



WESTSIDE
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY REPORT 2026

MISSION

The mission of the Westside Community School District, as an innovative educational system, is to ensure academic excellence and to serve the unique needs of all learners.



VISION

Westside Community Schools will relentlessly pursue innovative educational ideals and promise to personalize learning for every student.

We invite the challenge of developing a community of learners who embrace a broader, richer definition of success.

Our school district theme this year is "Win the Day." Guided by our mission to serve the unique needs of all learners, our dedicated staff shows up each and every day ready to meet our students where they are and help them grow and prepare for the future.

As you look through this Annual Report, we hope you take great pride in what you see. We hope you feel a sense of connection to YOUR school district. We hope you see talented students, hard working staff, and an organization that is proud of its past and working hard to get even better for the future.

Westside is a special place. The community partnerships we enjoy, along with our unmatched level of support from alumni and supporters, allow us to provide tremendous opportunities for our young people. Together, we are working to win today, win tomorrow, and win into the future.

There's no better place to be than Westside.

DR. MIKE LUCAS
SUPERINTENDENT





2026 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

APR 13	APR 27	MAY 11	JUN 15	JULY 13	AUG 03	AUG 24
SEPT 08	SEPT 21	OCT 05	OCT 19	NOV 02	NOV 16	DEC 07

Meetings are held at the ABC Building, 909 S 76th Street, at 6:00 PM unless otherwise indicated.



ADAM YALE
PRESIDENT



KRIS KARNES
VICE PRESIDENT



SARAH RIDER
SECRETARY



MEAGAN VAN GELDER
TREASURER



BETH MORRISSETTE
TREASURER-ELECT



DANA BLAKELY
DIRECTOR

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

AVERAGE
NUMBER OF
STUDENTS IN
EACH K-6
CLASSROOM

20

LANGUAGES
SPOKEN
WITHIN THE
DISTRICT

32

33

PERCENTAGE
OF STUDENTS
RECEIVING
FREE AND
REDUCED
LUNCH

6132

S T U D E N T S E N R O L L E D

38

PERCENTAGE OF
OUR TOTAL
STUDENT
POPULATION
OPTS INTO THE
DISTRICT

PERCENTAGE
OF STUDENTS
RECEIVING
SPECIAL
EDUCATION
SERVICES

16

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

At Westside Community Schools, recruiting great educators is a year-round effort, and one we take seriously (with just the right amount of fun). Our team is always on the lookout for well-rounded, passionate educators eager to make a difference in students' lives. We value individuals who bring strong content knowledge, a collaborative spirit, and a genuine commitment to helping every learner succeed.

To connect with future educators, we partner with local and regional colleges and universities, building relationships with students early in their careers. You'll also find our team at hiring events and career fairs, where we enjoy meeting talented candidates and sharing what makes our district such a special place to work.

Our recruiting team is a familiar and popular presence at these events—known for being approachable, enthusiastic, and ready to talk about all things Westside. And while we focus on educators, we're always recruiting for year-round staff, too, because great schools are built by great teams.

