Estacada School District Budget FAQ

1. General Budget & Funding

How much revenue does the district receive for the charter school, and how is it used?

The district receives funding for the charter school based on state formulas. When planning for the year ahead, their estimated ADMw and ours are combined as seen on page 8. The state uses this combined number to pay us monthly starting with two payments in July since there is not June payment. We then pay the charter school based on their portion of funds at 80% of the charter school rate listed at the lower part of page 9. As the year progresses, the state will true up these numbers with actual enrollments and rates adjusted by statewide enrollment.

For this budget we are assuming a charter school ADMr of 1440. Multiply that by $11,530 equals ~ $16.6m. We retain 20% of that or ~ $3.3m.

What is a "purchased service," and what does it include?

Purchased services are contracted services provided by outside vendors or organizations. These may include instructional services (such as charter schools), professional services, legal support, and other operational needs.

What are "associated payroll costs"?

Associated payroll costs include employee benefits such as retirement contributions, health insurance, payroll taxes, and other related expenses. These costs are often considered alongside salary to understand the total cost of staffing.

What are "other uses of funds," and why have they increased?

Other uses of funds refer to the movement or reservation of money rather than purchases of goods or services, and includes items like interfund transfers, debt service, and planned reserves/contingencies. The considerable increase in the Special Revenue Fund is primarily attributable to the PERS reserve, which grew from $950K to $2.85M. This growth came from the discovery of a substantial beginning fund balance in the PERS UAL fund (Fund 301) that was transferred to the PERS Reserve (Fund 280) and budgeted as a planned reserve, as this balance had not historically been accounted for in the budget.

2. Transfers, Debt, and Fund Balances

What is the purpose of transfers within the budget (e.g., food services or other funds)?

Transfers move money between funds to support specific programs or obligations. These may include operational support, capital purchases, or legally required fund allocations. In the case of Food services, often times, the meal reimbursements we receive are not enough

to cover the actual costs providing the program, therefore funds must be transferred into it typically from the General Fund

Is there still a plan to transfer funds for a new bus?

A portion of the State School Fund is made of a (partial) reimbursement of transportation expenses (including depreciation). The rate of reimbursement is calculated annually with a majority of the districts (Estacada included) receiving 70%. The requirement that this amount be used to purchase new busses (a capital expense) is not longer in force, however we still must use it on transportation in areas such as salaries, benefits and or purchased services. It is best practice to maintain the bus fleet as depreciation is a large reimbursable expense.

The district will likely replace a bus if it is financially prudent to do so. If that happens it will be funded from fund 252 which essentially serves as our bus savings account.

Why is debt service shown as a revenue source?

Page 20 is a new way of presenting information on the budget as a whole. The top header rows show the fund groups (general fund, special revenue funds, debt service etc) on the left, the revenue sources and expense sources are detailed.

Are beginning balances and transfers referring to the same funds?

In some cases, beginning balances are later transferred to other funds to be better utilized. One example of this is on page 120 our now expired General Obligation Bond fund.

We expect to have about $100k left in that fund at the end of this year, which becomes our beginning fund balance July 1. By law we are allowed to spend those funds on capital projects which are in alignment with the original uses of funds voted on by the taxpayers.

In order to potentially spend these funds, we need to move them to the proper area, in this case the capitol projects fund.

3. PERS, Reserves, and Long-Term Obligations

How funded is the PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) obligation?

PERS funding can be pretty complex, but I will try to present in a way that makes sense and will stay available to answer deeper questions.

As a district we have basically two PERS “bills”. The first is the contribution the district makes to each member’s retirement accounts based on a rate given to use every two years. This year that rate is either 19.1 % or 22.26% of payroll depending on how long the member has been in the system. In addition, the district pays another 10.5% of everyone’s payroll to help the system catch up with members who have already retired. At Estacada, most employees are responsible for their own 6% contributions to retirement (commonly called “the pickup”).

The second "bill" we get is an amount we pay for debt service on a bond the district took out over 20 years ago. This bond saved the district millions over its lifespan and as it wraps up, we are actively looking to replace it but funding conditions must be just right to get it to work. We pay this debt service by charging ourselves 11% of wages into a internal debt service fund.

What are the district's total retirement obligations, and are reserves sufficient?

The rates mentioned above adjust ever two years and are expected to go up starting in 27-28. As a hedge, the district maintains a PERS reserve fund, fund 280 page 106. This fund is not intended to pay our PERS bills each month, rather funds are transferred to the general fund as needed to help offset increases

4. State Funding Formula & Adjustments

How does the teacher experience adjustment affect funding?

The state school fund formula treats this as a cost adjustment rather than a "sanction" – their logic being that a district with an average experience lower than the state average has lower salary costs.

