

“Standards. Vision. Preparation. Success!”

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BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

**2026-27 School Budget
Presentation**

April 27, 2026





As always, the Budget process focuses on the 3 R's:

Responsive, Respectful and Resourceful

- *Responsive* to the needs of students and the community in both educational delivery and continuous school improvements.
- *Respectful* of taxpayers in difficult economic times.
- *Resourceful* by taking a tough line on efficiency and taking advantage of opportunities to look beyond this year and into the years ahead .



Budget Guiding Principles

- Sustain excellence of Bergenfield Public Schools by:
 - Keeping the focus on teaching and learning
 - Putting resources first and foremost in the classrooms
 - Maintaining high expectations and support for each and every student
 - Recruiting, developing, and sustaining a world-class teaching force
 - Being at the forefront of 21st century learning, such as STEM, robotics, and green technology



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Mission of Today Made Simple

BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**1 CHILDREN
COME
FIRST**



Awards and Recognitions



Bergenfield's Reputation as a
National, State, and Local School District Of Excellence



One of America's Best High Schools



- Bergenfield High School has been ranked among the top 6% of high schools in the United States by the *U.S. News & World Report* in the 2025-26 Best High Schools survey
- BHS was recognized as being 1,440th in the nation, 66th in NJ, and the 15th best in Bergen County
- Ranked 1,102 in the nation for college readiness

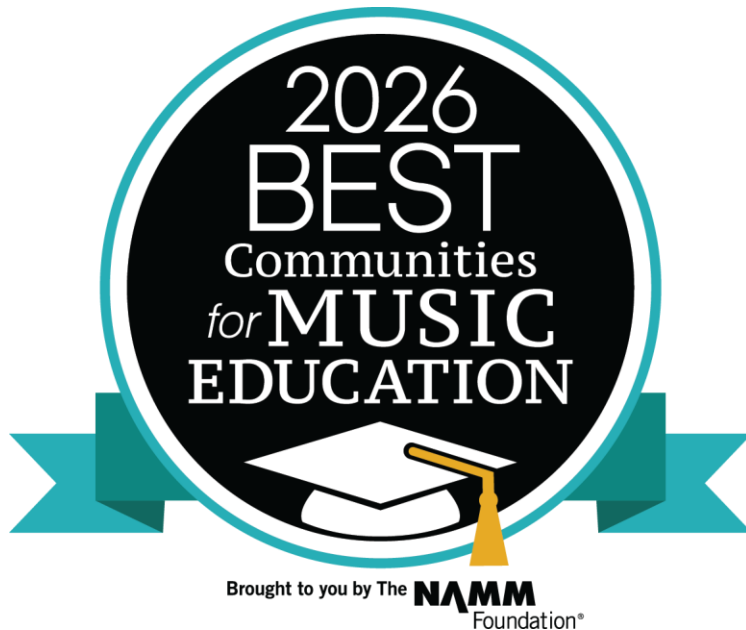


K-12 School District Rankings



- The district was ranked 68th in New Jersey by Niche.com
- Ranked 1,163 in the country out of the 11,565 districts included in the report
- We also ranked 20th in Bergen County

Best Communities for Music Education



- Once again, we were named one of the best communities in the nation for music education by the NAMM Foundation
- Our 17th year in a row making the list and 19th time overall!



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Curriculum and Student Achievement

