

Elwood Union Free School District

**2026-2027
BUDGET
WORKSHOP #3**



Date: February 12, 2026

**Presenter: Lorraine Dunkel,
Assistant Superintendent for Business**

DISTRICT GOALS

I. Extraordinary Student Focus

We are committed to nurturing the whole child and maximizing every student's potential. This will be achieved through diverse, data-driven instruction that uses multiple assessments to address the unique needs of each learner, preparing them to be confident and capable for the future.

II. Financial & Operational Planning for Future Stability

Through strategic short and long-term financial planning, we are dedicated to maintaining safe, secure and environmentally responsible school facilities that support our community's well-being and future growth.

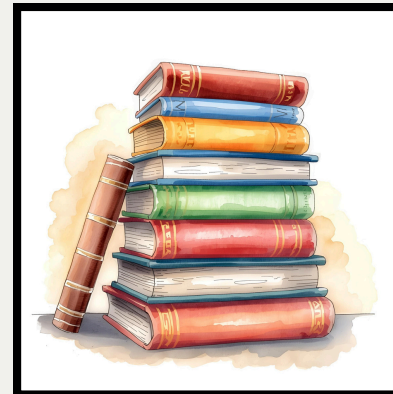
III. Enhancement of School-to- Community Partnerships

We commit to strengthening communication channels with parents, staff and the broader community to foster meaningful engagement and drive measurable growth in community involvement within our school district.

IV. Commitment to the Health and Safety of Our School Community

We are dedicated to the health and safety of our school community by strengthening district structures and routines while actively leveraging ongoing training, partnerships and available resources.

2026-2027 BUDGET PRIORITIES



Maintain current program



Propose a budget that is educationally sound and fiscally responsible



Continue developing long-term sustainability by reducing reliance on fund balance and reserves

