



2026-2027

Mansfield Township School District Budget

Public Hearing & Financial Overview

May 6, 2026

Diana Mai, Superintendent
Gail Libby, Acting Business Administrator

Setting the Record Straight

FACTS:

- MTSD had a 3% reduction  in State Aid (this is the maximum cut)
- MTSD already has the lowest costs in the cluster for administrative salaries
- The district has already made cuts to positions, programs, and resources to create a budget that is as lean as possible
- The 2026-2027 MTSD School Budget is student-centered and focuses on student needs as the #1 priority.

What the Data Actually Shows

- **MTSD has made significant, measurable progress**, even while operating below adequacy measures for funding.
- **The needs of our students have become more complex and more intensive**, including increases in students requiring academic intervention, specialized services, and social-emotional support.
- **This budget reflects a deliberate, student-centered response**, making strategic investments to ensure every student is supported, every need is met, and the district continues to move forward despite financial constraints.

Demographic Composition Shifts (2018–2025)

Student Group	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	23-24	24-25	8-Year Trend
Special Education (%)	17.7%	17.7%	17.7%	16.3%	19.3%	18.2%	19.6%	17.4%	
Section 504 Plans (%)	3.0%	3.5%	4.0%	4.5%	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.5%	
ELL / ML (%)	4%	4%	5%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	
Minority (%)	32%	33%	34%	35%	36%	38%	40%	42%	
Economically Disadvantaged (%)	33%	35%	33%	31%	34%	38%	46%	42%	

Student Demographics → Economic Disadvantage → Increased Needs → Higher District Costs



Research consistently shows that demographic and socioeconomic characteristics function as “cost factors” that increase the level of spending required to educate students, placing structural financial burdens on school districts.

American Institutes for Research (2015); Bellwether Education Partners (2020)

The Real Impact of Changing Student Needs

Who We Serve Is Changing



More students requiring:

- Targeted academic intervention
- Specialized instruction and related services
- Multilingual learner supports
- Emotional, behavioral, and family support systems
- Financial assistance

How a Student-Centered Budget Responds



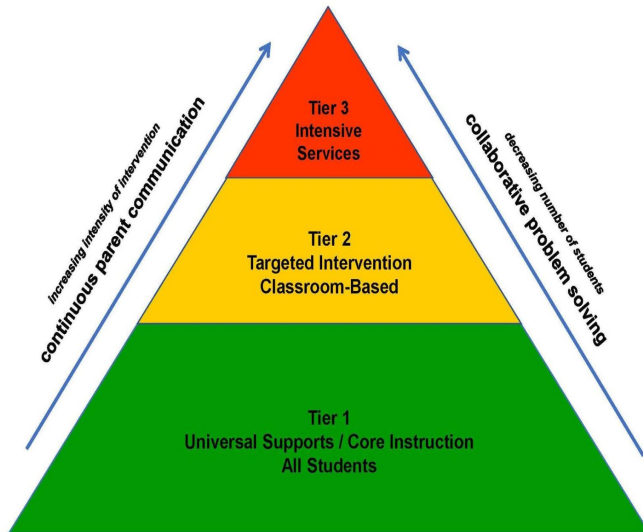
Prioritizing resources **closest to students:**

- Maintaining small class sizes
- Investing in early literacy (K–2)
- Strengthening data-driven instruction through MTSS
- Sustaining professional development for staff

MTSS: The Power of Intervention

Multi-Tiered System of Supports:

a framework to provide targeted academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support to all students.

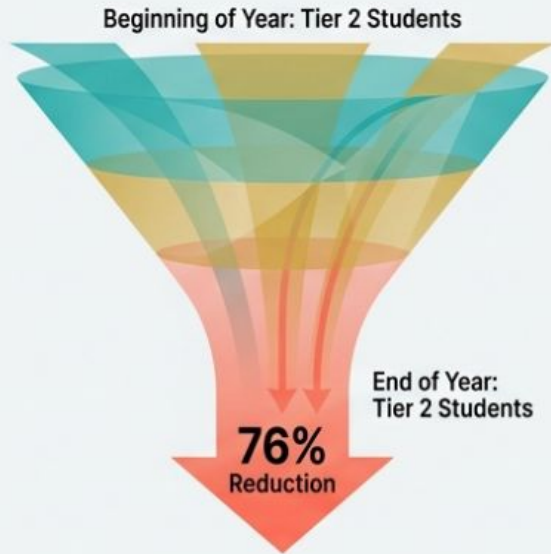


- MTSS emphasizes prevention and early intervention, which research shows can **reduce the number of students requiring intensive, high-cost services** by addressing needs before they escalate.
- MTSS doesn't eliminate cost → it allocates it earlier, where it is more effective and less expensive.