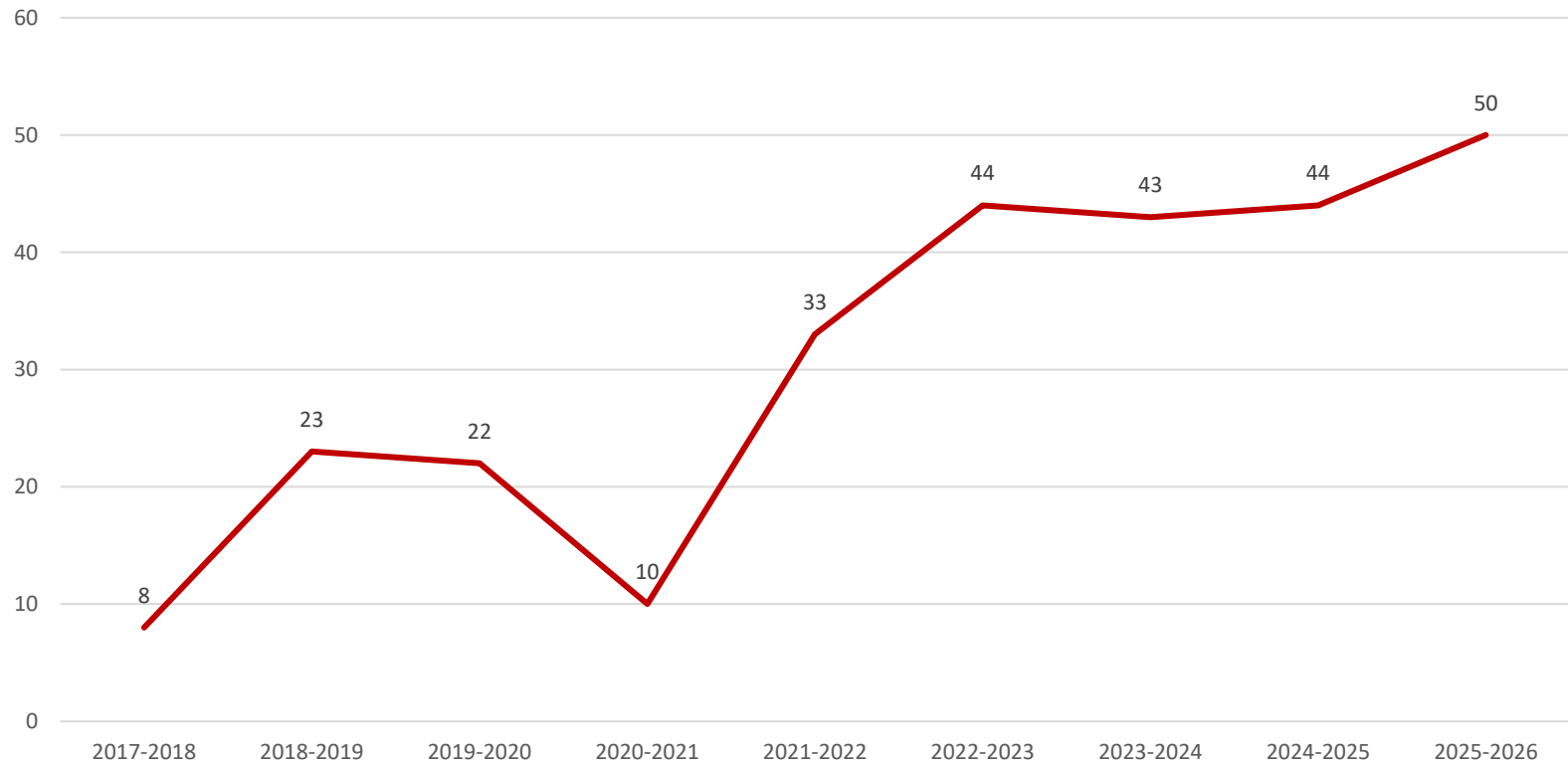


Seal of Biliteracy

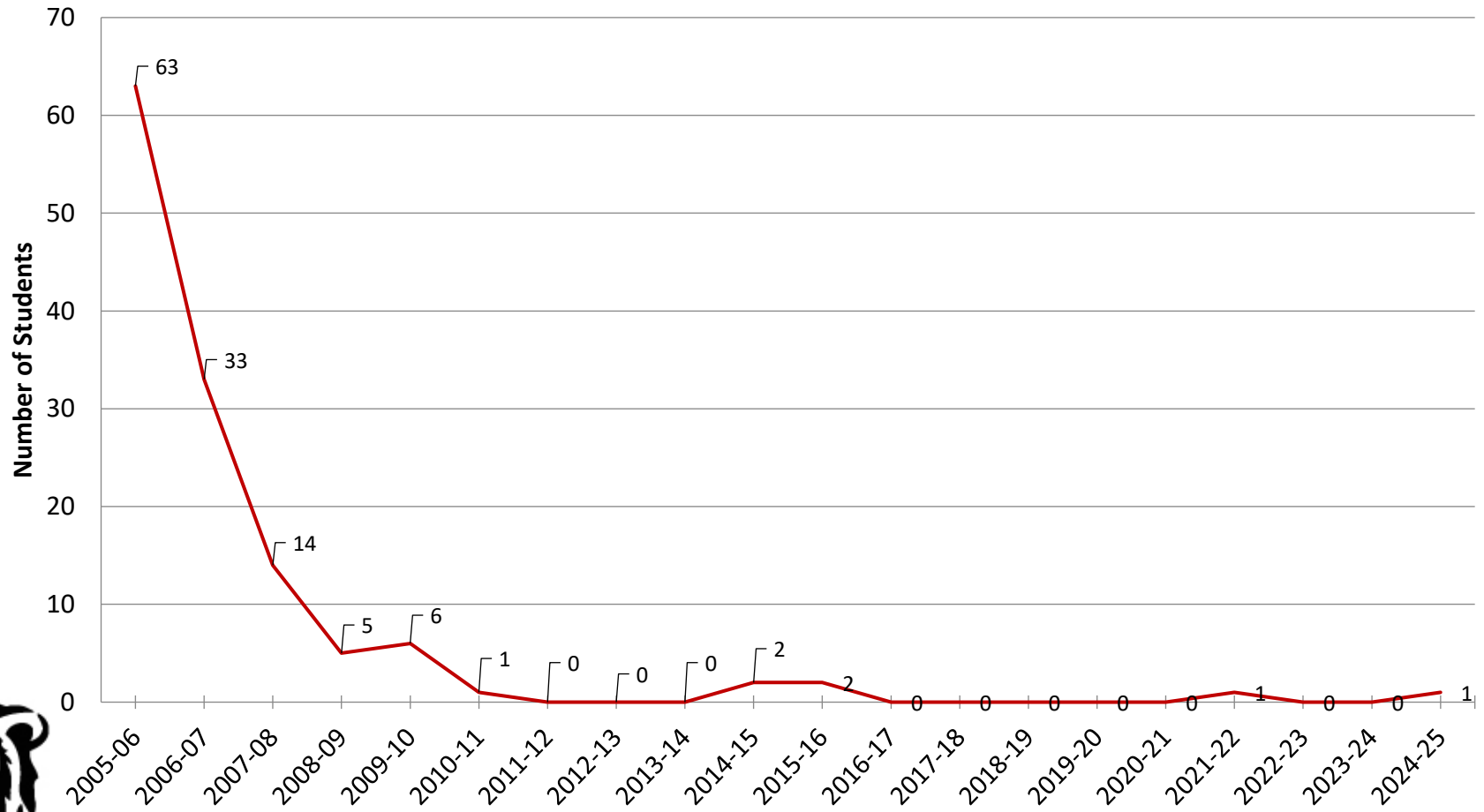


Seal of Biliteracy

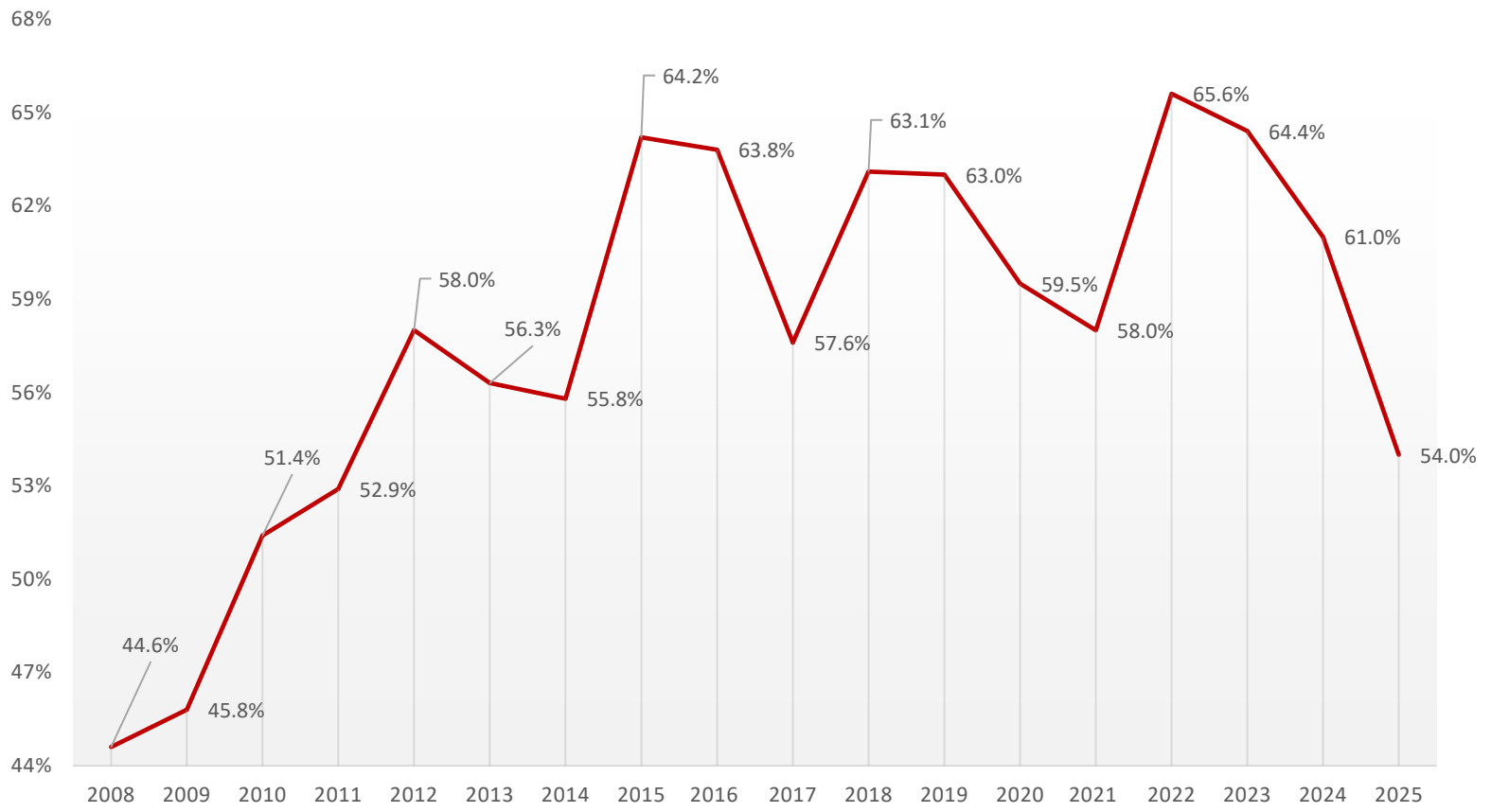
Seal of Biliteracy
(Bergenfield High School)