AGENDA



1

2025 Fiscal Health Update

2

Initial State Aid Projections

3

Tax Levy Projections

4

What's Next



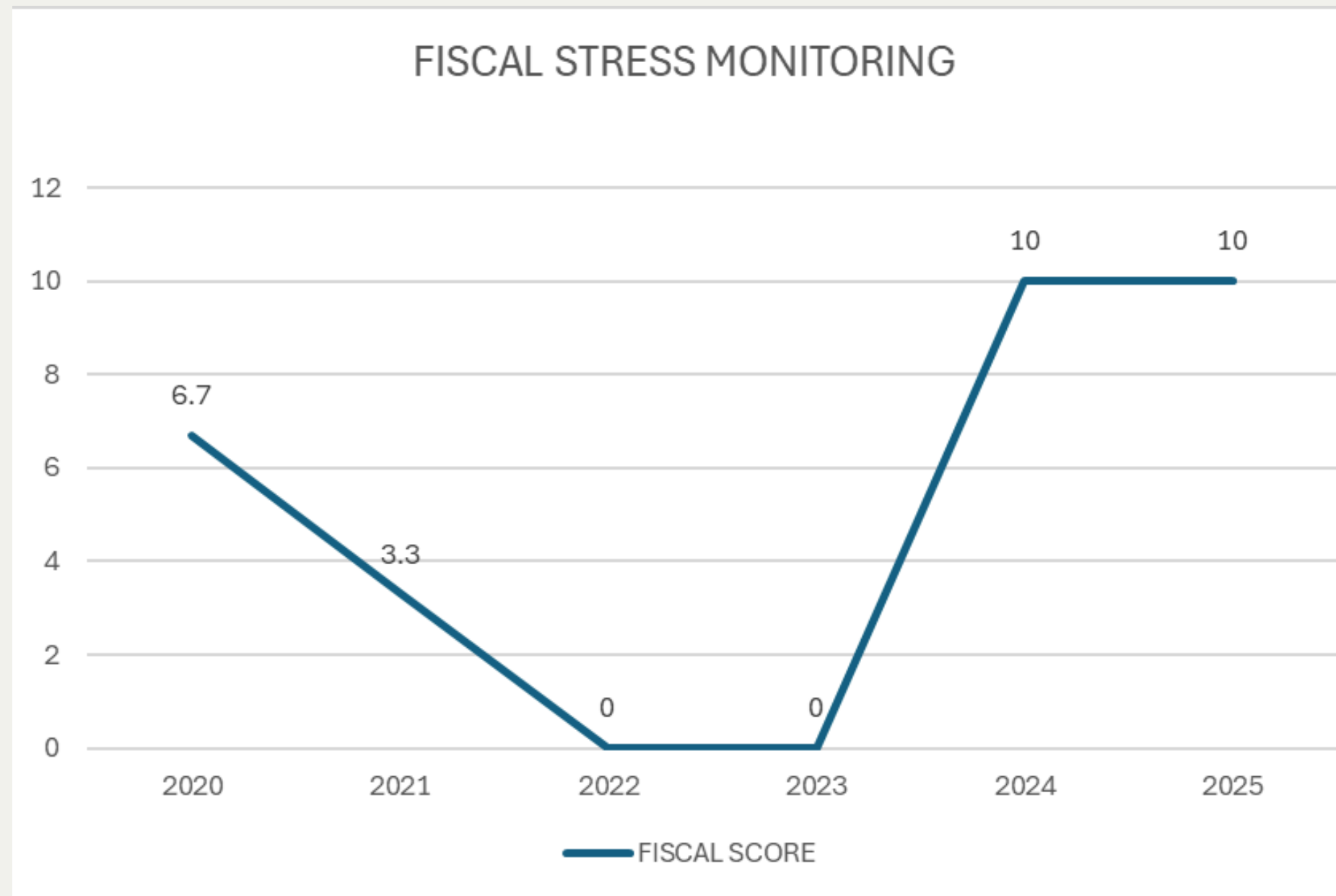
UPDATE ON FISCAL HEALTH

Fiscal Stress Score

- New York State provides annual fiscal health scores to all districts. The score is based on points given in various fiscal categories including Fund Balance, Cash Flow, Debt and Deficit Spending.
- This system was created as an early warning system for communities and school districts for potential fiscal problems. Alerting everyone to potential problems gives local officials and taxpayers the opportunity to be more proactive.
- For year end 2025, Elwood has received “no designation”, which is the top rating a municipality can receive.



UPDATE ON FISCAL HEALTH

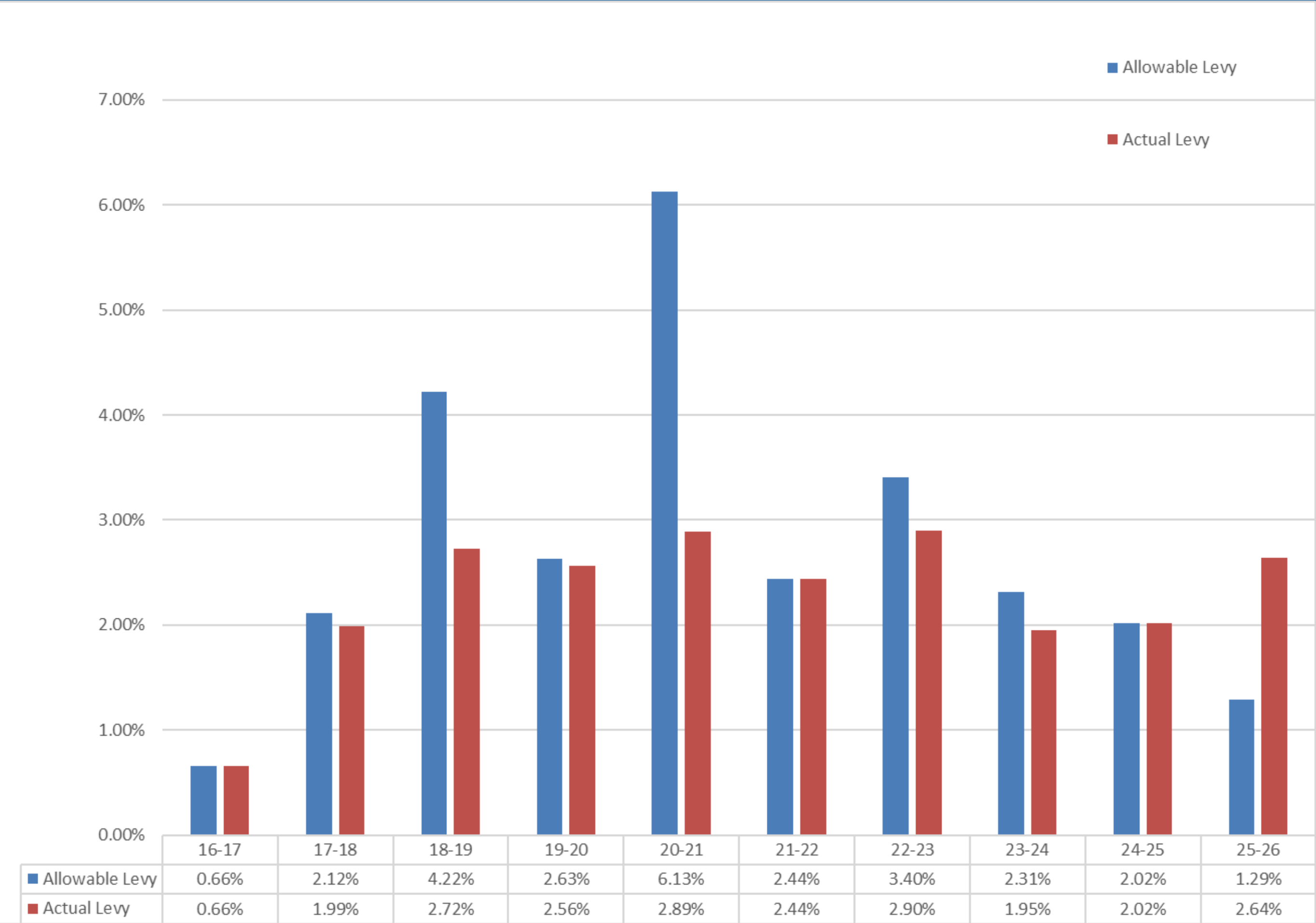


- Along with “no designation”, our score remained flat at a score of 10 from 2024.
- A score of 25 or above will result in a designation of “susceptible fiscal stress”.