National Center on Response to Intervention (n.d.); What Works Clearinghouse (n.d.), U.S. Department of Education

When We Invest in Support, Students Succeed

Making Academic Gains



Chronic Absenteeism Cut Nearly in Half

21.5% → 11.6%

- ↓ Down 9.9 percentage points
- ↓ 46% reduction in one year

What this means:

- More students are in school consistently
- Increased access to instruction
- Strong impact from targeted interventions



Disciplinary Referrals Decreased

2024–2025 → 2025–2026

- ↓ 20% reduction

What this means:

- Stronger, safer school climate
- Fewer disruptions to learning
- Positive impact of behavior supports

From Investment to Impact

Language Arts: Beating State Averages

Grade 4:



+6.7%

vs. State's +2.8%

Grade 5:



+14.7%

vs. State's +0.5%

Grade 6:



+4.2%

vs. State's +2.9%

Mathematics: District-wide Growth



+7.7%

Increase in passing/meeting scores across all grades.

Grade 3 Passing Rates Surged



Budget Priorities 2026-2027

Prioritizing investments that directly impact student achievement, safety, and long-term sustainability.



Strong Classrooms

- Maintain small class sizes (18–23 students)
- Preserve staffing to support individualized learning



Academic Excellence

- Launch K–2 Science of Reading literacy program
- Pilot math curriculum improvements
- Update classroom materials across all subjects
- Strengthen early literacy foundations



Student Programs That Matter

- Protect Instrumental Music & Band
- Library/Media Arts
- Spanish as World Language for 6th Grade
- Maintain levels of intervention and enrichment



MTSS: A District Priority for Student Success

- Maintain strong MTSS leadership through the Assistant Principal/MTSS Coordinator to ensure consistent, data-driven oversight of all interventions
- Data analysis to identify student needs early and provide support across all tiers



Technology

- Upgrade outdated classroom technology
- Maintain reliable infrastructure (servers, networks)
- Improve efficiency with updated equipment
- Most important goal: safe and secure technology use

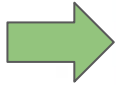


Safe & Well-Maintained Schools

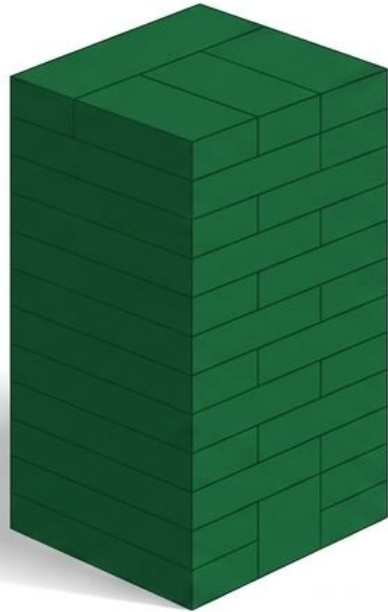
- Invest in proactive facilities maintenance
- Prevent costly repairs through long-term planning
- Ensure safe, clean, functional learning spaces

The Challenge: Operating Below Adequacy

\$12,919,367

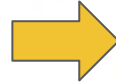


The amount the State says is needed (\$12.92M) for a “thorough and efficient” public education.



State-Calculated Adequacy Budget

\$10,952,851



The district is operating **\$1.96 million below** the State’s calculated adequacy level,



**Actual Funding
(Local Fair Share + State Aid)**

State aid cut by the maximum -3% (-\$158,550 loss).



This gap is made worse by a **\$158,550 reduction in state aid**, limiting the district’s ability to fully support student needs.

Fixed Costs

PREDICTABLE

- Negotiated Salaries (3.5%*)
- Curriculum
- Supplies
- Facilities (planned initiatives)
- Existing state mandates

*below state average of 3.72%

UNPREDICTABLE

- **Health Benefits (23.4% increase)**
- **Utilities (8-15%)**
- Transportation
- Facilities (emergencies)
- Special Education costs
- New state mandates

