



Darien

Public Schools

FY27 Board of Education Budget Request

Darien Board of Finance

March 3, 2026

Proposed FY27 Budget Increase

FY26 Budget:	\$125,760,223	
FY27 BOE Recommended Budget:	\$130,179,922	
Total Budget Increase:	\$4,419,699	3.51%
FY27 Capital Budget Request:	\$1,915,550	

10 YEAR BUDGET % INCREASES			
Fiscal Year	Superintendent Proposed Budget	BOE Approved Budget	Town Approved Budget
FY27	3.88%	3.51%	
FY26	4.39%	4.92%	4.92%
FY25	6.19%	6.48%	4.73%
FY24	4.94%	3.56%	3.47%
FY23	3.95%	3.74%	3.74%
FY22	3.99%	4.03%	4.03%
FY21	3.46%	3.40%	2.38%
FY20	2.98%	2.61%	2.02%
FY19	2.75%	2.34%	2.34%
FY18	2.08%	2.16%	2.16%
FY17	3.85%	3.44%	3.44%
Average	3.86%	3.65%	3.32%

DRG A Budget Requests

District	Superintendent's Budget	BOE Approved Budget
Easton	5.94%	5.63%
Westport	5.48%	4.98%
Ridgefield	4.62%	4.62%
Redding	4.54%	3.96%
New Canaan	3.94%	3.94%
Weston	3.92%	3.91%
Wilton	3.60%	3.60%
Darien	3.88%	3.51%
Average	4.49%	4.27%

FY27 Budget Request

Budget: \$130,179,922
Budget Increase: 3.51%

Category	% Growth	% Cumulative Growth
Salaries	2.28%	2.28%
Enrollment	0.25%	2.53%
Operating	-0.65%	1.88%
Fixed, Equipment & Revenue	0.83%	2.71%
New Initiatives	0.80%	3.51%
Total	3.51%	3.51%

Budget Highlights

Teaching & Learning	● 5 instructional coaches to strengthen elementary teaching and learning ● Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) addresses academic, behavioral, and social-personal learning needs for all K-12 students
Teacher Recruitment & Retention	● DEA Contract enhancements provide new in-service professional learning opportunities, while increasing budget predictability
Communications	● Public Information Coordinator to improve communication, community engagement and create greater transparency
Safety & Security	● School security redesign
Special Education	● Orton Gillingham training for staff ● Students returning to district & aging out
Mental Health	● Continued support for Teen Talk & DHS Wellness Center
Technology	● Technology for Students & Staff ● New software to support AI integration into teaching & learning
Employee Benefits	● Transition to self-insured health insurance model ● Change in plan design (\$3,000/\$6,000 deductible; prior Rx authorization)

FY27 Budget Drivers-Salaries

Category	% Growth
DEA Contract	2.34%
DAA Contract	0.18%
Non Certified Contracts	0.63%
Turnover/Salary Savings	-0.96%
ESY	0.07%
Wellness Coordinator-Grant Compression	0.02%
Total Salaries	2.28%

FY27 Budget Drivers-Staffing Changes (Enrollment)

Category	% Growth
Elementary Enrollment Changes	0.13%
Middle School Enrollment Changes	-0.08%
High School Enrollment Changes	-0.07%
Special Education Staffing	0.08%
Student Transportation Drivers (Special Education)	0.08%
Benefits for Staffing Changes	0.11%
Total	0.25%

FY27 Budget Drivers-Operating

Category	% Growth
Special Education (OOD Tuition, Contracted Services, ECR)	-0.67%
Other (primarily Textbooks)	-0.10%
Teen Talk (Grant Compression)	0.05%
Software Contractual Increases	0.03%
Unfunded Mandate (Composting)	0.02%
Tuition Reimbursement-DEA	0.02%
Total	-0.65%

FY27 Budget Drivers-Fixed, Equipment, Revenue

Category	% Growth
First Student Transportation	0.23%
Utilities	0.19%
Employee Benefits	0.52%
OPEB/FICA/Pension	-0.32%
CIRMA	0.03%
Technology Equipment	0.29%
Revenue Excluding ECR	-0.11%
 Total	0.83%

FY27 Budget Drivers-New Initiatives

Category	% Growth
Elementary Instructional Coaches	0.54%
Public Information Coordinator (net of webmaster stipends)	0.06%
Security Redesign	0.01%
Benefits for FTE Changes	0.17%
New Software	0.02%
Total	0.80%

Capital Improvement Projects

- **Darien High School** **\$500,000**
 - Resurface blacktop at oval & stadium parking
 - **Hindley Elementary School** **\$345,600**
 - School radio replacement
 - Bollards for picnic area
 - Resurface blacktop for entrance & parking lot
 - Replace gymnasium floor
 - **Holmes Elementary School** **\$278,000**
 - School radio replacement
 - Bollards for main entrance
 - Resurface blacktop for entrance & parking lot
 - **Royle Elementary School** **\$383,400**
 - School radio replacement
 - Bollards for picnic area
 - Resurface blacktop for entrance & parking lot
 - Replace gymnasium floor
 - **Central Office** **\$48,900**
 - Generator automatic transfer switch replacement
 - **District** **\$359,650**
 - Replacement cycle - custodial floor scrubbers
 - Vehicle replacement (2007 Truck)
 - Security cameras, server & licensing, hardware replacement cycle
 - Two suburbans for outplacement locations
- Total: \$1,915,550**

**ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL
BUDGET INFORMATION
(Pages A1-A9)**

Proposed FY27 Budget Increase

FY26 Budget:	\$130,640,433	
FY27 Superintendent's Budget	\$130,640,433	3.88%
FY27 BOE Adjustments	\$(460,511)	
FY27 BOE Recommended Budget:	\$130,179,922	
Total Budget Increase:	\$4,419,699	3.51%

10-Year Operating Budget History

Year	BOE	BOE End-of-Year Return to the Town
FY16	\$90,722,526	\$179,698
FY17	\$93,847,816	\$493,302
FY18	\$95,874,777	\$729,230
FY19	\$98,122,266	\$336,376
FY20	\$100,118,408	\$569,611
FY21	\$104,284,508*	\$1,370,631*
FY22	\$106,624,199	\$694,441
FY23	\$110,607,016	\$810,367
FY24	\$114,630,074	\$3,676*
FY25	\$119,864,475	\$604,808
FY26	\$125,760,223	
	Average (10-year)	\$675,589

*Includes supplemental appropriation

FY27 Enrollment

	2025-2026	2026-2027	Change
Elementary	2,080	2,118	+38
Middle School	1,038	1,030	-8
High School	1,341	1,293	-48
Total	4,459	4,441	-18

K-12 Enrollment FY26-FY31

	K-12	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Year	Total	Total	Total	Total
2025-26	4,477	2,083	1,040	1,354
2026-27	4,441	2,118	1,030	1,293
2027-28	4,450	2,153	1,043	1,254
2028-29	4,480	2,173	1,036	1,271
2029-30	4,527	2,226	1,031	1,270
2030-31	4,563	2,243	1,042	1,278

- Next year's enrollment projected to decrease by 18 students
- Enrollment over next five years projected to increase by 86 students or 1.9%
- Maintains BOE class size guidelines

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6-12
Class Size Guideline	18-22	18-22	19-23	19-23	20-24	20-24	Below 18-24

FY 26 DRG-A Per Pupil Expenditures



District	Per Pupil Expenditure
Wilton	24,987
Ridgefield	25,332
Darien	26,242
New Canaan	26,345
Easton	26,374
Westport	27,715
Weston	28,973
Redding	31,257
Region 9	34,346
Average	27,952

Personnel Additions

Instructional		Non-Instructional	
Elementary Instructional Coaches	5.0 FTE	Public Information Coordinator	1.0 FTE
Hindley - Teacher	1.0 FTE	Wellness Coordinator (Grant Compression)	.33 FTE
Holmes - Teacher	1.0 FTE	Student Transportation Drivers (Special Education)	2.0 FTE
MMS Special Education Teacher	1.0 FTE		
ELP Psychologist	.2 FTE		

Personnel Reductions

Instructional

Non-Instructional

MMS- World
Language Teacher 1.0 FTE

Director of Security 1.0 FTE

DHS-
Mathematics
Teacher .6 FTE

DHS - World
Language Teacher .4 FTE

DHS-English .2 FTE

Historical FTE Trend

	FY22 Budget	FY27 BOE Recommended	% Increase	
Administrators	37	36	-2.70%	Eliminated Dir of Instructional Tech
Teachers	482	485.2	0.66%	MMS Staffing from 4-5. Added Literacy Coaches
Paraprofessionals-Special Education	109	136	24.77%	IEP Driven
Paraprofessionals-General Education	23	15	-34.78%	
Secretaries	31	27	-12.90%	
Maintenance	12	13	8.33%	In Sourced Groundskeeping
Custodial	30	32	6.67%	Ox Ridge
Security	12	14	16.67%	SSOs
Nurses	13	12	-7.69%	
Transportation	3	18	500.00%	In House Special Education
Unaffiliated	33.8	37.8	11.83%	In Sourced Occupational Therapists
Food Service	9	3	-66.67%	Contracted with Chartwells
Total	794.8	829	4.30%	<i>A8</i>

Efficiencies over Time FY20 to FY27

Year Implemented	Efficiency	Cumulative Savings
FY25	New Transportation Model	\$1,650,000
FY21	4.5 classes to 5	\$1,229,917
FY23	New Salary Schedules (Maint, Custodial, Para's, Secretaries)	\$902,386
FY24	Secretarial Support	\$822,852
FY27	High Deductible & Prior Authorization Changes	\$760,373
FY24	Budget Control	\$509,649
FY24	Instructional Technology Supervision	\$400,000
FY25	Part Time Cleaners	\$320,925
FY25	In Sourcing Special Education Positions	\$318,672
FY21	YMCA Agreement	\$197,000
FY25	Field Advertising	\$96,000
FY21	Copier Contract	\$85,470
FY23	Athletic Trainers	\$72,448
FY25	Fingerprinting	\$66,000
FY26	5 Day ELP Tuition	\$61,770
Total Cumulative Savings		\$7,493,462