ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Excellence of Elkhart

ACADEMICS • ARTS • ATHLETICS



POINTS OF PRIDE

- #1 in state for IREAD-3 growth when compared to like-sized districts
- Successfully transitioned 6th grade students to the middle school last year
- 94.5% graduation rate
- #1 Career Center in Indiana
- Athletic and Arts in ECS
- Strong Community and Alumni base



ECS Overview

- **Facilities - 3.14 million square feet (1.1 Billion in Assets)**
- **Deferred maintenance 20 million minimum annually**
- **80 square miles**



1 Early Learning Center	1 High School	1 District Office
13 Elementary Schools	EHS Freshman Division	2 Alternative Education Programs
3 Middle Schools	1 Career Center	5 School of Studies
Technology Center	Farm	Transportation Depot
Adult Education Program		

Students - 10,500 (24-25)



Over 10,300 Dual Credit Earned by Students
ECS Students Attend Some of the Top Universities Across the Country
Over 16 Million Dollars in Scholarships Offered
70% of Students Connected to After School Clubs/Activities
ISSMA 2025 State Finalist
Best Communities for Music Education 6 Years in a Row
2,300 Student Athletes Grades 5-12
Multiple D1 Athletes & Academic All-Stars

Staff - 2,054 (24-25)

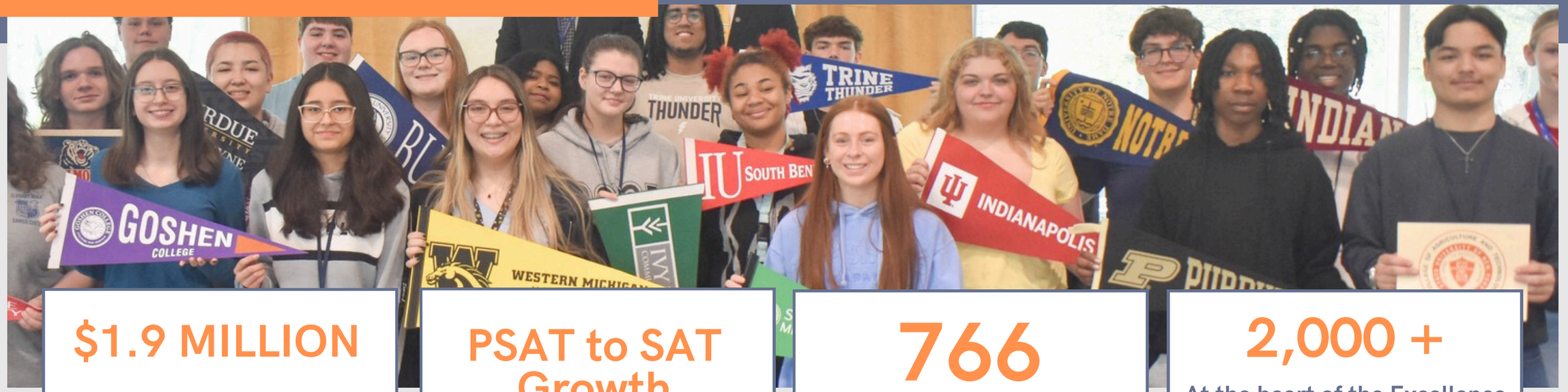


64 District Leaders	Indiana Counselor of the Year	RISE Award from IDOE
835 Certified Staff	RAMP School Counseling Certification	NIC Football Coach of the Year
908 Classified Staff	2 Schools IDOE Family Friendly Schools	
247 Substitutes		



Academics

94.5% Graduation Rate



$1.9 MILLION

For each of 5 years (totaling nearly $10 million) for Full-Service Community Schools Grant from US Dept of Education

PSAT to SAT Growth

Increase of 20 points (3 points higher than the State growth) from fall to spring 2024-25.

766

Elkhart High School and Elkhart Area Career Center students participating in internship and work-based learning opportunities

2,000 +

At the heart of the Excellence of Elkhart is a team of exceptional educators, coaches, and support staff who make our district truly stand out.

