

Jefferson Township Public Schools

2026-2027

Preliminary Budget

March 23, 2026

Presented by: Jeanne Howe, Superintendent

Rita Oroho Giacchi, Business Administrator

District Vision & Mission Drive All Budgetary Decisions

VISION

The district will be a leader in academic excellence while developing healthy, well-rounded, resourceful students who are positive, contributing members of local and global communities.

MISSION

We strive to foster academic excellence by engaging students in meaningful learning experiences that meet the highest educational and ethical standards, while supporting every learning style – in a caring, inclusive, and collaborative learning environment, supported by the greater community.

2026-2027 Budget Goals

- Minimize the impact of state aid funding loss on student achievement and program offerings
- Maintain reasonable class sizes
- Continued support for internal academies
 - Multimedia, Broadcasting and Journalism Academy, STEM Academy & Business and Finance Academy
- Maintain district operations, sound facilities & safe transportation
 - Continue some purchasing to maintain district technology and transportation fleet
- Effectively leverage other available funding sources
- Preserve ability to utilize banked cap in future years
 - Exorbitant increases in healthcare expected to continue
 - Operating budget cannot accommodate necessary capital improvements

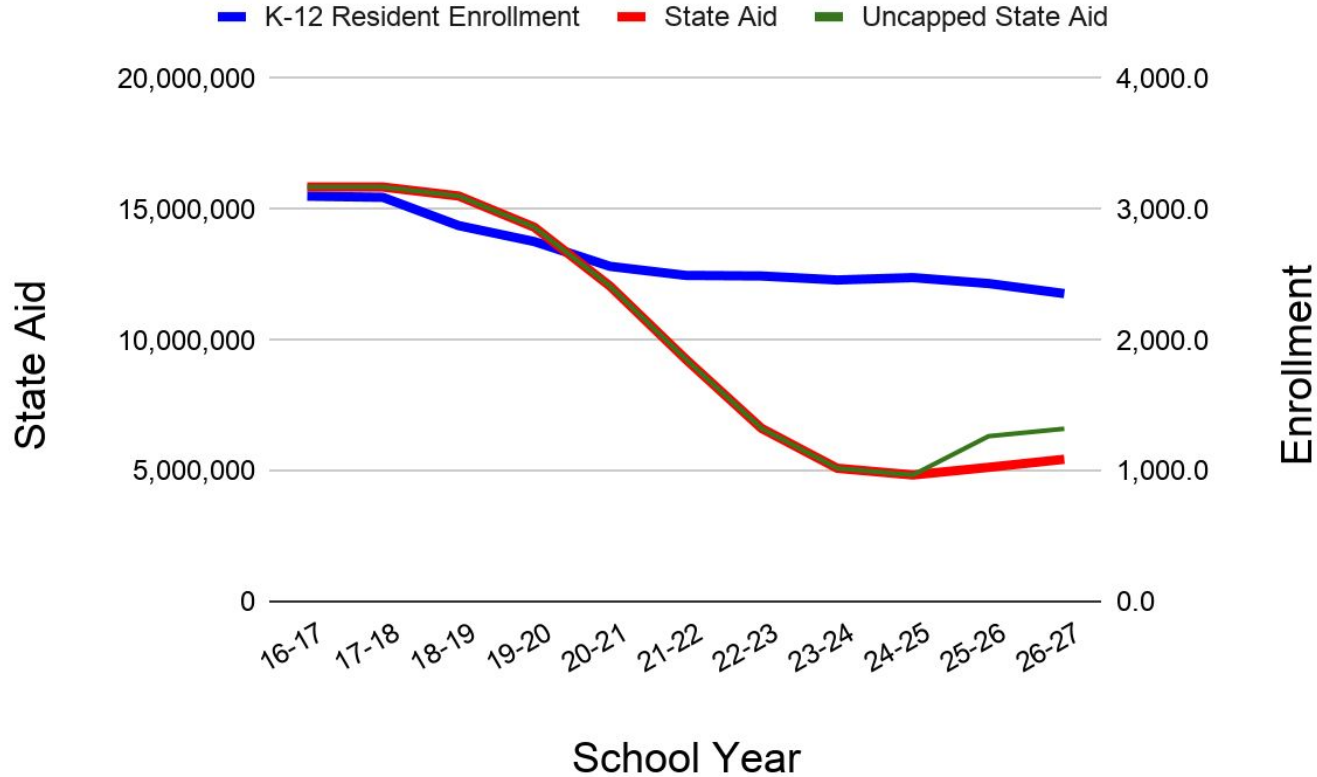
S-2 Impact on Jefferson Township Public Schools

