

Suffield Public Schools

Superintendent's Proposed Budget Overview FY 27



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Suffield Public Schools is to prepare all students with the knowledge, skills and attributes required for success in a rapidly changing world.





2026-2027 Budget Increases

Salaries	3.34%
Health Insurance	1.39%
Special Ed. Tuition/Transportation	0.59%
General Transportation	0.48%
OPEB, FICA, 401(a)	0.26%
Utilities	0.12%
All Other	0.10%
TOTAL INCREASE	6.28%



Salaries

- Settlements in all bargaining units over the past 18 months have increased salaries. However, they remain below average when compared to districts in area and state.
- Staff shortages persist in the state and country. Competitive salaries are important for recruiting, hiring and retention.
- An additional 0.4 FTE Spanish position needed to maintain appropriate staffing at secondary level. It adds \$15K to the budget.
- There are no known teacher retirements at this time. The deadline for teachers to receive a retirement stipend is February 1.



Health Insurance Rate Increase

- Our health insurance plan is a self-funded partnership with the town.
- 11.5% premium rate increase recommended by insurance broker comes on the heels of a 20% increase last year. However, average renewal rates over the past decade are below average.
- Rate increase could change as new claim information becomes available during the budget process.



Special Education Tuition and Transportation

- Partnership with ESS to support special education students with significant needs reduces the increase for tuition and transportation. Starting program in January at McAlister school. Cost for a full-year is \$162K. We may expand program to SMS.
- Challenges facing students continue to rise, especially at the elementary level where there are few outplacement options.
- We are working to add a special education teacher to be split between MIS and SMS. This will be funded through a state grant.
- Budgeting in this area constantly changes.



General Transportation

- Current five-year contract in final year and is far below market value.

- In the process of negotiating a new transportation contract. Expected to be slightly below market value but will add \$200K to the budget which is .48% of the overall budget increase.



ALL OTHER

- All other budget requests account for just 0.10% of the requested budget increase: Examples of requests not included in the budget:

- ML/EL (TESOL) Teacher
- Part-time, After-school Agriscience position (\$18,000)
- \$20,000 in additional library book requests.
- A pilot of Amplify ELA in 2026-27 is proposed rather than a multi-year rollout to gather data for an informed decision while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- Additional funding for professional learning, including Building Thinking Classrooms.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- McAlister Intermediate School was named a School of Distinction by the Connecticut State Department of Education in recognition of outstanding student growth in Mathematics on SBAC.
- A.Ward Spaulding School Preschool achieved National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation
- Renovations of Suffield High School STEAM Lab complete. The lab is transforming teaching and learning opportunities in the CTE Department.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Eleven Suffield High School graduates earned the American FFA Degree honor (representing 42% of the students recognized in Connecticut)
- K-5 special-area teachers are exploring Suffield's natural and built environments to develop meaningful place-based learning experiences for students.
- Suffield High School was named a “2025 Best High School” by U.S. News and World Report.
- Suffield High School students participate in cutting-edge biotechnology spearheaded by Mark Beigel, gaining hands-on experience with CRISPR, a revolutionary gene-editing technology.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Through an SFES grant, the Homestead Project at the McClean Outdoor Education Preserve is under development. This interdisciplinary program, supported by Joe Grimard, Julie Haefner, and Suffield High School students, involves cultivating fruit trees and plants historically found in the area in the 1800s. Students will harvest the crops for use in SHS foods classes.
- The Home Builders Institute program is in its second successful year at Suffield Middle School, led by Kevin Mattia. Students who continue the program in high school have the opportunity to earn industry credentials.
- Boys Tennis - State Champions. Baseball and Girls Tennis - State Runners-up. Girls Lacrosse - State-semifinalist. Boys Soccer and Girls Volleyball- State-quarterfinalists.