IREAD

DOUBLE DIGIT INCREASE

Spring of 2025

$10 + MILLION

Earned Scholarships

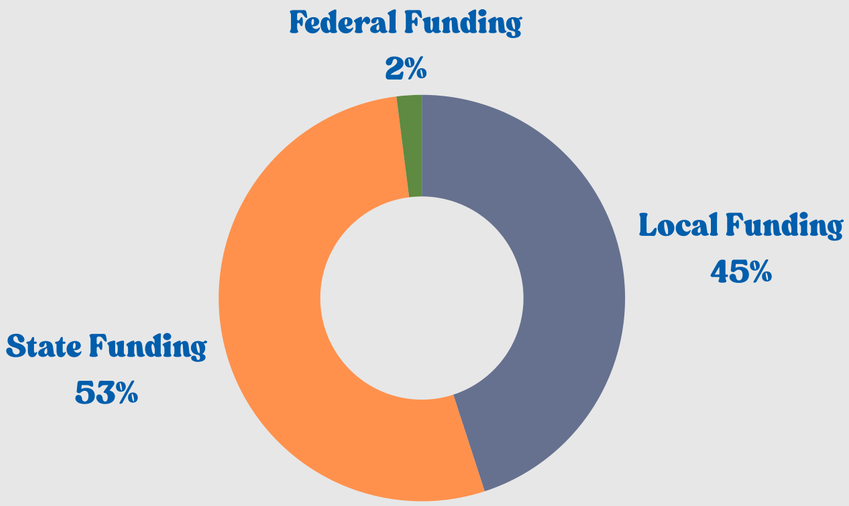
52% DISTRICT GROWTH IN WIDA

English Language Proficiency Assessment

High Ability Programing

ECS offers advanced, enriching opportunities across all grade levels.

School Funding



Local Funding Supports:

Operations Fund: Supports things like buses and bus drivers, administrators, front office staff, custodians, maintenance, utilities, and professional services.

Referendum Funds: Voter-approved additional funds to support teacher salaries, instructional assistants, resource officers in schools, social workers, and in-school counseling.

Debt Services Fund: The funds are used to build new facilities and to update existing facilities. These funds support the payments for this debt.

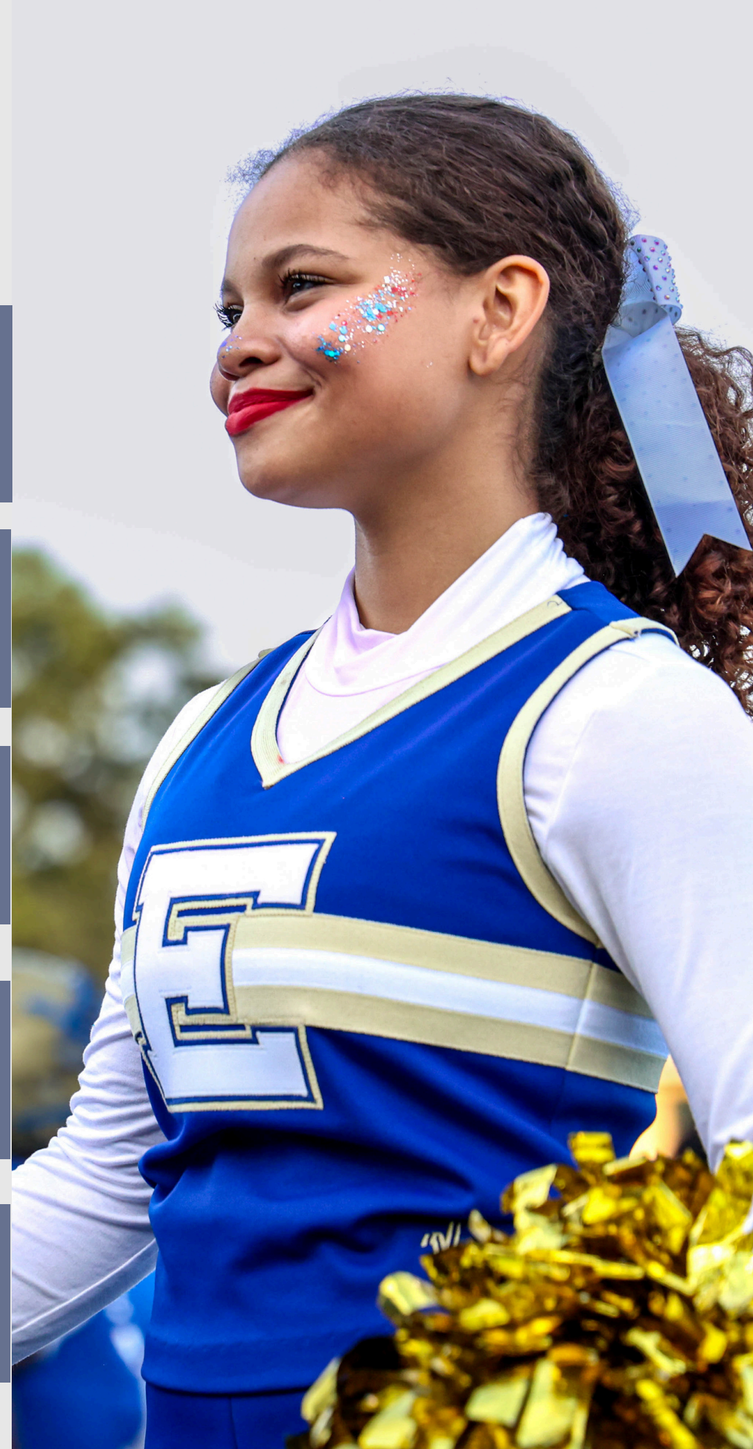
State Funding Supports:

Education Fund: Supports salaries and benefits for teachers and instructional assistants, textbook costs, and school media centers.



Local Tax Terms

Net Assessed Value (NAV)	The taxable value of a property after all applicable exemptions and deductions have been subtracted from the gross assessed value.
Deductions/ Exemptions	Reductions to a tax-payer's NAV.
Credit	Directly reduces the amount of tax you owe, dollar for dollar.
Tax Rate	The rate used to determine how much a property taxpayer will pay. Some are fixed, like a referendum. Some are variable.
Tax Levy	The total amount of funds provided to the local unit of government.



Tax Calculations

- **Education (# of students x dollar amount set by state)**
- Operations Fund (dollars based on state controls)
- Debt Service (NAV x tax rate)



SEA1 Impact

What this means for Elkhart Community Schools

Schools will face increasing financial pressure over the next 7 years.

- Reduce expenses by reducing services to students.
- Raise more money through local taxes.
  - Tax rates would need to increase to generate the same amount of money for the operating fund and debt services.
  - Referendum rates would need to increase to generate the same amount of money.
- Increase debt by financing buses and other maintenance we currently pay for in cash. Teacher/staff salaries cannot be financed.



SEA1

Summary of Bill:

The goal of SEA1 is to provide property tax relief by providing credits and additional deductions to the NAV (net assessed value) used to calculate property taxes.

Funds Impacted:

Operations Fund

Supports buses and bus drivers, front office staff, custodians, maintenance, administrators, technology, utilities, and professional services.

0% Increase vs Typical 4% Increase

Debt-Service Funds

Repays debt incurred from bonds and supports maintenance, technology and facilities needs.