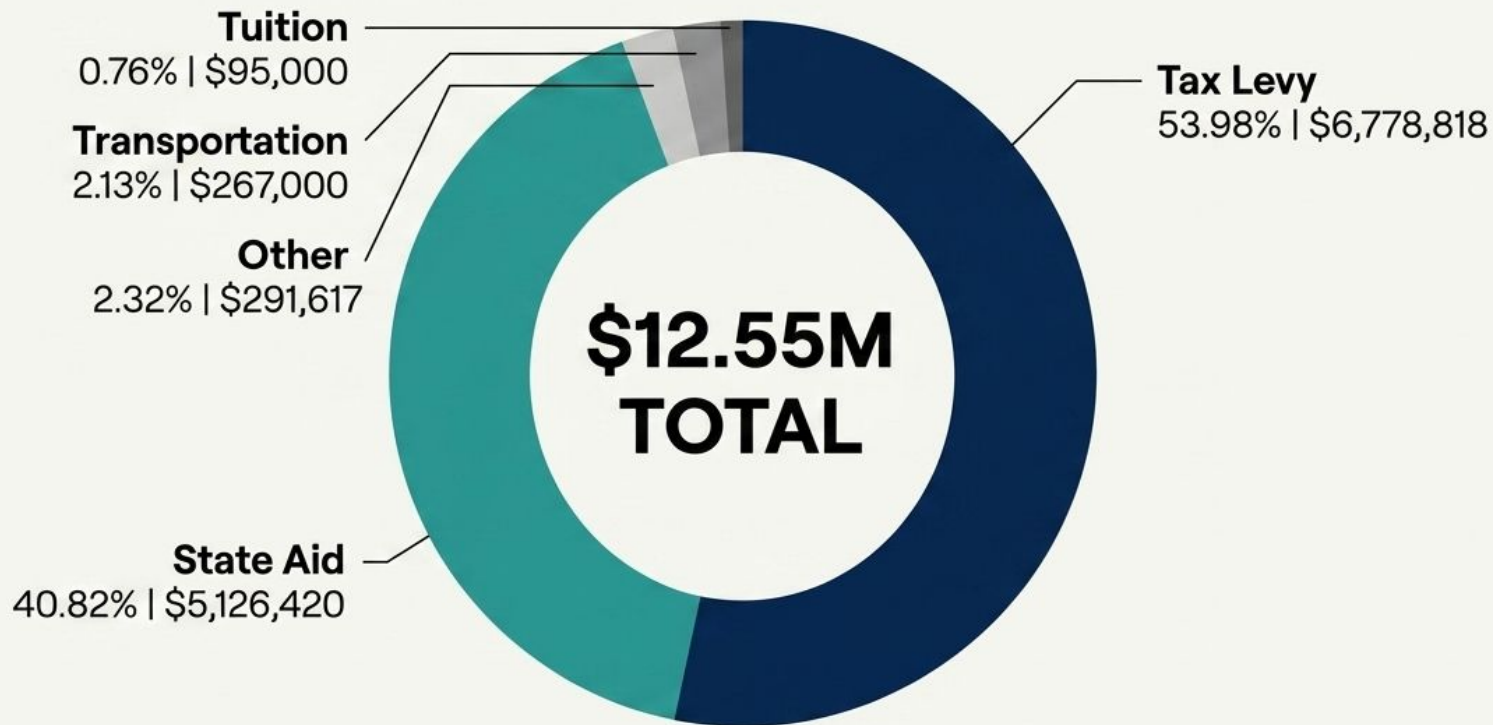


These costs are inflationary and legal realities that impact our budget.

