



## 2026-2027 State Budget Considerations and Local Budget Planning

### Q&A

**1. How did the district get to this point, to have to cut positions and budgets?**

Pitt County Schools is not alone in facing financial challenges. School districts across North Carolina are dealing with the expiration of federal COVID-era ESSER funding, inflationary pressures that exceed state funding increases, and a funding formula that does not fully cover the rising cost of educating additional students. Although Pitt County Schools planned for the end of ESSER funding, many related expenses have shifted to the local budget and cash reserves. This requires the district to reduce spending to a sustainable level while maintaining the state-mandated balanced-budget requirement. The district is taking proactive steps to adjust to these changes and avoid more severe financial challenges.

**2. During the position reductions, will any staff lose their job?**

No. Position reductions will be achieved through retirements, resignations, and reassignments to other sites/positions due to changes in funding allotments.

**3. How does the reduction affect class size?**

The district is following the current state allotment formula along with an approved class size waiver. As a result, some classes may experience an increase in class size.

**4. Will there be impacts at the central office level, or are the cuts only affecting teaching positions?**

Yes, district office positions have also been eliminated. We have done this through retirements and resignations. Some district staff have been transferred to other positions. No staff member has lost their job as a result of these reductions.

**5. If you are reducing positions, why is the district hosting a job fair?**

Pitt County Schools employs over 3,000 individuals, and there is an ongoing need to hire teachers, teacher assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and other staff to ensure schools operate effectively. Despite necessary reductions, vacancies will continue to exist across the district.

**6. Are there other cuts beyond the anticipated position reductions?**

Yes. While approximately 80% of the district's budget is allocated to salaries, budget reductions are not limited to personnel. The district continues to review all areas of spending, including contracts, programs, and other resources.

**7. Why is there a need to cut so many positions, and why are there fewer funds available?**

School districts across the state are experiencing reductions in state and federal funding, requiring difficult financial decisions. The reduction in positions was a necessary response to decreased funding.

**8. Student enrollment for Pitt County Schools was increasing in 2024-25 and projected to increase in 25-26. What happened?**

Although enrollment increased, North Carolina provides school funding in arrears. State allotments are based on the prior year's student count (either the first or second month, whichever is higher). As a result, current-year enrollment increases are not fully reflected in funding until the following year.

**9. How are lottery funds used?**

The district can receive lottery funds through three main sources. First, the Public School Building Capital Fund (**PBSCF**) distributes \$100 million statewide, with Pitt County typically receiving about \$1.7 million, primarily used to reimburse borrowing for school construction or renovation. Second, the Public School Building Renovation and Repair Fund (**PSBRRF**) provides \$500,000 annually per county, allowing funds to accumulate interest and be used to renovate existing facilities, make small additions, or purchase building-attached equipment, but not for land, modular classrooms, furniture, or computers. Third, the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund (**NBPSCF**) is a competitive grant program with an annual application cycle, typically offering around \$350 million statewide against roughly \$3.8 billion in requests; awards are based on factors such as county economic status, revenue-generating capacity, debt levels, and project type. Pitt County Schools has applied for 17 NBPSCF projects but has not yet received an award.

**10. How can parents and community members best advocate for additional school funding?**

Parents and community members can advocate for additional school funding by contacting their state representatives through calls, emails, or letters to urge them to pass a state budget and fully fund public education. They can also make their voices heard by participating in elections and voting.

**Resources**

[Public Schools First NC](#)

[EdNC](#)

[Lottery Capital Funding](#)