**Not inclusive of non-recurring Supplemental Stabilization Aid

BUDGET YEAR	GENERAL FUND STATE AID	CURRENT YEAR INCREMENTAL LOSS	CURRENT YEAR LOSS VS. 17-18 SY
18-19	15,508,649	-554,620	-554,620
19-20	14,315,347	-1,193,302	-1,747,922
20-21	12,063,605	-2,251,742	-3,999,664
21-22	9,272,081	-2,791,524	-6,791,188
22-23	6,631,798	-2,640,283	-9,431,471
23-24	5,105,647	-1,526,151**	-10,957,622
24-25	4,849,657	-255,990**	-11,213,612

7 YEAR CUMULATIVE LOSSES = 44,696,099

History of Enrollment vs. State Aid



Post S-2 Funding: The Impact of Arbitrary Caps

Aid Category	Aid Denied in 25-26	Aid Denied in 26-27	Two-year Total
Equalization	N/A	N/A	N/A
Special Education	\$775,948	\$771,167	\$1,547,115
Security	\$76,011	\$76,163	\$152,174
Transportation	\$338,129	\$319,253	\$657,382
TOTAL	\$1,190,088	\$1,166,583	\$2,356,671

JEFFERSON IS DENIED CRITICAL FUNDING AFTER SEVEN YEARS OF UNCAPPED LOSSES

Enrollment by Building

School	Highest Enrollment	25-26 Actual Enrollment	26-27 Anticipated Enrollment
Briggs	338	263	263
Stanlick*	398	250	269
White Rock	479	458	454
Intermediate School	922	877	867
High School	1,125	758	738

*It is expected that staff currently housed at the Central Office building will be relocated to space in Stanlick School.

Budgetary Response: 2018 to Present

- Closed two buildings (Milton and Cozy Lake)
- Anticipated sale of Central Office building
- Reduced staff: administration, instructional, and support
 - Enrollment-based
 - Reconfiguration
 - Reduction in programs & services
 - Media program at elementary schools
 - Elimination of G&T teacher in grades 1-3
- Reconfigured the school district three times
- Introduced 3-tier transportation
- Reduced High School Substitute coverage
- Reduced Professional Development
- Added and increased participation fees
- Overnight field trips at cost of parents

Budgetary Response: 2018 to Present (cont'd.)

- Reduced funding for PSATs
- Moved into, out of, and back into the State Health Benefits Plan to achieve savings
- Applied for all available grant funding and additional aid, including Preschool Education Aid
- Used all maintenance reserve and almost all capital reserve
- Introduced a referendum to address most critical facilities needs
- Limit repairs of the physical plant to critical need only
- Shared testimony at Senate & Assembly Budget meetings and NJDOE Public Comment Hearings pleading for fair funding beginning in February 2020
- Engaged community in multiple letter-writing campaigns to local- and state-level legislators
- Enlisted media outlets to amplify awareness of the district's budget crisis