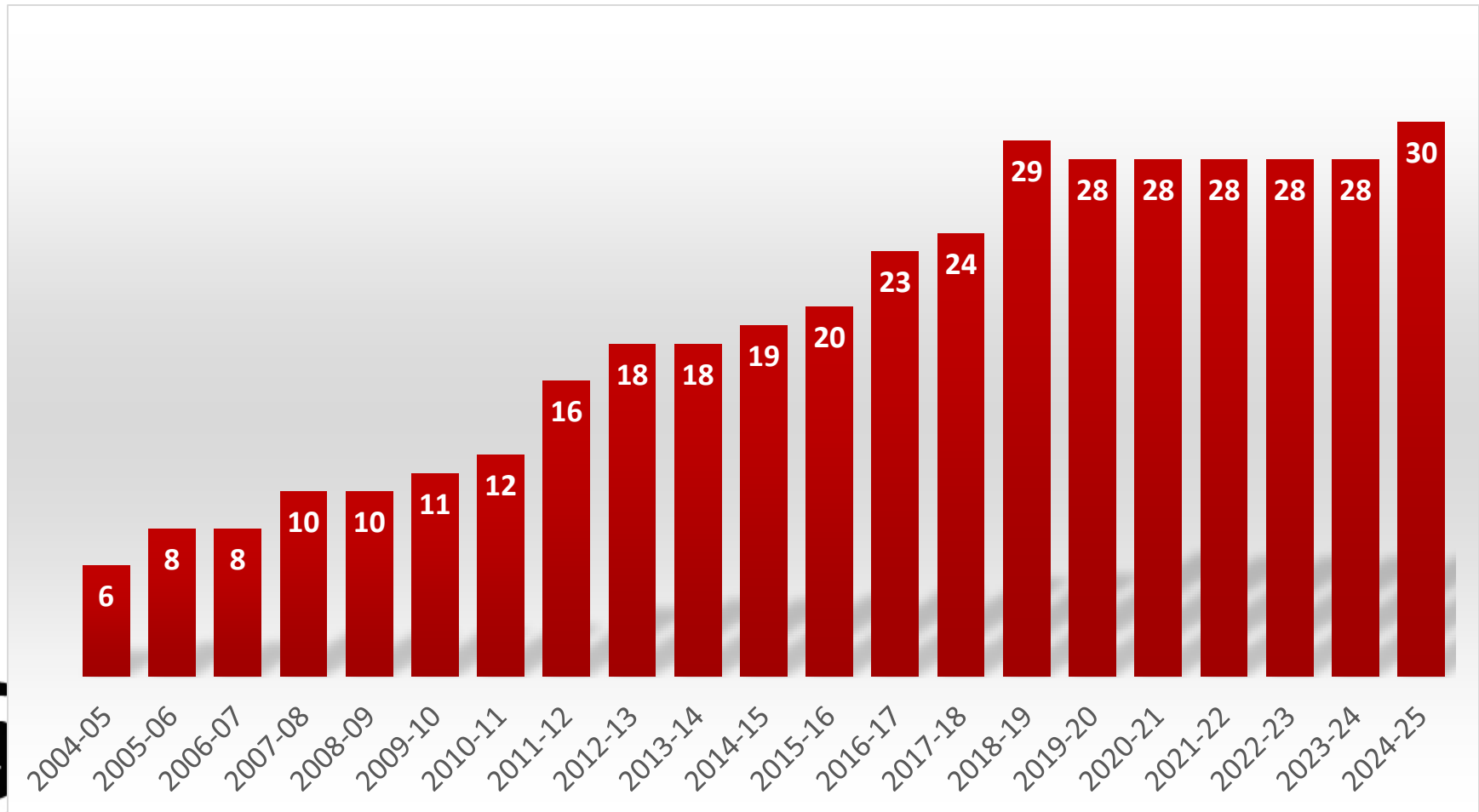
Dropouts



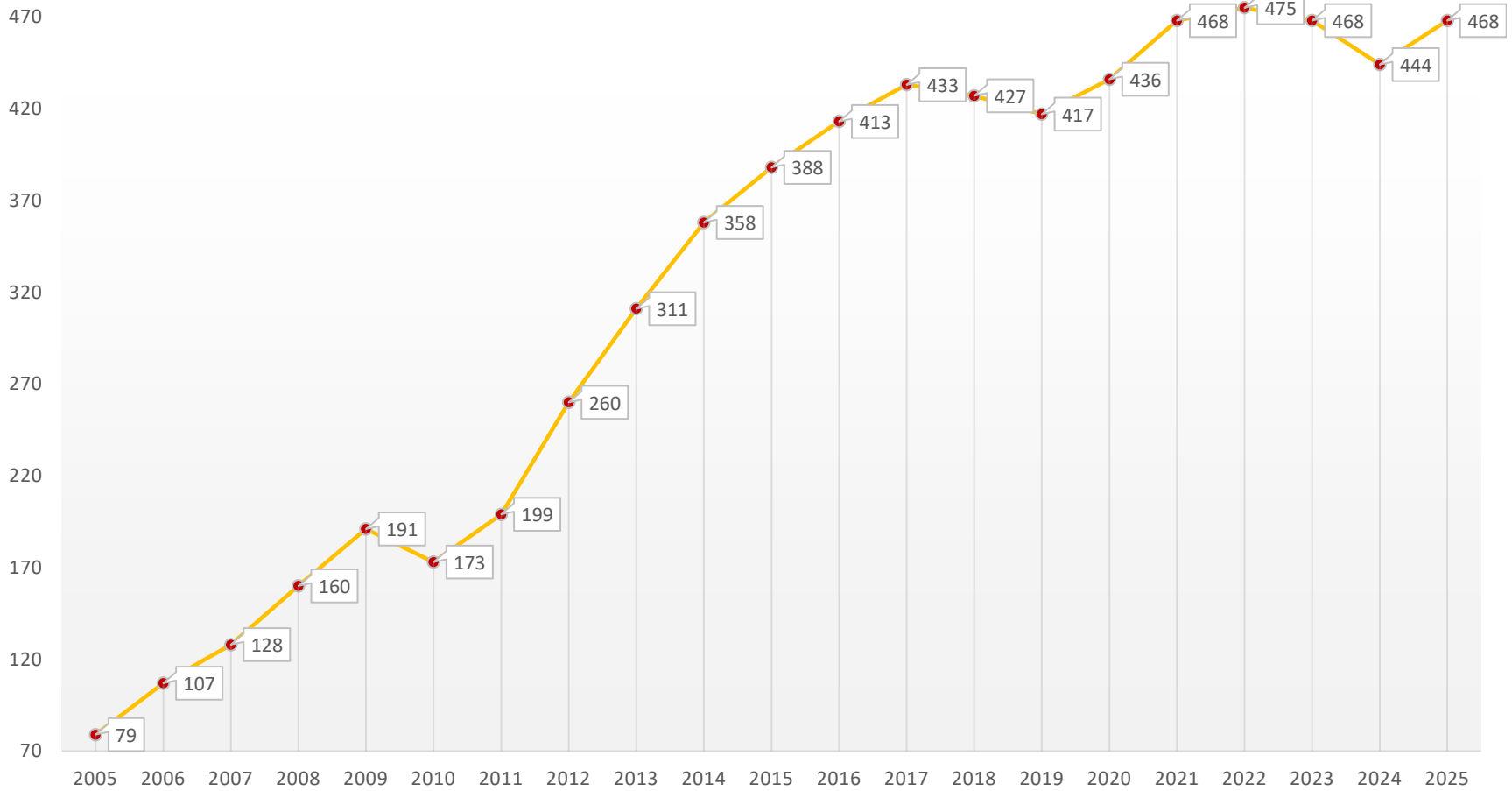
Graduates Attending 4-Year Colleges



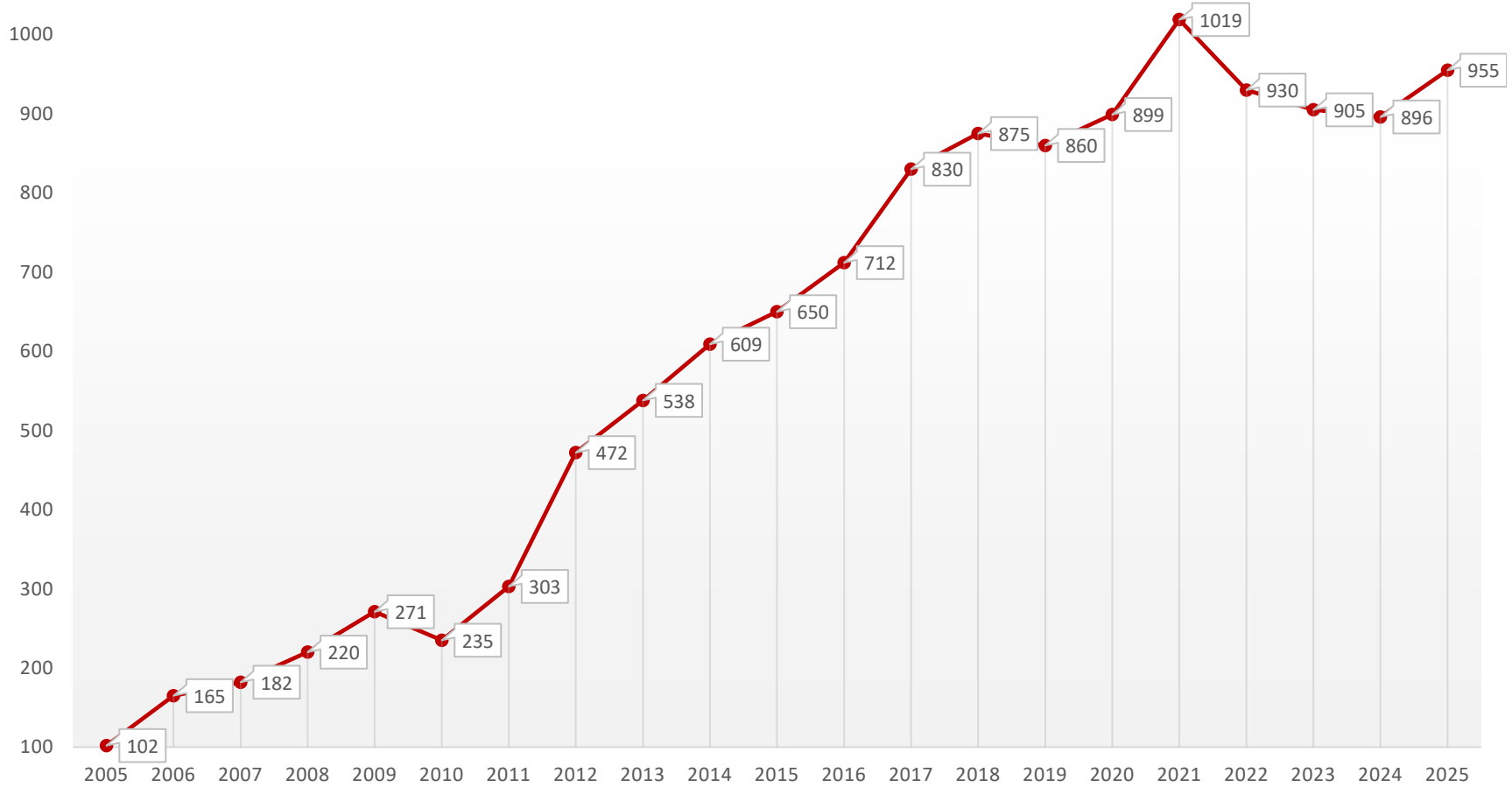