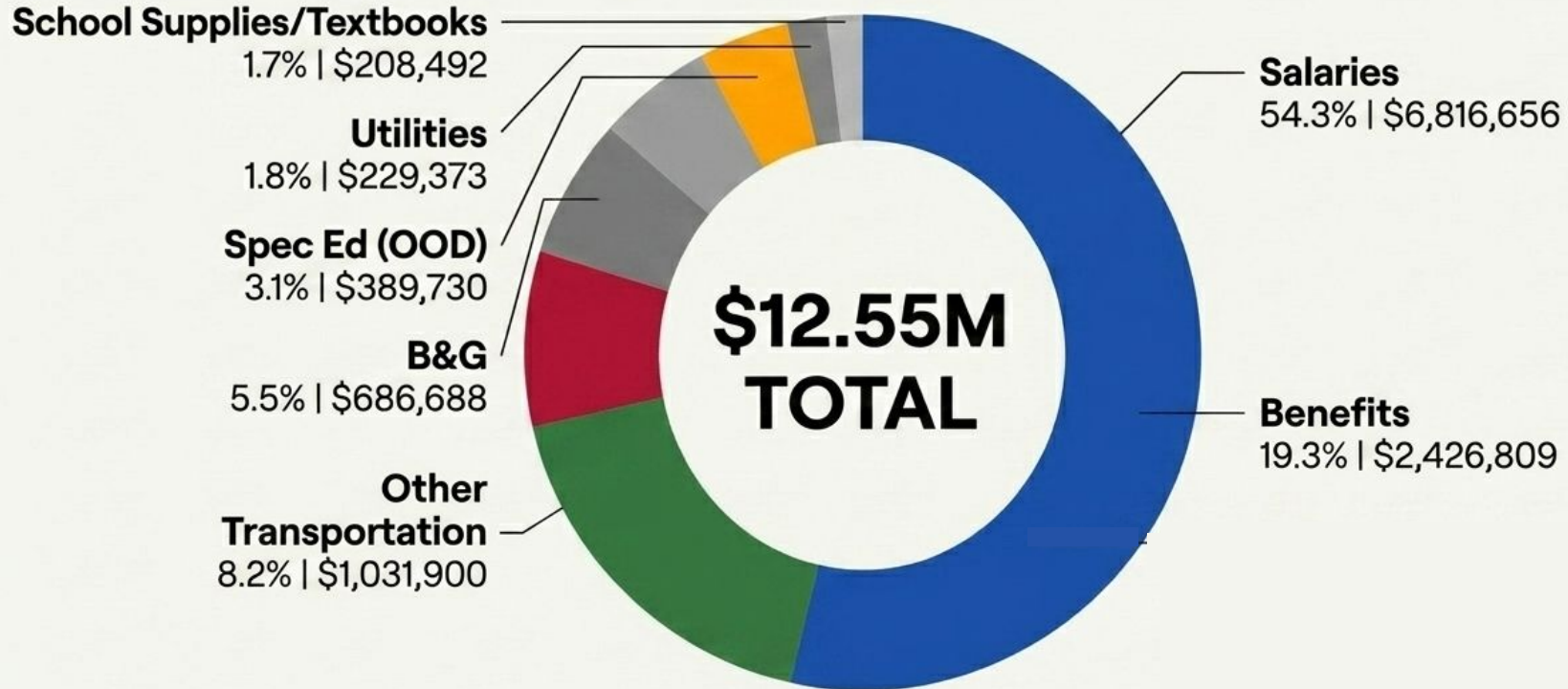
Operating Budget 2026-2027

OPERATING BUDGET 2026-2027				
Revenues			Expenses	
Tax Levy	6,778,818	53.98%	Salaries	6,816,656
State Aid	5,126,420	40.82%	Benefits	2,426,809
Tuition	95,000	0.76%	Spec Ed (OOD)	389,730
Transportation	267,000	2.13%	Utilities	229,373
Other	291,617	2.32%	School Supplies/Textbooks	208,492
TOTAL	12,558,855	100.00%	B&G	686,688
			Transportation	1,031,900
			Other	769,207
			TOTAL	12,558,855