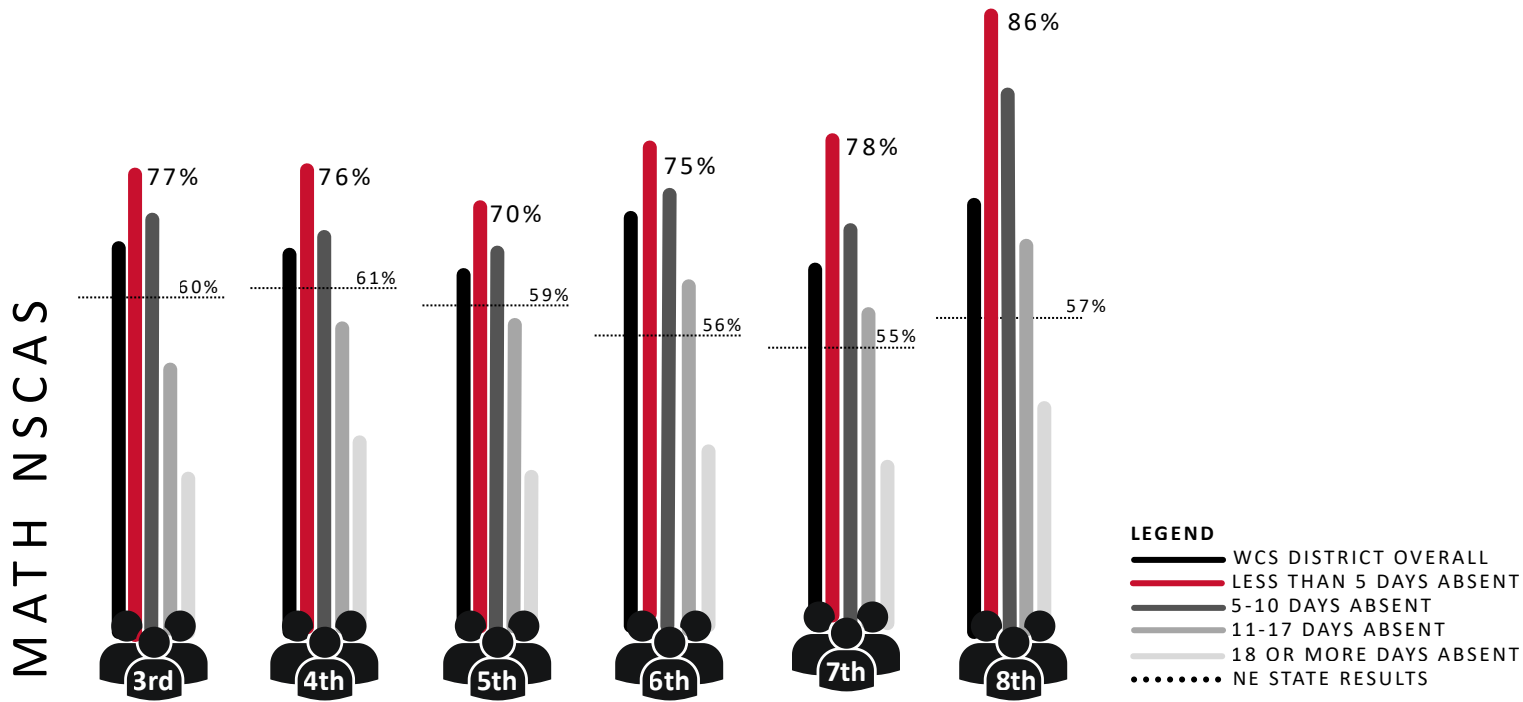


LEARNING

IMPACT OF ATTENDANCE ON NSCAS SCORES

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Here's a look at how our students performed on the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) tests last spring. You will see the percentage of our students who met or exceeded proficiency declines as absences increase. We want to continue to stress the importance of regular and consistent school attendance when our students are not sick.



SAFETY THAT SUPPORTS STUDENT SUCCESS

Westside Community Schools is committed to maintaining safe, welcoming environments where students and staff can thrive. In Spring 2025, we added a Director of School Safety and Security to strengthen coordination and ensure consistent practices across all campuses. This role supports thoughtful planning and strong partnerships with local agencies, helping us continue to build on a proactive approach to safety.