Can higher-than-average experience increase funding?

In theory yes, however higher experienced teachers are more costly, increasing expenses.

Why is transportation funding only partially covered?

Transportation is reimbursed at various rates depending on per student costs. 70% is the rate that most districts are reimbursed.

How do ADMw rates (general, charter, total) differ?

These rates determine how funding is distributed per student and how funds flow between the district and charter schools and vary according to formula, rules and past practice. Page 9 lists the different rates

5. Enrollment & Student Counts

Why do student counts (ADMw/ADMr) change significantly year to year?

At Estacada, they do not vary significantly. The state combines the estimate for both the district and the charter school which makes the report look skewed.

Are enrollment shifts between school levels expected?

Yes the district and the charter school are predicting slight growth, approximately 118 student between the two of them.

6. Staffing, FTE, and Compensation

How are district-wide staff (FTE) assigned across schools?

Some staff serve multiple schools or district-wide functions rather than being assigned to a single building.

Why do staffing costs vary across schools?

Differences may be influenced by staff experience, grade levels served, and program needs.

Why do some positions show mismatches between FTE and salary?

This can occur when staff split roles, are funded through multiple sources, or are accounted for differently across reports.

Can district employees also be contracted as purchased services?

Generally no.

7. Departments & Program Changes

What caused major increases or decreases in department budgets?

Departments such as Teaching & Learning, Human Resources, and Fiscal Services may fluctuate due to staffing, program changes, or strategic priorities. Also, some departments, particularly Teaching and Learning, are funded by multiple sources such as the general fund (100) and SIA grant (230)

Why did Fiscal Services increase significantly with minimal staffing change?

The Fiscal Services department has experienced significant transition over the past several years in both staffing and budgeting. In the 2026–27 proposed budget document, all Fiscal Services staff are fully funded under function code 2520. In prior years, portions of the Senior Accountant and Director of Finance roles were allocated across multiple functions, including Care and Upkeep of Buildings (2542), Business Support Services (2510), and Transportation (2550). (See pages 53–56.)

What is included in Risk Management?

Risk Management is mostly liability and property insurance costs.

Why do some services appear to move or disappear?

Programs may be reclassified under different budget categories over time. We have also changed to a new software to more clearly present the budget.

8. Payroll Ratios & Cost Structure

Why do salary-to-benefit ratios vary by program?

Different roles have different benefit structures, which can affect the ratio of salary to total cost. Also, benefit amounts vary with partial FTEs.

Why are district-wide costs higher than individual school averages?

District-wide costs include centralized services that support all schools. District wide services are where most Director and Assistant Director positions are held both of which have generally higher salaries.

9. Revenue Expense Changes & Financial Trends

What explains large changes in specific budget lines over time?

Fluctuations may result from one-time funding, program changes, or accounting adjustments. Also this budget is reflective of a reduction in the rate of growth and targeted cuts which can slow or reduce some line's allocation while raising another.

Has the district's investment pool changed despite higher interest rates?

The decrease in 1510 is due to two things working against: as our debt gets paid down, there is less money in those accounts earning interest, and interest rates through LGIP have also dropped 0.7% over the past year, from 4.7% to 4.0%. Year to date we have earned just under $24K in interest in the debt service funds, and you will see this same downward trend in the General Fund line 1510 as well.

Why did federal funding decrease while other sources increase?

Federal funds can increase/decrease year over year as a function of Federal Budget priorities, numbers of students served and fluctuations between offerings within programs.

In the general fund there is a big jump from 2324 to 2425 in 1990. What happened? Page 24

The spike in miscellaneous revenue in FY24-25 was due to two one-time corrections: a payroll liability adjustment for errors prior to July 1, 2024 that added approximately $232K, and a year-end accounts receivable reconciliation completed in preparation for the audit where invoices and their corresponding revenue had not been posted to the correct accounts. These were non-recurring corrections, so the FY26-27 budget returns to a more normal estimate.

In the general fund, there is a steady drop over time in line 5440. What's happening? Page 25

The steady decline in beginning fund balance reflects the growing gap between our revenues and expenditures. As state funding has not kept pace with rising costs, the district has had to draw on fund balance each year to cover the difference, which is why that starting balance continues to shrink over time.

Speech Pathology shows no FTE but on page 69 it shows an FTE of 3.875? Page 51

Speech Pathology FTE appears on page 69 rather than page 51 because those positions are funded through IDEA federal grant dollars, which sit in the Special Revenue Fund rather than the General Fund. The expenditures you see on page 51 in the General Fund represent the portion of speech pathology costs that exceed what the IDEA grant can cover, essentially the costs the district absorbs when federal funding runs short.