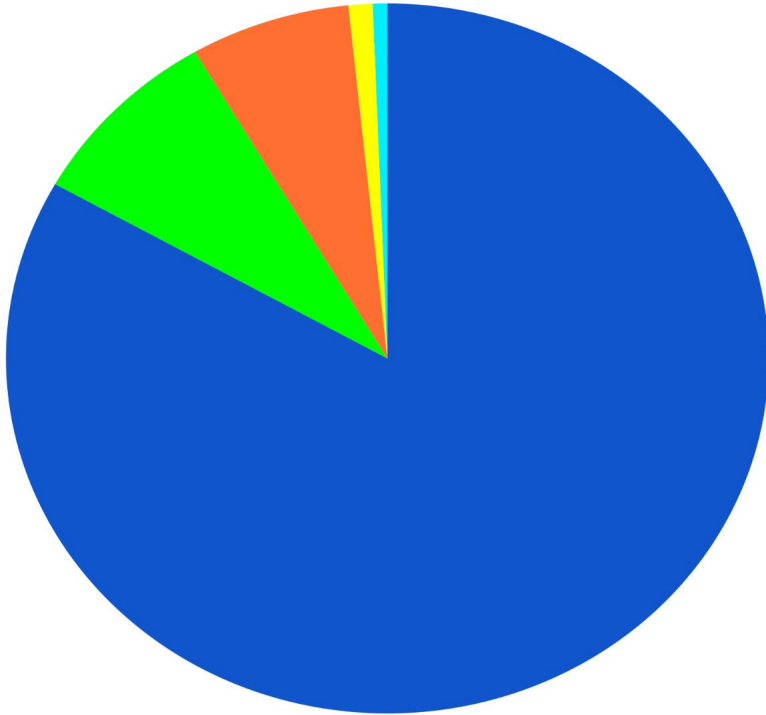
25-26 Budgetary Staff Reductions

Category	Reductions in 25-26 Budget	Total Full-Time Equivalent before Reduction	Percent Reduction
Certificated Staff - Principal	1	6	16.67%
Certificated Staff - Counselor	2	13	15.38%
Certificated Staff - Nurse	1	7.19	13.91%
Certificated Staff - Instruction	21.5	257	8.37%
Non-certificated - Armed Security	1	6	16.67%
Non-certificated - Secretary	1.5	25	6.00%
Non-certificated - Custodial	2	22	9.09%
Total	30		

Key 2026-2027 Funding Challenges

- \$1,166,583 loss in State Aid due to arbitrary funding limit
 - Following prior year loss of \$1,190,088 due to same limits
- \$3,552,731 increase in expenditures
 - Including \$2.9 million increase in expected health care expenditures
- \$1,700,000 in budgeted use of fund balance/current year savings
 - Down from \$2,700,000 for 25-26 budget
- \$0 in Excess Surplus from the SY ended 6/30/25
 - Second year of \$0 surplus to support future year budgets
- Inability to generate budgetary savings for future years' operations or capital reserve
- \$622,020 increase in preschool state funding, full implementation reached in 24-25 school year

2026-2027 Budget Funding



Funding Source	25-26 Estimate	% of Total Revenues
Local*	57,400,724	83.2%
State (non-PEA)	5,806,848	8.4%
State (PEA)	4,682,700	6.8%
Federal	702,950	1.0%
Other**	425,700	0.6%
Total	69,018,922	

*includes debt repayment

**General Fund contribution to special revenue fund for special education preschool students

Preschool Education Aid



- \$4,682,700 in Preschool Education Aid to be received continue offering preschool to all eligible three- and four-year-olds
- 275 General Education Preschool Students expected to be enrolled in the program
- Preschool classrooms will be housed in Briggs & White Rock Schools
- All Preschool Disabled classrooms will continue to be located in Briggs School
- Transportation is included for all preschool students
- Savings to the general fund from PEA is approximately \$1.45 million
 - In other words, without PEA funds, our general budget would need to accommodate an additional \$1.45 million in expenditures

2026-2027 Budgeted Expenditures

Category	25-26 Budget	26-27 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Instructional Programs	27,384,907	28,417,374	1,032,466	3.77%
Employee Benefits	11,763,793	14,637,331	2,873,538	24.43%
Facilities	5,984,119	6,719,498	735,379	12.29%
Student Services	5,883,905	5,293,487	-590,418	-10.03%
Transportation	4,476,882	4,496,616	19,734	0.44%
Tuition	3,725,173	3,585,688	-139,485	-3.74%
Capital	609,542	109,542	-515,000	-84.49%
Debt Service	2,400,029	2,393,886	-6,143	-0.26%
Centralized Support & Admin	2,708,256	2,698,223	-10,033	-0.37%
School Administration	2,103,455	2,151,974	48,519	2.31%
Curriculum & Instruction	931,437	1,035,609	104,172	11.18%
Total	67,971,498	71,539,228	3,552,731	