Total AP Courses



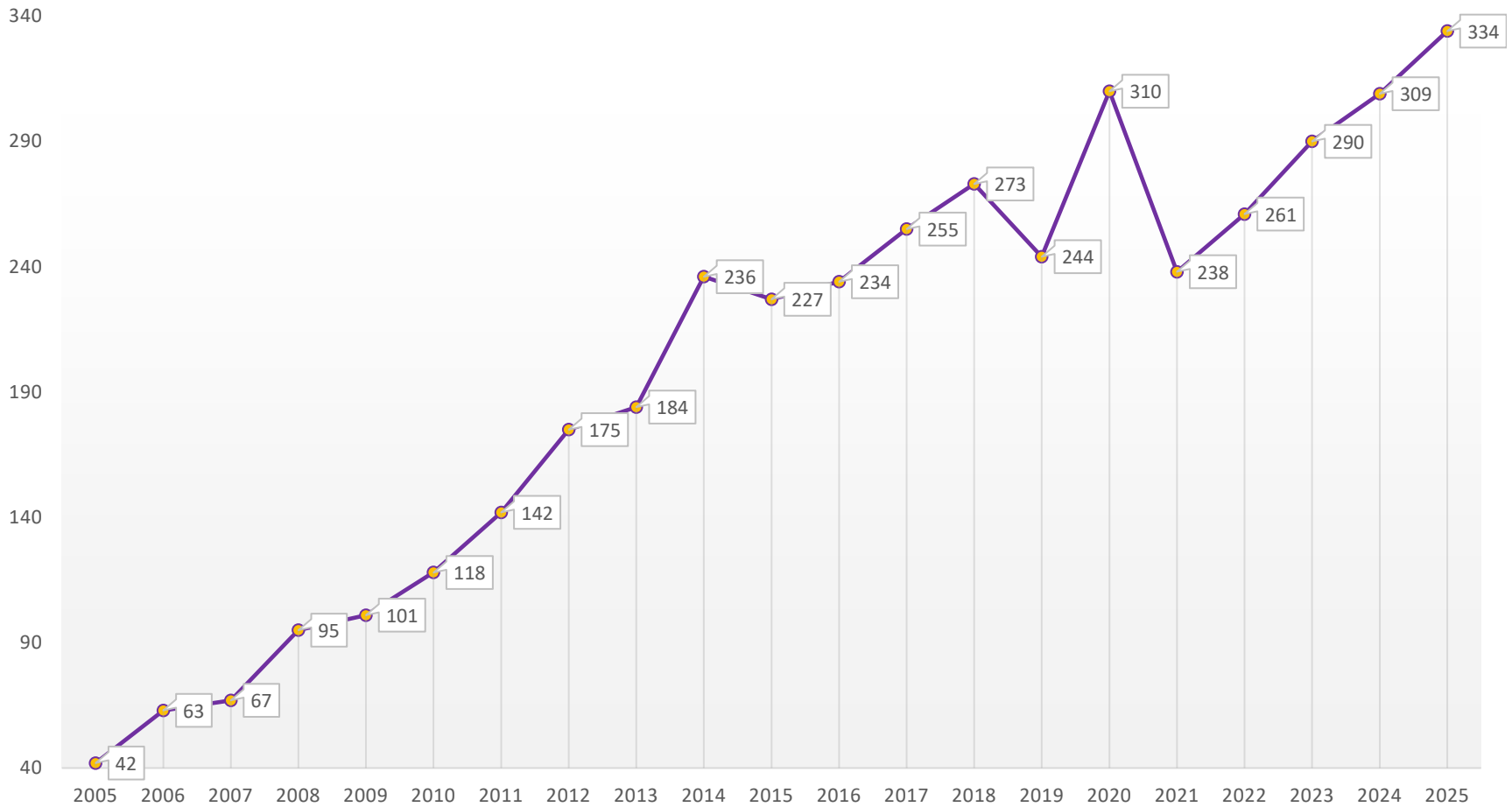
Total # of AP Students



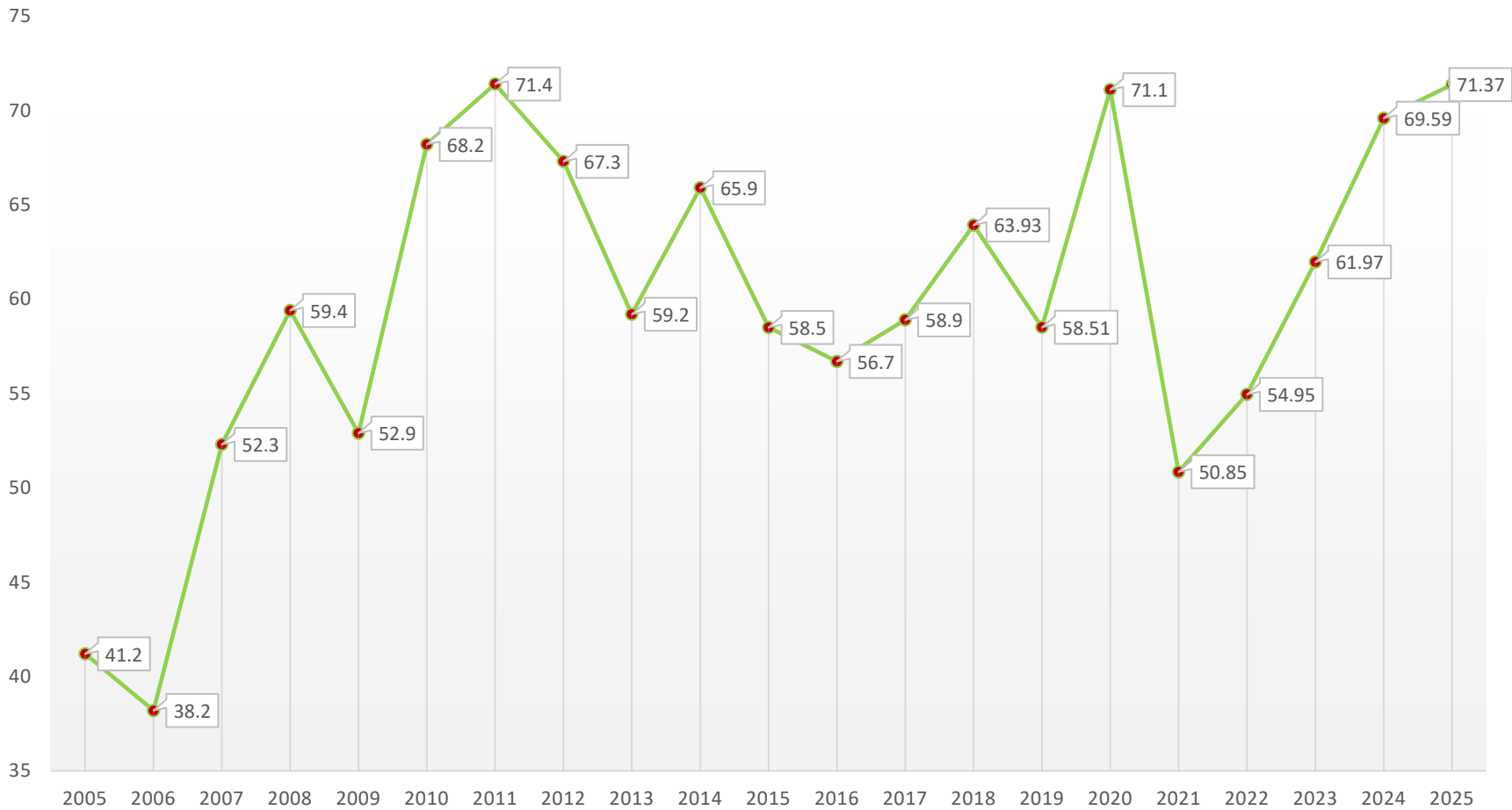
Total # of Exams