Possible Tax Rate Increase



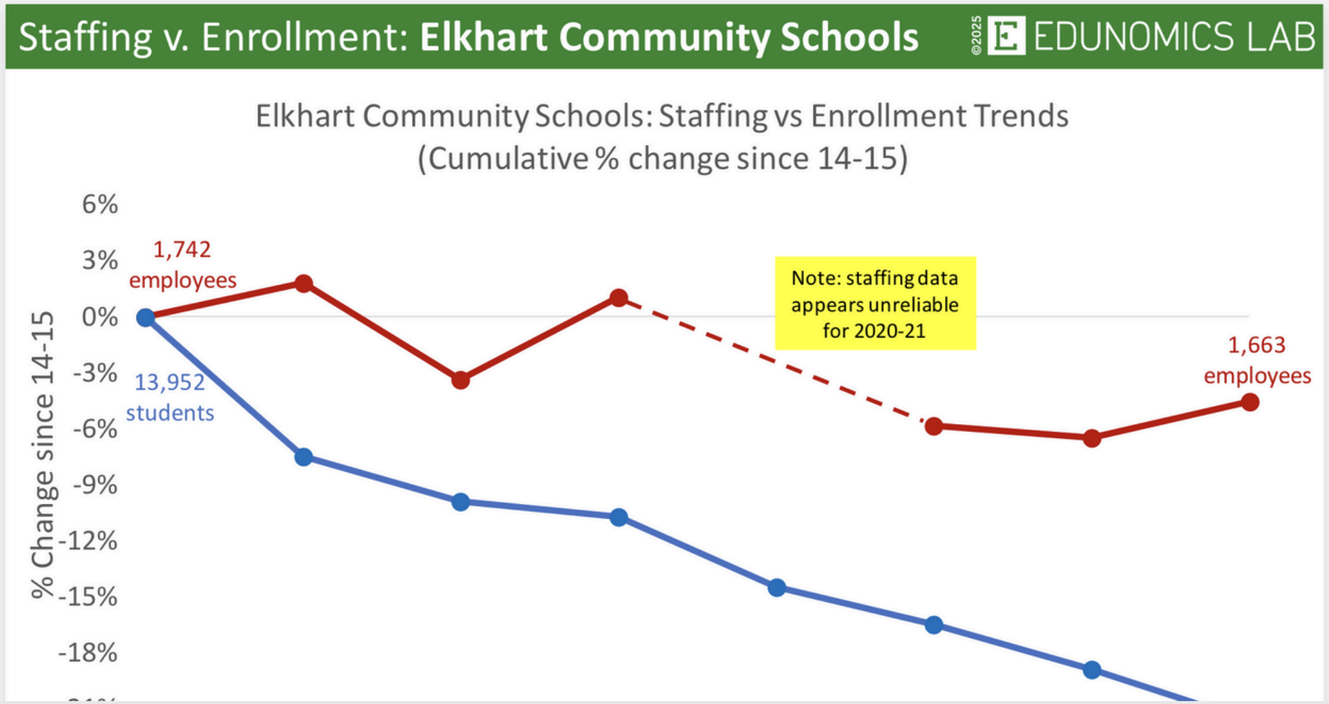
Quick History

In 2009, following the recession and as Indiana became a referendum state, lawmakers lowered property taxes and raised sales taxes—prompting Elkhart residents raising a local property tax increase to **maintain funding for public education**.

Funding is further strained with additional taxpayer **funds to charter and voucher programs** without raising state taxes.

SEA 1 will **reduce programs and services** for students at a time when school obligations are growing and the need for new programs is increasing—unless funding is restored.

Significant Challenges



Declining Enrollment- Not only an Elkhart issue

Unbalanced staff to student ratio based on enrollment

Buildings are set up to serve 17,000 students.



Classroom Occupancy

214 out of 371 elementary classrooms are currently unoccupied for instruction, for 58% occupancy across the district.