The federal funding drop seems like a big deal. What happened? The Other Sources line jumped big. What happened? Page 60

The $693K decline in federal funding is primarily the result of a budget cleanup, where funding had been carried in the budget for grants that were no longer active and needed to be removed. As for the jump in Other Sources, that ties back to the PERS UAL fund situation discussed earlier, where a historical beginning fund balance that had not previously been budgeted was identified and is now properly reflected in the budget.

What is going on with the graphs on pages 64-65?

Pages 64 and 65 show two different ways of looking at the same Special Revenue Fund expenditure data. The first graph breaks spending down by what is being purchased, such as salaries, payroll costs, and other uses of funds, with other uses of funds making up 29% of requirements largely due to the planned reserve in the PERS Reserve fund. The second graph breaks that same spending down by purpose or activity, showing that 35% of requirements fall under the Instruction function, meaning that the largest share of special revenue dollars is directed toward students.

Are the 2 FTEs teachers on page 68?

The 2 FTE in Title I are our reading specialists. Rather than teaching a general classroom of students, they work with students who are struggling with reading, providing targeted intervention and support. These positions are funded through Title I dollars because they are specifically serving students in need of additional academic support, which is exactly what Title I is designed for.

High School Extracurricular - how many employees/individuals take advantage of this stipend? I'm sure it's more than 0.50 FTE or is that just a placeholder FTE since many are already counted elsewhere in the budget? The total cost seems high for the FTE. Page 46

The 0.50 FTE shown represents only the Athletic Director's time allocated to high school extracurriculars, with the other half of their FTE sitting in the Middle School extracurricular budget. The remaining salary dollars in that line cover additional pay for coaches and club advisors, who are not counted as FTE because they are already employed elsewhere in the budget and simply receive extra compensation for their coaching or advising duties. In total, 63 employees receive this type of additional pay, some of whom coach or advise multiple sports or activities.

10. Student Programs & Revenue Sources

What is "tuition from individuals"?

This is typically non resident enrollment into specific programs their home district may not provide.

Why did food service sales drop to zero?

All students eat for free currently due to a program called CEP or Community Eligibility Program.

Why have donations and student fees increased?

Increases may reflect fundraising efforts or shifts in funding responsibility.

What is the College Scholarship Fund?

Some scholarships are managed at the district level. There are multiple scholarships reflected in this area which we manage internally by sub area which is not reflected in the budget document.

What is Medicaid Administrative Claiming?

This program allows districts to recover costs associated with eligible student health-related services through a census of services we provide. The program is managed by the Clackamas Education Service district and provides us needed funding for special education services.

11. Special Populations & Outcomes

How does the district serve high-cost special education students?

Some of the district's high cost special education students are served by off site programs which can be very expensive, costing well more than the funding provided by the state and federal governments.

Does funding follow outcomes?

The goal of a good budget is to fund the best outcomes. This year, we have implemented a program based budgeting framework which helped to guide district leaders on specific program allocations. We plan to continue this process and grow it as we look to the future. It should be noted that federal and state laws require us to fund some special education programs regardless of outcomes.

12. Operations & Facilities

Why are utility costs increasing overall but decreasing at some schools?

The proposed budget allocations this year are based on current year utilization with a roll up, typically 5%. Variations may be a function of building efficiency and usage changes.

Why are some charts or graphs difficult to interpret?

We are very open to feedback on the charts, graphs and visualizations presented in this document.

Are certain reimbursements handled like insurance claims?

In terms of grants, many of our grants are, in fact, reimbursing grants were the district is responsible for the service up front and then gets reimbursed at a later date.

Governance & Oversight

Does the Board of Education budget include compensation?

No, Board members at Estacada are not compensated for their service. They may receive reimbursements for travel and other expenses in accordance with school policy.

13. Insurance & External Costs

Has the district explored alternative insurance providers?

Generally, no. Like a large majority of Oregon School Districts, Estacada participates in the PACE program which is a consortium of districts who pool together as a single self-insured risk pool in order to get better pricing on the district's often specific coverage needs.

Since the pool was formed in 2006, it has likely saved Oregon School Districts in general, millions of dollars. The costs have been increasing faster than the rate of inflation, however, due primarily to an increase in claims.

14. Additional Transparency Questions

How are different sections of the budget connected?

The general fund, our largest fund is often referred to as "the budget" but in reality, the entire budget is made up of the general fund, a number of special revenue funds, the debt services fund and capital project funds. Money can be moved between these funds only if it is budgeted and planned for in the budget document. Typically all the expenses budgeted are not spent. Any funds not spent at the end of the year becomes "ending fund balance" on the last day of the year and "beginning fund balance" the next day, the beginning of the year.