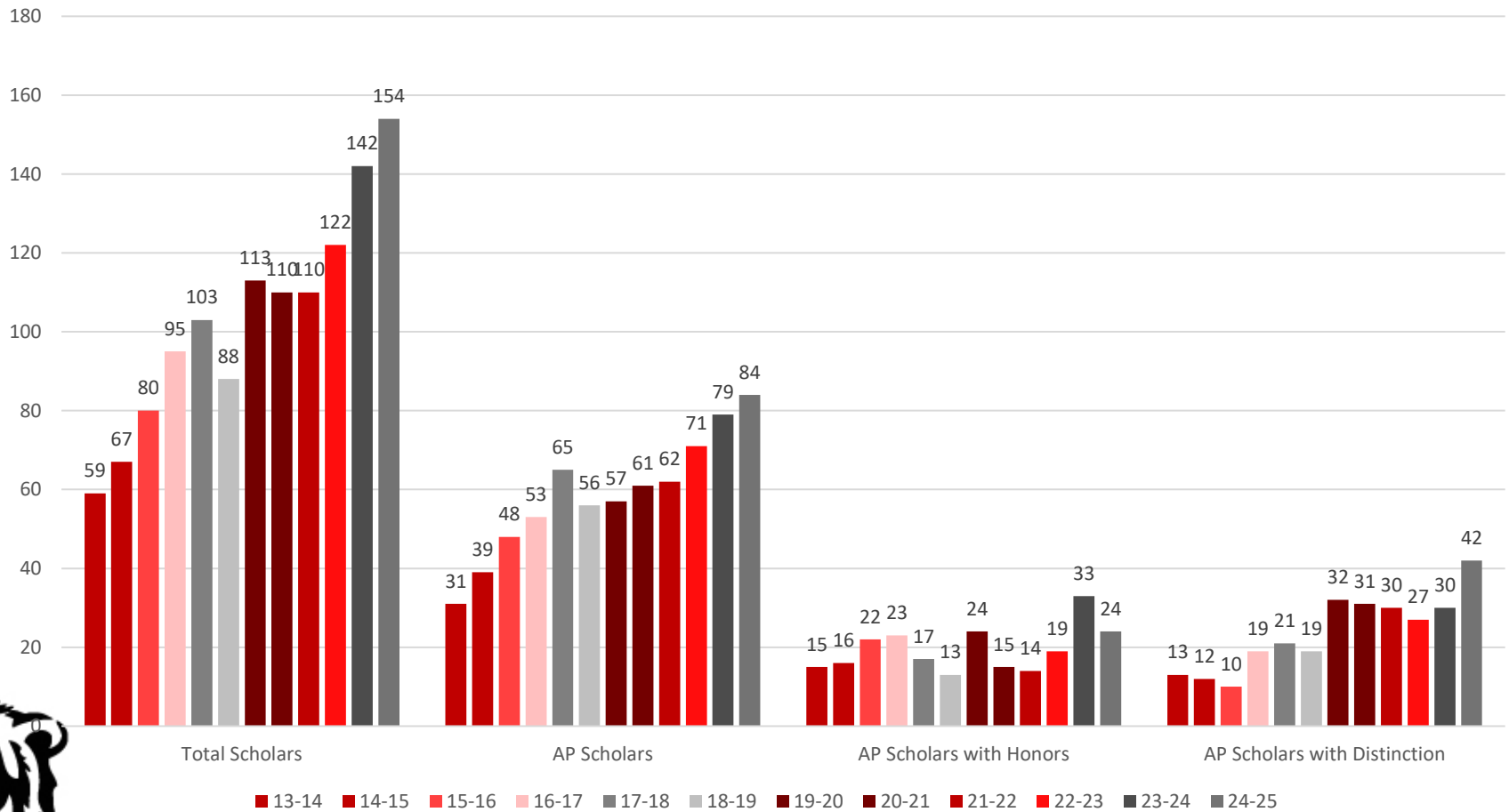
Total # of AP Students with Score 3+



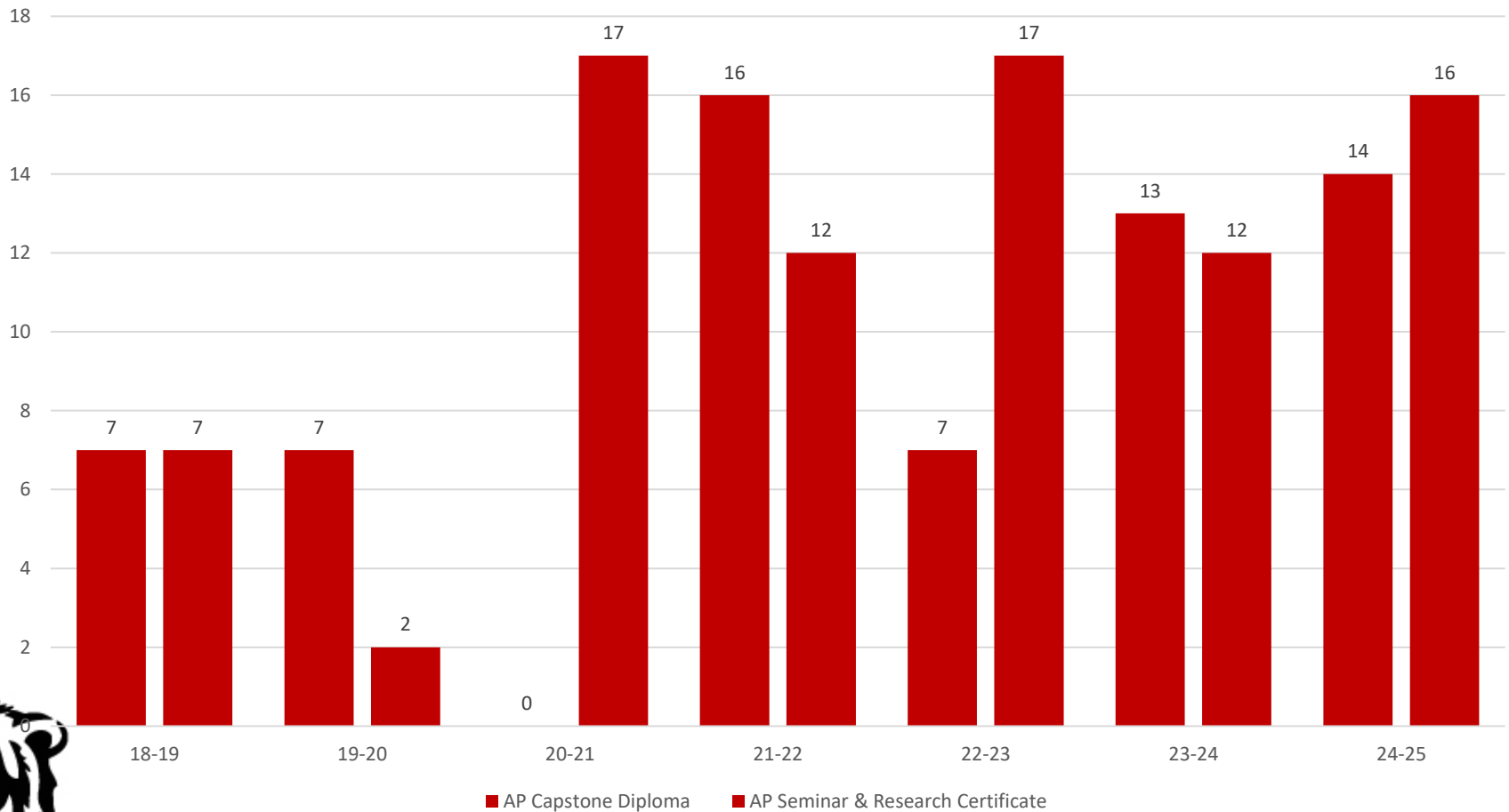
% of AP Students with Score 3+



AP Scholars



AP Capstone Program













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What colleges and universities has the class of 2026 been accepted to?