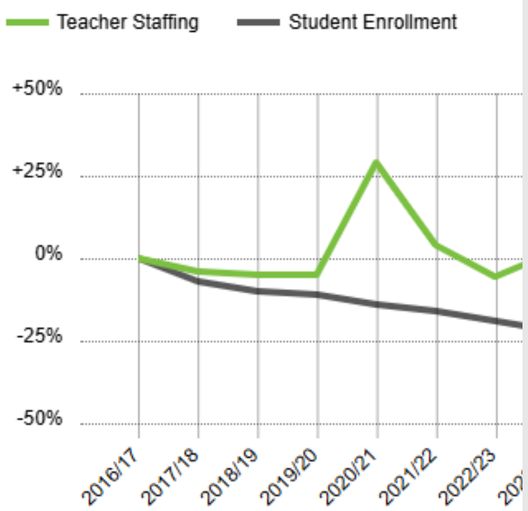


Staff Count vs. Enrollment

Elkhart Community Schools

Elkhart County, IN

Student/Teacher Growth 2016-24



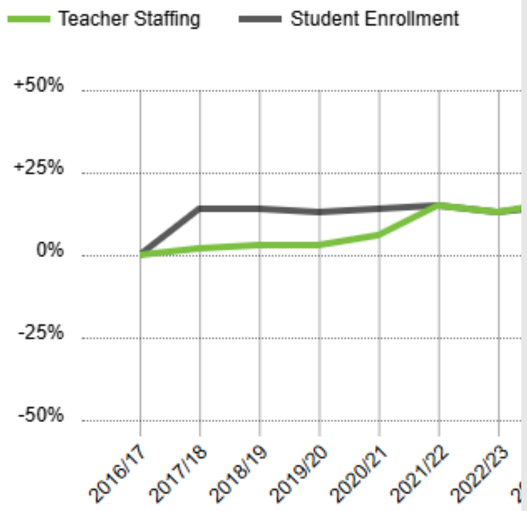
Student/Teacher Ratio



Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation

St. Joseph County, IN

Student/Teacher Growth 2016-24



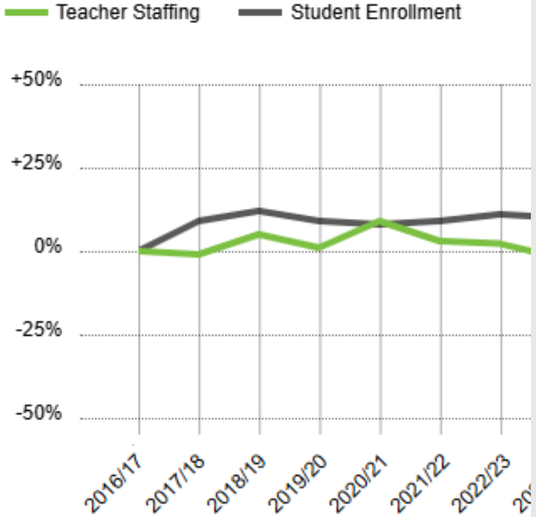
Student/Teacher Ratio



Concord Community Schools

Elkhart County, IN

Student/Teacher Growth 2016-24

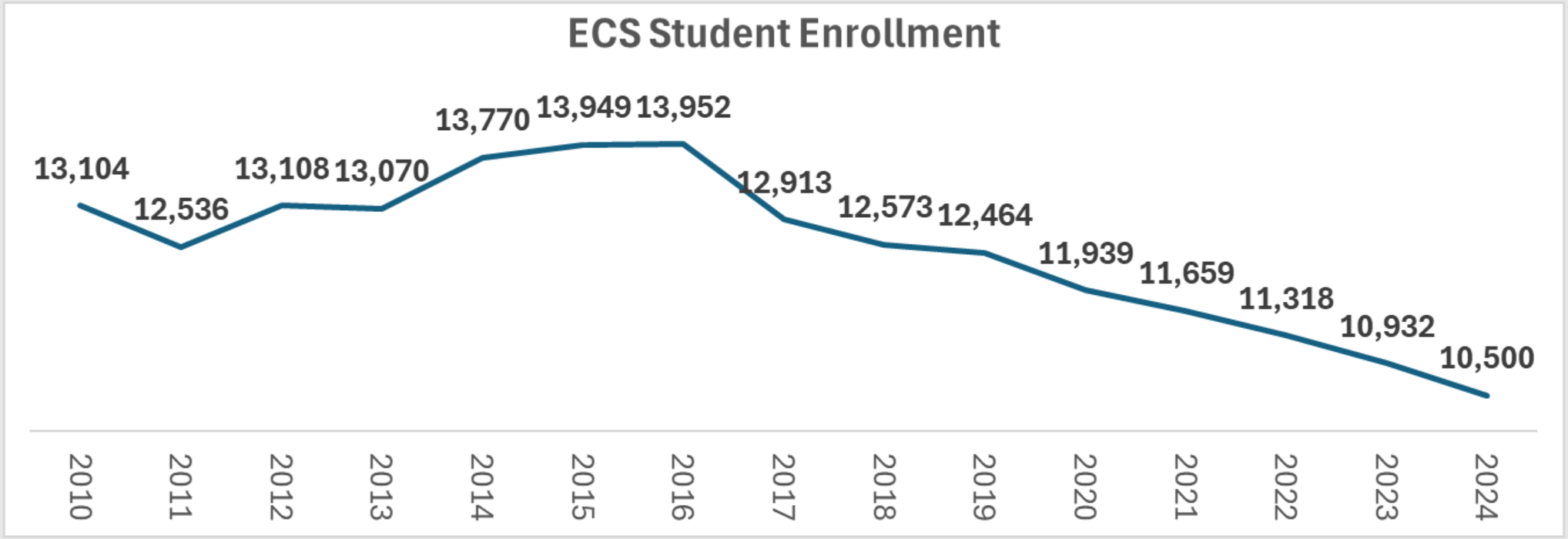


Student/Teacher Ratio



Buildings vs. Enrollment