Revenues

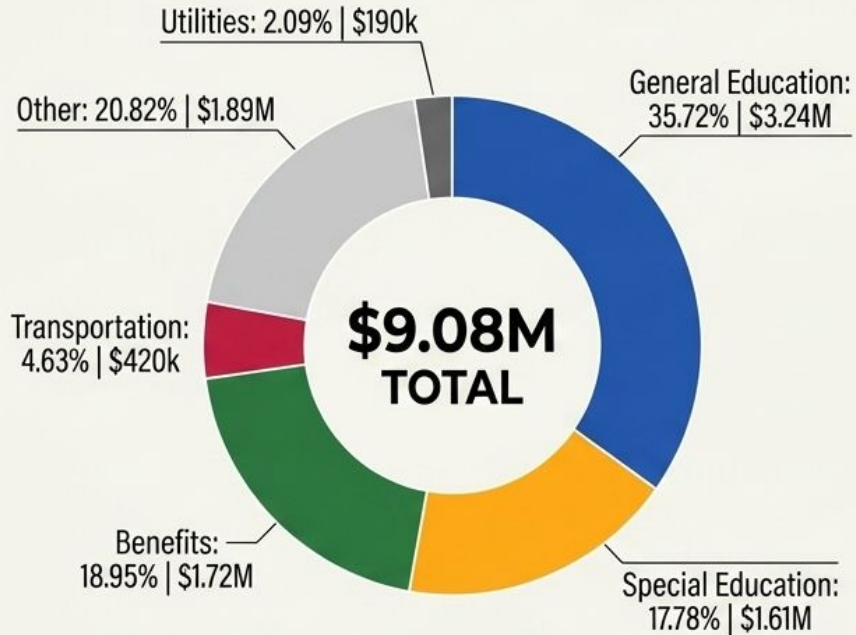


Expenses

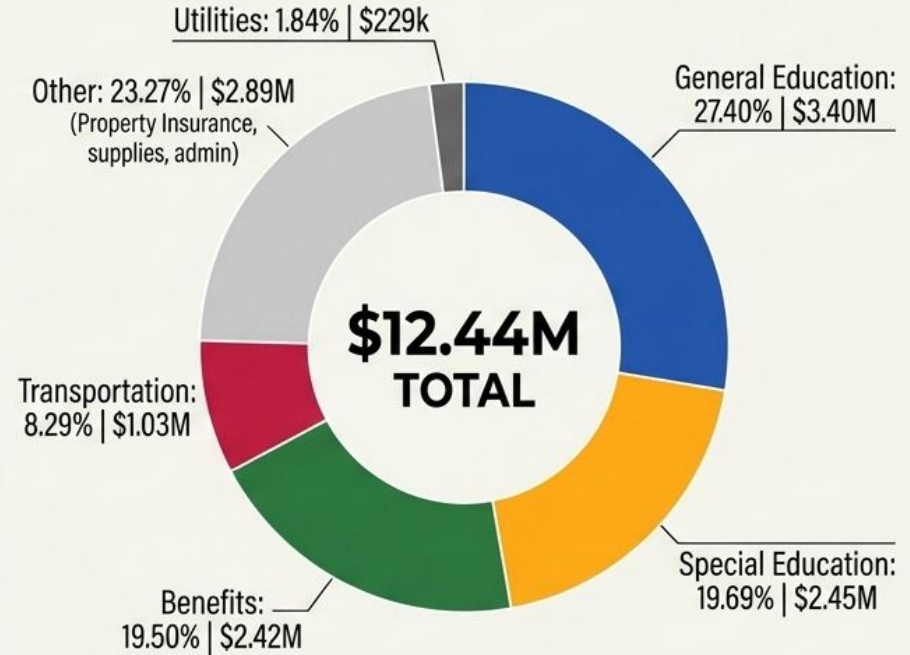


A 10-Year Comparison

2016-17



2026-27



Maximizing Grant Funding

Mansfield Township actively pursues and utilizes grant funding each year to support instructional programs, facilities improvements, and student opportunities while reducing reliance on local tax dollars.

Federal & Ongoing Funding Sources

- **IDEA and IDEA Preschool Grants** – Support special education services and early intervention programs
- **ESEA Funding** – Enhances academic support, intervention, and instructional programming
- **REAP Funding** – Provides supplemental technology resources for rural school districts

State & Competitive Grants

- **LIFT Grant (Awarded)** – Supports early literacy initiatives and K-2 reading development
- **5 State Grant Applications Submitted (2025–26)**
 - Awarded: LIFT Grant
 - Remaining applications pending or not awarded to date (COACH, IMPACT, HIIT, BRIDGE)
 - Reflects active and ongoing pursuit of external funding opportunities

Historical Tax Increases

Fiscal Year	% State Average Increase	% MTSD Increase
FY 2018	2.3	2
FY 2019	2.38	2
FY 2020	2.38	2
FY 2021	2.32	3.56
FY 2022	2.34	1.94
FY 2023	2.81	2
FY 2024	3.22	2
FY 2025	4.56%	2

The Mathematical Reality Without Compromise

10.8%

The tax levy increase required to meet next year's budget drivers with zero cuts to staff or programs.

Gap representing
\$569,423 in
necessary reductions

Staffing Cuts

- Teacher
- LDTC
- Paraprofessionals
- Consolidated classes in 3rd grade and 6th grade
- Lunch aides (less for FY27)

Budget Cuts

- Instructional Technology Programs
- Lease v. Purchase
- Technology Services
- Supplies
- Consumables (buying piece by piece vs. class sets)

4.8%

The Proposed Compromise Levy.

Taxpayer Impact

Average Mansfield Home



\$9.83 / month
(\$117.98 / year)

Valuation: \$245,800
(Market Value ~\$414,000)

2%

3%

4%

4.8%

5%

6%

8%

Higher-Value Home



\$13.99 / month
(\$167.88 / year)

Valuation: \$350,000
(Market Value ~\$590,000)

MTSD's Student-Centered Budget



**Strong Classrooms, Targeted Supports, and
Smart Financial Management in Challenging Times**