Most Popular Destinations

(largest number of acceptances)

-  Rutgers University (New Brunswick)
-  Montclair State University
-  Ramapo College of New Jersey
-  Kean University
-  Pace University (NYC)
-  Bergen Community College
-  Seton Hall University
-  Rowan University
-  Temple University
-  St. John's University



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☀ Highly Selective Acceptances

- Ivy League & equivalents:
 - Harvard University
 - Yale University
 - Princeton University
 - Columbia University
 - University of Pennsylvania
- Top-tier universities:
 - Stanford University
 - Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 - Duke University
 - Johns Hopkins University
 - Northwestern University



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Specialized & Creative Schools

- Parsons School of Design
 - Rhode Island School of Design
 - Savannah College of Art and Design
 - School of Visual Arts
 - Culinary Institute of America
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STEM Powerhouses

- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Stevens Institute of Technology
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- University of Michigan







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What is the class of 2026 interested in majoring in?




 **HEALTH & MEDICAL PATHS**






-  Nursing (Registered + Practical + Specializations)
-  Biology / Biomedical Sciences
-  Pharmacy & Pre-Health Programs
-  Neuroscience & Public Health


 **Trend:** Strong interest in healthcare careers



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 **SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMAN SERVICES**





-  Psychology
-  Criminal Justice / Criminology
-  Political Science
-  Education & Special Education
-  Social Work


 **Trend:** Students drawn to helping professions & public service

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BUSINESS & FINANCE




-  Business Administration
-  Finance
-  Accounting
-  Marketing & Management


 **Trend:** Practical, career-focused majors remain popular



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STEM & ENGINEERING





-  Mechanical, Civil, Electrical Engineering
-  Computer Science / IT / Data Science
-  Chemistry & Biochemistry


 **Trend:** Steady interest in high-demand technical fields



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CREATIVE & SPECIALIZED FIELDS













-  Fine Arts / Design / Architecture
-  Music & Performing Arts
-  Culinary Arts
-  Environmental & Earth Sciences

 **Trend:** Smaller but diverse creative pathways



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QUICK SUMMARY

Category	Trend
 Undecided	 Most common
 Health Fields	 Very high
 Business	 High
 Engineering/STEM	 High
 Social Sciences	 Moderate
 Creative Fields	 Smaller niche



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💡 KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A large portion of students are still exploring options
- Healthcare is the **dominant career interest**
- Business and engineering remain **strong, stable choices**
- Wide variety of unique and emerging fields represented



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How do we continue to grow and maintain high levels of academic achievement, improve facilities and keep taxes stable?



Saving Money

- Solar panels - able to sell the unused Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) at a profit
- Energy Efficient Unit-Ventilators and LED Lighting
- Tri Valley Autism and Bear Den Life Skills Programs



Saving Money

- Boiler Replacements at BHS and RWB
- District is receiving 40% of the cost via a ROD Grant from NJDOE.
- Total Savings to the Bergenfield Taxpayers is **\$1,897,841**





What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



What's New? (continued)



2026-2027 Capital Projects

- Bathroom Repairs
- Boiler Project
- Painting
- Asbestos Abatement
- Masonry Repairs
- Paving
- Classroom Doors
- LED Lighting



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2026-2027
Proposed Budget



State Aid Revenues



26-27 Revenues Review

Revenue Source	Increase/Decrease
2% Tax Levy Increase	\$1,117,824
Tuition Revenue	\$767,043
State Aide Loss	-\$645,044
SEMI Reimbursement	<u>\$38,484</u>
Grand Total New Revenue	+\$1,278,307

Last year our total was -\$44,280



26-27 Expenses (Large Increases)

Expense Source	Increase/Decrease
Health Benefits	+\$4,035,015
Tri Valley Program	+\$1,155,168
Salaries	<u>+\$1,300,000</u>
Grand Total Some Large Expenses	+\$6, 490,183

* Approximate round numbers

Last year our total was \$3,430,000



Health Benefit Increases

2025-2026 Budget for HB

\$11,001,488

2026-2027 Budget for HB

\$14,693,723

**Increase of \$3,692,235
or 33.6%**



Required Cuts

Total Operating Budget Cuts

\$5,027,140

Last year we had to cut \$4,069,386



Budget Cut Categories

Cut Main Categories

- Retirements
- RIF's (Mostly Attrition)
- Software Subscriptions
- Supplies
- Insurance
- Building Maintenance
- Technology



The Last 16 Years of Tax Increases

Average % Increase
1.96%

Average \$ Increase
\$1,007,935

Over \$1,800,000 in tax savings over the last 16 years.



Budget Adequacy Status

<u>Name</u>	Amount
Total Budgeted Adq	\$74,187,233
District Adq Budget	<u>\$80,801,891</u>
Total Amount Under NJDOE Recommendation	-\$6,614,658



What it means to be “under adequacy”

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- A district is under adequacy when:
 - It's spending is below its calculated adequacy budget.
 - Simply put, the district is not funded at the level that the NJDOE says is necessary to meet the required educational standards.

-\$6,614,658 under adequacy



Additional Revenue Needed

Revenue Source	Revenue Amount
Maintenance Reserve	\$1,773,312
Surplus	\$1,341,921
Health Benefit Waiver	\$3,289,445
Banked Cap	<u>\$707,819</u>
Total Additional Revenue	\$7,112,497



Enrollment Projections

The New Jersey Department of Education projects that as of October 15, 2026 we will have 3,470 students.

	<u>Actual</u>
October 15, 2025	3,481
October 15, 2024	3,570
October 15, 2023	3,655
October 15, 2022	3,582
October 15, 2021	3,584
October 15, 2020	3,642
October 15, 2019	3,642
October 15, 2018	3,560
October 15, 2017	3,552
October 15, 2016	3,546



Anticipated Funds For 2026-2027 Budget

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Source	Amount
Fund Balance	\$2,352,754
Tuition Reserve	395,000
Tax Levy	61,006,309
Tuition	4,531,923
Miscellaneous Revenue	535,237
Transportation Fees	65,075
Withdrawal From Emergency Reserve	25,000
Withdrawal From Capital Reserve	1,203,470
Withdrawal From Maintenance Reserve	1,773,312



Revenues from State Sources

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	2025-2026	2026-2027
State Aid		
School Choice Aid	\$327,199	\$338,637
Categorical Transportation Aid	939,769	948,718
Categorical Special Education Aid	5,693,193	5,938,368
Equalization Aid	14,039,814	13,180,924
Categorical Security Aid	1,209,981	1,158,265
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>22,209,956</i>	<i>21,564,912</i>
Medicaid Reimbursement	7,620	46,104
PEA Carryover	175,789	308,785
PEA Aid	1,463,374	1,515,754
Total	\$23,856,739	\$23,435,555



Total Revenues

Source	Amount
General Fund	\$93,499,099
State Sources (restricted)	2,135,335
Federal Sources (restricted)	1,672,200
Debt Service	<u>0</u>
Total Revenue All Sources:	\$97,306,634




What is the 2% tax law?

In New Jersey, the “2% tax law” refers to a cap on how much a school district can increase the local property tax levy each year to fund its budget.

What the law is

The rule comes from New Jersey Property Tax Levy Cap Law, enacted in 2010.

 It limits most school districts to raising their property tax levy by no more than 2% annually

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What are the exceptions to the 2% cap?

- Health Benefit Waiver
- Banked Cap Waiver
- Enrollment Adjustment Waiver
- Debt Service (We have zero debt)



What is Banked Cap?

