph School District (SJSD) represents sound financial management and long-range planning by the Board of Education and district staff. The primary function of the budget document is to ensure SJSD has the resources necessary to continue to serve our more than 9,000 students. The document has been prepared and presented to the Board of Education as a basis for the high-quality educational services the patrons of the school district have come to expect.

This budget document aids the district in providing the foundation for public transparency, and it also serves as the focal point for communication of district financial processes to the community.

Developing the district budget is the work of many dedicated individuals, including board members, district administrators, school principals, directors, teachers, and support staff. The budget development process is an ongoing cycle taking place throughout the school year, requiring school leaders to simultaneously monitor and evaluate one budget while planning and developing future budgets.

Local, state, and national economic conditions play a significant role in the budget development process. The district staff has done a tremendous job navigating the changing impacts of COVID-19 on school funding over the last several years. At this time, the State of Missouri has not only budgeted for full funding of the foundation formula for the upcoming school year but increased the State Adequacy Target (SAT). This important piece of the foundation formula has not been updated since school year 2019-2020 (\$6,375) and will be approximately \$7,145 for the 2025-2026 school year. The State has also fully funded funding the Transportation State Aid Payment for the fourth consecutive year. It is important to note that at the time the budget was developed and presented, the Governor of Missouri has yet to give the final approval.

Economic conditions have influenced both residential and commercial growth over the years. In short, the nationwide economic crisis earlier in this decade significantly slowed assessed valuation growth, reduced the valuation of existing property, and negatively impacted state budget factors resulting in reductions in income and sales tax. Buchanan County Assessor has sent out letters to the citizens notifying them of possible increases in assessed valuation for this coming tax year. It is



SJSD VISION

Creating a climate of achievement in partnership with an engaged community

SJSD MISSION

Preparing students for success in a complex and changing world

SJSD CORE VALUES

Our values are central to our daily actions and propel us towards the accomplishment of our vision. They are the heart of our work in the St. Joseph community.

LEARNING—We believe that students should be engaged in rigorous learning every day, in every classroom, where curiosity is encouraged and critical thinking is cultivated in innovative schools.

COMMUNITY—We believe that a culture of collaboration and community is key to the success of the St. Joseph School District and that community is built in the classroom, in each school, in the district, and through meaningful partnerships and respectful relationships across our city.

EQUITY—We believe that all people matter and that our district should invest in resources that maximize the potential of all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, language, or income.



important to note that as the 2025-2026 budget year will be the first year the county has allowed citizens over the age of 65 to apply to have their assessed valuation frozen.

Revenue. The district’s 2025-2026 revenues are budgeted at \$160.4 million in total revenue and \$152.1 million in operating revenue (operating revenues exclude revenues derived from the debt service levy or sale/refinancing of general obligation bonds). The total revenue budget increased from 2024-2025 by \$1.7 million. The largest part of this increase is attributed to the change in the foundation formula by including weighted average membership at 10% while still including 90% of funding from average daily attendance.

The taxes derived from local assessed valuation (AV) of property are the primary source of revenue in SJSD. The Buchanan County Assessor assesses the real and personal property in the school district every odd year. During the even years, the only things that can cause a change in the assessed valuation of real property are new construction or demolition. In preparing the 25-26 budget, the District used a five (5) year average change in AV to estimate the tax collection. The average change in AV for the last five (5) years equates to 2.32%. The district used a collection rate of 100%, this is a total estimated tax collection of \$62, 477,017.28 between funds 1 and funds 3. The estimated AV that was used was \$1.270 billion to build the budget.

Per state law, the district’s tax rate will be officially set at a tax rate hearing in August of 2025. The 2025-2026 budget has been prepared with no change in the total tax rate of \$4.9163 (includes operating and debt service tax rates) per \$100 of assessed valuation. There may be changes to the tax rate ceiling (made by the Missouri State Auditor) or the actual tax rate based upon the certified aggregate assessed valuation figures provided by the Buchanan County Assessor prior to the tax rate hearing.