Our buildings are designed to hold over 17,000 students in total, and today they serve 10,500 students.



Enrollment Projection

Feasibility Study 2022-2023

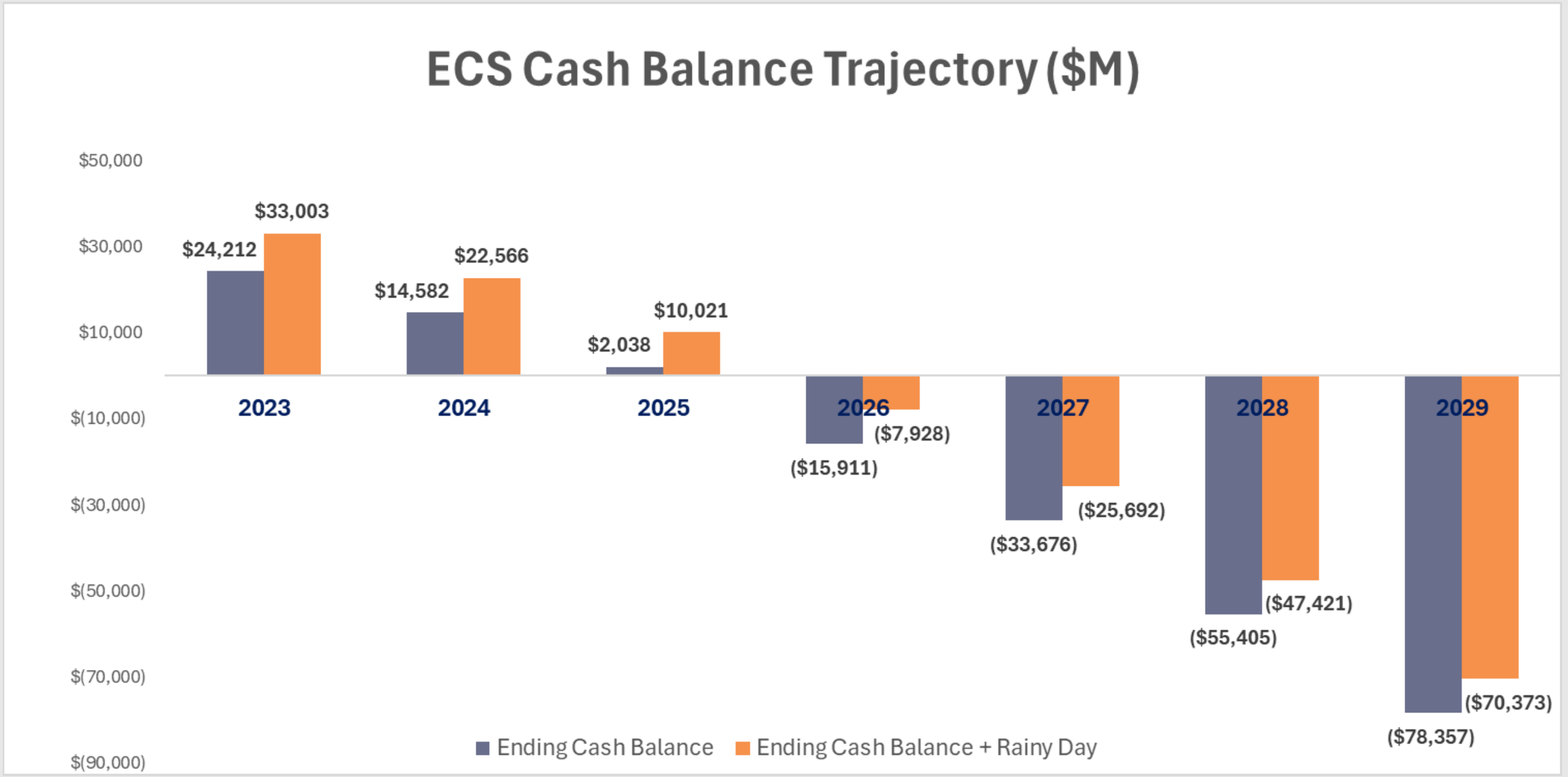
Year	Low K Low Mig	High K Low Mig	Low K High Mig	High K High Mig
2022-23	**11,178**	**11,178**	**11,178**	**11,178**
2023-24	10,989	11,006	11,039	11,054
2024-25	10,761	10,794	10,843	10,873
2025-26	10,435	10,482	10,537	10,580
2026-27	10,165	10,224	10,285	10,341
2027-28	9,989	10,061	10,124	10,193
2028-29	9,871	9,955	10,019	10,100
2029-30	9,789	9,885	9,943	10,036
2030-31	9,749	9,858	9,907	10,013
2031-32	9,755	9,876	9,912	10,030
2032-33	9,757	9,890	9,909	10,041