Evolution of the 26-27 Budget Projections

- July 2026 Board Meeting - \$5.5 million projected shortage reported
- November 2026 Board Meeting - Projected shortage reduced to \$4.8 million due to revised estimates from changing health insurance providers
- Current shortage = \$2.9 million
 - Distasteful Budget Cuts: \$403k
 - Additional state aid: \$308k
 - Additional Preschool Expansion Aid: \$622k
 - Reduction in number of vocational school students: \$148k
 - Other current year savings vs. budget (W/C insurance, P&C insurance, payroll, etc.): \$419k

Proposed Budget Reductions

Basis	Description	Estimated \$ Impact
Enrollment Analysis	Reduce two HS teaching positions	\$263,000
District	Reduce one support position	\$89,000
Administrative review	Reduced requested memberships	\$4,832
Administrative review	Reduced requested HS presenter	\$7,500
Administrative review	Removed requested travel/PD	\$19,600
Administrative review	Reduced legal ads	\$1,400
Administrative review	Reduced field trips	\$1,400.00
Administrative review	Reduce requested Instructional Technology	\$16,790.00
	Total	\$403,522.00

THESE CUTS ARE DISTASTEFUL AND NOT FAIR TO STUDENTS

26-27 Preliminary Budget Options

Option 1: Make the Cuts

Implement reductions outlined previously to balance the budget internally.

Consequence:

Fundamentally alters the district's educational programs and services.

Option 2: A Budget of Increased Revenue

Utilize available healthcare waiver adjustment and increase the local tax share by a total of 6.3%

Consequence: Preserves programs and staff but increases the local tax burden.

Option 3: An Unbalanced Budget

Submit a budget with a deficit to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Consequence:

Unknown. Likely results in a state-appointed monitor.

Devastating Cuts Needed to Balance the Budget

- Increased Class Size (K-6)
- Eliminate High School Athletics
- Reduce HS After School Activities by 50%
- Eliminate JTIS & Elementary After School Activities
- Eliminate Courtesy Bussing & Late Bus
- Reduce Nursing, Library Services & Support Staff

**THESE CUTS WOULD CAUSE HARM TO STUDENTS AND
CANNOT BE RECOMMENDED. STATE RESPONSE UNKNOWN.**

Proposed Preliminary Budget Deficit

Description	Amount	Notes
25-26 Tax Levy	51,715,917	25/26 Tax Levy
2% Increase over prior year	1,034,318	2.00% Increase
Healthcare Waiver Adjustment	0	
Other sources of Revenue	15,842,987 (A)	State, Federal and other local sources
Total Revenue	68,593,222 (A)	
Total Expenditures	71,539,228	
DEFICIT	(2,946,006)	

- The proposed local funding scenario preserves Healthcare waiver adjustment of \$2,223,209 for use as banked cap in future year budgets.
- What has happened in these types of scenarios?

(A): These numbers were corrected on 3/24/26. Initially, the numbers improperly included \$425,700 representing a General Fund contribution to the Special Revenue Fund required for IEP students who will be placed in the General Education Preschool classrooms. That revenue was already accounted for in the tax levy numbers at the top of the chart.

Tax impact - What will it cost?

**Average Home
Assessed
Value =
\$331,661**

**Annual
Increase =
\$223.92**

**Monthly
Increase =
\$18.66**

Help Continue the Fight for Fair Funding

- Like, follow, and stay up to date through updates posted on the district website and social media
- March 24th: Jeanne Howe will testify in front of the Senate Budget Committee from the JTHS Media Center
- March 25th: Jefferson goes to Trenton! Various representatives have registered to testify at the in-person Assembly Budget Committee meeting
- March 30th: Continued advocacy at the Senate Budget Committee meeting