A key variable to the basic funding formula is student enrollment and attendance. Based on the most recent enrollment numbers, SJSD has seen enrollment drop since 2020 by approximately of 572 students. It is also important to note that not all federal allocations have been released.

Expenditures. The 2025-2026 budget includes \$169.6 million in total expenditures, with \$152.8 million in operating expenditures. Expenditures are budgeted in the following areas:

Expenditure Object	2025-2026 Total Expenditure Budget	% of Total Expenditures
6100-Salaries	\$88,285,736.63	52.04%
6200-Employee Benefits	\$25,591,134.35	15.08%
6300-Purchase Services	\$24,642,985.52	14.52%
6400-Supplies and Materials	\$14,335,431.41	8.45%
6500-Capital Outlay	\$8,820,596.00	5.20%
6600-Long and Short Term Debt	\$7,985,421.50	4.71%
Grand Total	\$169,661,305.41	



The district's expenditures have fluctuated over the last few years as the Board of Education and district has worked to balance the budget. The 25-26 budgeted expenditures have increased by \$3,945,828.42 from the 24-25 expenditure budget.

Through a collaborative process with staff and board members, the district has agreed to fund salary schedules that reflect a 1.17% average increase.

Capital improvements to existing schools and facilities are included in the 25-26 budget. These planned expenditures are related to security upgrades, repair of facilities' roofs, upgrades to parking lots, playgrounds, plumbing, electrical systems, and the cycling out of antiquated nutrition service equipment.

Fund Balances. The projected gap between operating revenue (\$153.1 million) and expenditures (\$152.8 million) will result in a projected fund balance increase for the SJSD.

The Saint Joseph School District board policy DIAA states the unrestricted operating fund balance on June 30 should not be less than 20 percent of the expenditures for these funds for the prior fiscal year. The desirable level for unrestricted operating fund balances at fiscal year-end is a range of 20 percent of annual operating expenditures for the most recent year.

For example, the operating expenditures (less capital) during the 2024-2025 year are expected to total \$148.9 million. The Board of Education has established that the target fund balance at the beginning of the 2025-2026 fiscal year should be roughly \$29.7 million.

Fund balance is a key metric that the district uses to measure the financial condition of the district, it allows the district to meet cash flow demands throughout the school year. The fund balance also helps the district balance fiscal year surpluses and deficits and as well as provide monies for contingencies. The fund balance also contributes to the bond rating given to the district for the 2024 bonds of A+ (Standards and Poor's). In short, fund balances allow for economic stability and sustainability of the district. The projected operating fund balance for the 2025-2026 budget is expected to be 20.30%. It should be noted that the fund balance is based on a 12-month average and will fluctuate throughout the year.

Debt. The Board of Education will set the debt service tax levy in August of 2025. It currently sits at \$0.5300.

At the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year, the district's debt stands at \$25.9 million. This is well below the legal debt limit in the state of Missouri (15% of Assessed Valuation) of \$190.6 million.

Conclusion

This budget is developed with the best and most recent information available to SJSD officials at the time. Anticipated expenditures and revenue are estimated projections based on this information.

The preparation of this report could not have been accomplished without the diligent and dedicated services of the Business Office and the many district administrative assistants involved in the budgeting processes. We would



also like to express our appreciation to the administrators for striving to maintain a tradition of educational excellence in a fiscally responsible manner. Our sincere appreciation also goes to the Saint Joseph School District Board of Education and our community for providing fiscal support needed to develop, implement, and maintain the high quality of educational programs that has allowed the Saint Joseph School District to focus on *Preparing students for success in a complex and changing world.*

We are truly hopeful that this document will provide information that will allow the reader to understand the district's financial operations, its goals and objectives, and how they relate to our education programs and services for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,

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Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Robert Sigrist

Assistant Superintendent of Business & Operations

LEARNING • EQUITY • COMMUNITY

ST. JOSEPH

SCHOOL DISTRICT