Net loss of 3.4 million for the 25-26 school year.

Financial Reality

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Beginning Cash Balance	**27,290.7**	**24,212.1**	**14,581.8**	**2,331.0**	**(14,903.9**	**(30,531.4)**
Cash Inflow						
Revenues	117,403.1	119,590.1	120,526.9	123,212.3	128,025.8	130,216.8
Transfer In	9,953.8	9,636.7	5,546.9	-	-	-
TOTAL CASH INFLOW	**127,356.9**	**129,226.8**	**126,073.8**	**123,212.3**	**128,025.8**	**130,216.8**
Cash Outflow						
Expenditures	(118,065.6)	(128,088.9)	(134,288.4)	(136,489.8)	(139,616.8)	(142,823.8)
Transfer Out	(12,369.8)	(10,768.2)	(4,036.3)	(3.957.4)	(4,036.5)	(4,117.2)
TOTAL CASH OUTFLOW	(130,435.4)	(138,857.1)	(138,324.6)	(140,447.1)	(143,653.3)	(146,941.1)
Surplus (Deficit)	(3,078.5)	(9,630.4)	(12,250.8)	(17,234.9)	(15,627.5)	(16,724.3)
Ending Cash Balance	**24,212.1**	**14,581.8**	**2,331.0**	**(14,903.9)**	**(30,531.4)**	**(47,255.7)**
Ending Cash Balance + Rainy Day	**33,003.3**	**22,565.5**	**10,314.7**	**(6,0920.2)**	**(22,547.7)**	**(39,272.0)**

Our Path is not Sustainable



ECS Next Steps

Financial Transparency: We will continue to share clear, accessible budget information and highlight future impacts from SEA1 as part of our next Strategic Plan.

Fiscal Responsibility: We remain committed to strong fiscal stewardship while ensuring the needs of our students and staff are fully supported.

Increase Enrollment: We are actively working to grow and sustain student enrollment by offering innovative programs, strong academic pathways, and supportive environments that attract and retain families.

Next Steps: Propose a resolution to the school board to address these issues.



Thank you.