25/26 TO 26/27 INITIAL STATE AID COMPARISON

Category	25/26 Actual State Aid	25/26 Proposed State Aid	\$ Difference	% Difference
Foundation Aid	11,504,907	11,619,956	115,049	
BOCES Aid	1,370,800	1,572,713	201,913	
Public High Excess Cost Aid	171,436	149,706	-21,730	
Private Excess Cost Aid	505,585	516,839	11,254	
Hardware & Technology	21,403	19,447	-1,956	
Software, Library & Textbook	163,741	163,412	-329	
Transportation	2,051,814	2,054,909	3,095	
Building Aid	2,222,845	2,283,099	60,254	
High Tax Aid	1,046,049	1,046,049	0	
Totals	\$19,058,580	\$19,426,130	\$367,550	1.93%

Elwood Tax Levy History



**10 YEAR AVERAGE
TAX LEVY INCREASE
2.28%**



2026/2027 Tax Levy Projection

Elwood UFSD

Tax Levy Limit Calculation for 2026-27

Tax Levy Limit Cap Before Adjustments and Exclusions

2025-2026 Tax Levy	\$ 54,545,732
x Tax Base growth factor (as reported by Comptroller)	\$ 1.0145
	\$ 55,336,645
+ PILOT 2025-2026	\$ 575,073
	\$ 55,911,718
- Prior Year Exemptions (Debt Service)	\$ 3,597,623
Adjusted Prior Year Tax Levy	\$ 52,314,095
x Allowable Growth Factor (lesser of CPI or 2%)	\$ 1.02
	\$ 53,360,377
- PILOT for 2026-2027	\$ -
	\$ 53,360,377
+ Prior Year Carry-over	
Total Levy Limit	\$ 53,360,377
+ 2026-2027 Exemptions	
ERS	\$ -
TRS	\$ -
Capital Exclusions	\$ 2,981,782
Tax Levy Limit Plus Exclusions	\$ 56,342,159
Tax Levy Increase for 2026-2027 as a percent	3.29%
Tax Levy Increase for 2026-2027 as dollar amount	\$ 1,796,427

2026/2027 Estimates	
BOCES Expense	\$ 105,588
BOCES Aid	\$ (70,998)
Transfer to Capital	\$ 650,000
Debt	\$ 4,580,290
Bldg Aid	\$ (2,283,099)
Total	\$ 2,981,782



PROGRAM / POSITION REVIEW FOR 2026-2027

- MTSS Program Reevaluation
 - MTSS Programs
 - Reading at Harley
- Director of Curriculum
- High School Freshman Course
- Technology Software Upgrades
- Continued expansion of Assistant Coaches for Varsity Sports
- Continuation of K-12 Chromebook replacement cycle

Updates on Federal & State Mandates for 2026-2027

Additional items required for the 2026/2027 Budget

- Mandates Associated with the NYSED Portrait of a Graduate
 - Our "Portrait of a Graduate" initiative strategically aligns Elwood's curriculum with new NYS mandates by launching a foundational Freshman Seminar and expanding high-value student credentials, such as the Seals of Biliteracy and Civic Readiness. This plan optimizes resources through streamlined committee work to ensure our students meet 2026 financial literacy and climate science standards while fostering vital community partnerships.
- ENL Mandates
 - Change in NYS Testing System
- FAPE – Free and Appropriate Education
 - Mandates school to provide education to students until the age of 22 (formally age 21)

WHAT'S NEXT



- **Continued work on the expenditure budget throughout the month.**
 - **BOCES**
 - **Technology**
 - **Special Education**
 - **Personnel expenses may decrease as we await notification of potential retirements**
- **Transportation contract award to be recommended to BOE for approval in March.**



BUDGET PRESENTATION & MEETING DATES

Meeting Date	Presentation
~~Thursday, December 11, 2025~~	~~Budget Workshop #1~~
~~Thursday, January 15, 2026~~	~~Budget Workshop #2~~
~~Wednesday, January 21, 2026~~	~~Citizens Finance & Budget Committee Meeting (CFBC)~~
Thursday, February 12, 2026	Budget Workshop #3
Thursday, March 26, 2026	Budget Workshop #4
Thursday, April 16, 2026	Budget Workshop #5 & Budget Adoption
Thursday, May 7, 2026	Budget Hearing
Tuesday, May 19, 2026	Annual Budget Vote & School Board Election

BUDGET RESOURCES



All current budget-related information is available on the Elwood School District website.

Prior years' budget information is also available on the [Archived Budget Information](#) page.

Legal notices and budget newsletters will be distributed to the community and posted to the website throughout the budget process.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



The second CFBC meeting will take place on Monday, March 9, 2026 at 6:00pm in the Elwood Middle School Library.

The annual budget vote and election will take place on Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

There will be two Board of Education seats open for election for the 2026-2027 school year.

Nominating petitions are now available for pickup and are due back no later than April 20, 2026.

NEXT BUDGET WORKSHOP

BUDGET WORKSHOP #4
MARCH 26, 2026



QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

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