- Banked Cap allows school districts in New Jersey the ability to take the amount of unused tax that was under the 2% tax over the course of three consecutive budget years and use those unused tax monies to exceed the 2% tax increase in a given year.



2026-2027 Tax Increase Breakdown

2% Tax Increase	\$1,117,824
Health Benefit Waiver	\$3,289,445
Banked Cap Waiver	<u>\$707,819</u>
Total Tax Increase Amount	\$5,115,088

Total Tax Increase Percentage = 9.15%



How did we get here?

- The State Health Benefit Plan premium costs are up 37% as of 1/1/2026. We budgeted for a 20% increase. Increases were 17% higher than anticipated.
- Many experts are predicting another large increase for 1/1/2027. We are budgeted for a 25.1% increase. Time will tell the actual increase.
- There has been a 73% increase in premiums over the last five years.



What can we do about large health benefit increases?

- The State of New Jersey controls the cost of the State Educator's Health Benefit Plan (SEHBP) and its annual increases.
- The SEHBP annual premium increases are the greatest impact on real estate taxes in New Jersey.
- School districts and municipalities do not have control or influence over the SEHBP increases.
- Contact your state representatives and ask for SEHBP reform to slow down the increases in your real estate taxes.



Total Tax Increase

2026–2027 Proposed Tax Levy \$61,006,309

2025–2026 Tax Levy \$55,891,221

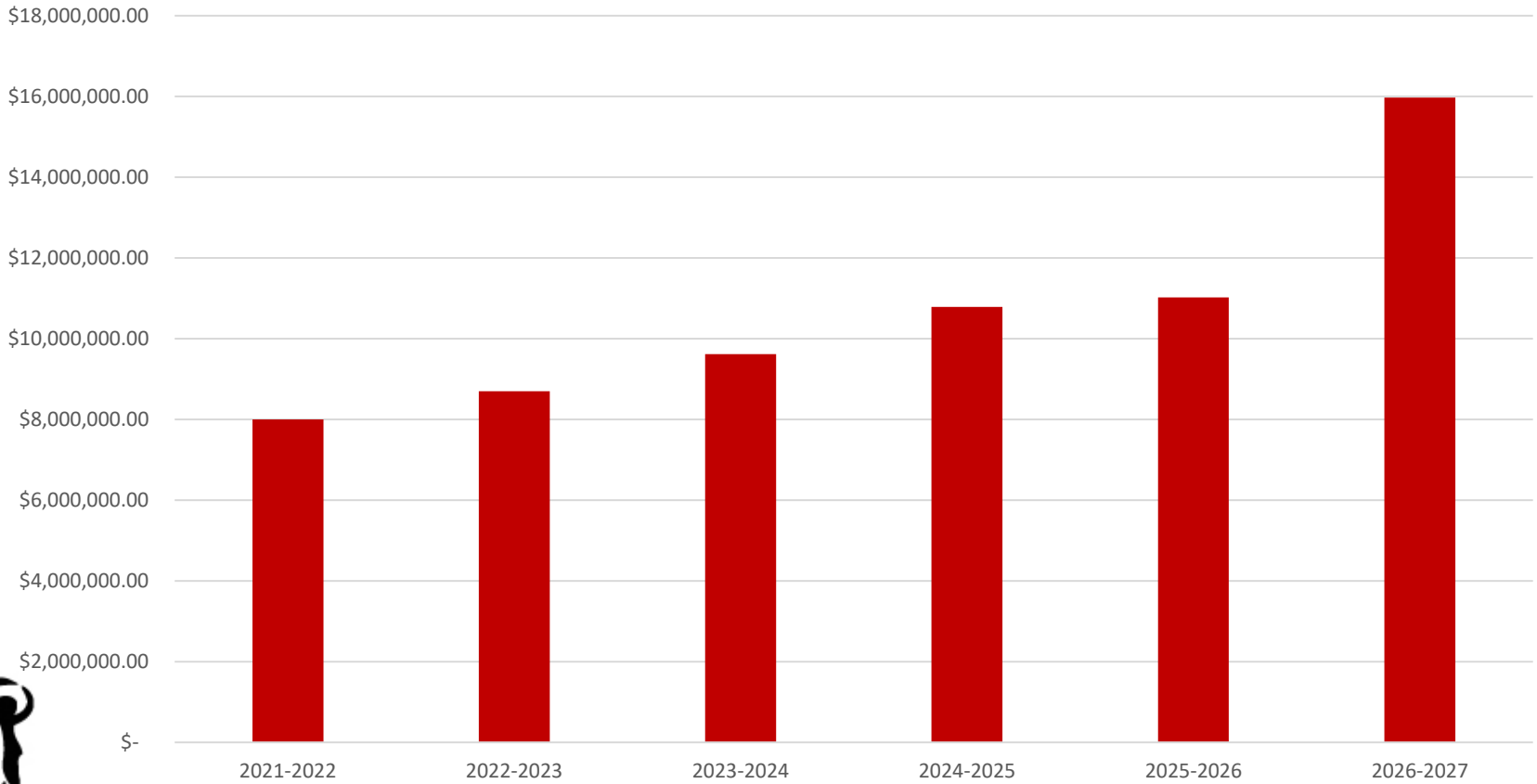
Tax Levy Increase \$5,115,088



Health Benefit Increases

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Health Benefit Cost Increases



Appropriations from General Fund **B**

Total General Current Exp \$91,968,768

Capital Outlay 1,238,957

Special Schools (Summer, Adult) 43,363

Charter School 248,011

General Fund Grand Total: \$93,499,099



Appropriations from Special Revenue Fund

State Projects

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PEA Special Education Contribution	\$310,796
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Preschool Education Aid and Carryover	<u>1,824,539</u>
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Total State Projects:	\$2,135,335
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Appropriations from Special Revenue Fund Federal Projects

Title I	\$593,388
Title II	74,051
Title III	25,795
Title IV	0
IDEA	978,966
Other Special Projects	<u>0</u>
Total Federal Projects:	\$1,672,200



Total Appropriations

General Fund Total \$93,499,099

Special Revenue Fund State Projects 2,135,335

Special Revenue Fund Federal Projects 1,672,200

Debt Service 0

Total Appropriations: \$97,306,634



Tax Levy Resolution

BE IT RESOLVED, that there should be raised for the General Fund, the sum of \$61,006,309 for the 2026–2027 school year.

This represents a 9.15% increase in the local tax levy.



Real Estate Values

2015 Quarter 1

- Homes sold: 41
- Median sale price: \$275,000

2026 Quarter 1

- Homes sold: 27
- Median sale price: \$699,000

This represents a 254% increase in median sale price in Bergenfield in comparative first quarters from 2015 to 2026.



Average Home Assessment

The average home in the Borough of Bergenfield is assessed at \$320,000.



Tax Impact

The tax impact of the 2026-2027 proposed budget on the average home will be:

Annually

\$624.96

Monthly

\$52.08

Weekly

\$12.02

2026-2027 Local Tax Levy

\$61,006,309

2025-2026 Local Tax Levy

\$55,891,221

Tax Levy Increase

\$5,115,088



“We Are Bergenfield”



Questions for the Board of Education?

