

What Do I Really Need to Know About the Proposed District Budget?

The Challenges We're Navigating

- **Rising Costs:** Health insurance and contractual obligations continue to increase, putting pressure on the budget.
 - **Declining Enrollment:** Our enrollment continues to decline, a trend affecting nearly 90% of districts statewide. This is especially noticeable at Springhurst Elementary, where we anticipate **607 students this fall**, down from 714 in 2023-24.
 - **Increasing Student Needs:** Student needs are becoming more complex, especially in special education, requiring additional programs and staffing.
 - **Reduced State & Federal Aid:** State and Federal funding depend largely on enrollment. As enrollment declines, funding decreases.
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Our Guiding Principle: Provide the best possible programs and opportunities for our students while being responsible with taxpayer dollars.

The Bottom Line: What This Budget Delivers

- **Responsible Growth:** Increases spending by 3.68% compared to the 2025–26 budget.
 - **Increasing Costs:** Includes more than **\$1.3 million in increased costs** (healthcare, staffing, special education programming, transportation), **which equals approximately 3% of the tax levy.**
 - **Adjusts Staffing: Reduces 10 positions** (2 staff reductions and 8 unfilled positions), including the FLES position at Springhurst Elementary.
 - **Maintains Student Programs:** Keeps all **courses, clubs, and athletic programs in place**, and adds a Universal Prekindergarten Program and an elementary special education class.
 - **Invests in Staff Development:** Continues training across all areas to support high-quality instruction and operations.
 - **Advances Capital Improvements:** Includes a **\$100,000 Capital Outlay Construction Project**. The district will present final details before the May 12 budget hearing.
 - **Manages Tax Impact:** Increases the tax levy by 3.49% while the *projected tax rate* decreases from \$19.97 to \$19.23 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Changes in property assessments, including market adjustments, new construction, and renovations, drive this decrease.
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