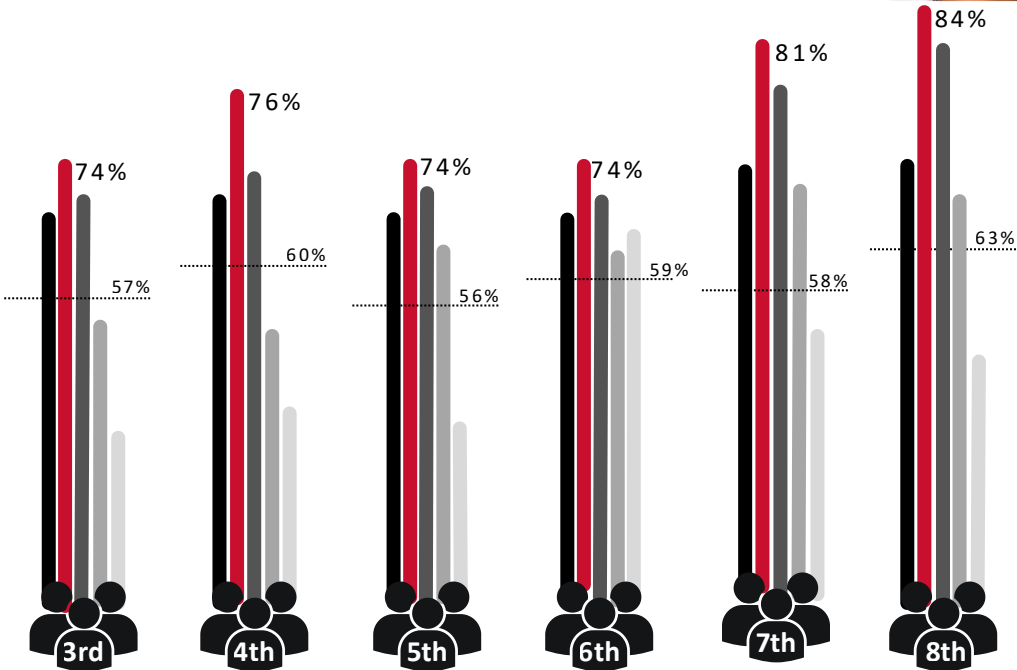
We are also enhancing safety through the use of AI-supported weapon detection systems across all campuses. These tools operate quietly in the background, adding an additional layer of awareness while allowing students and staff to focus on learning and connection.

Across all buildings, we maintain consistent visitor check-in procedures and provide ongoing, uniform safety training for staff. These shared practices ensure a coordinated, calm response and a consistent experience in every school.

At WCS, safety supports learning. When students feel secure, they are better able to grow, engage, and succeed.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS NSCAS



ACHIEVEMENT

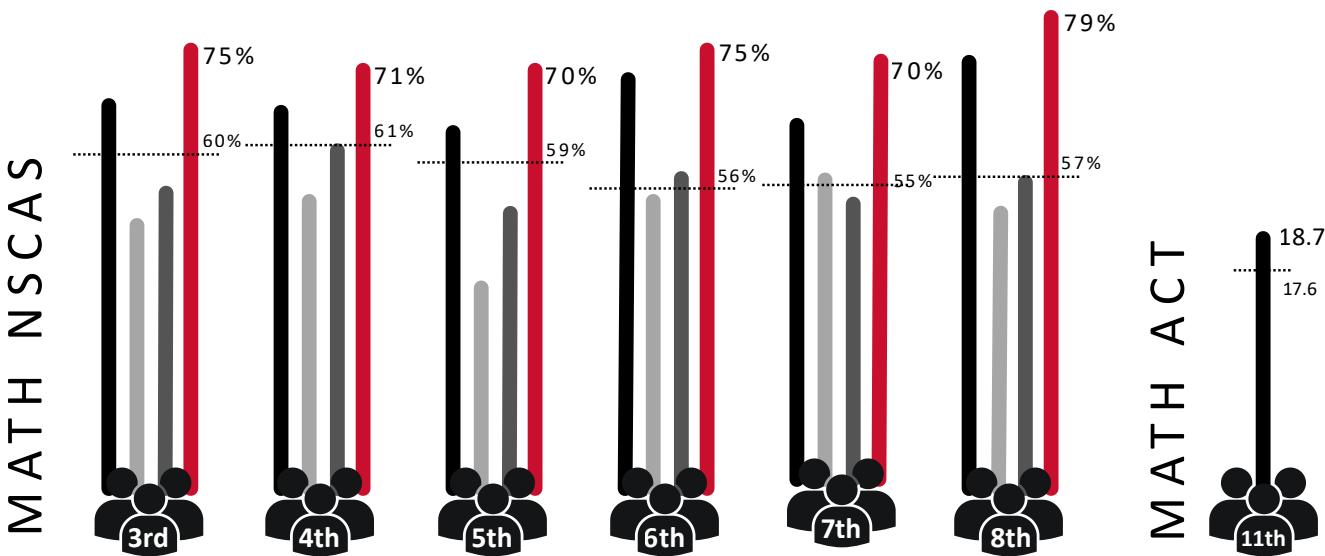
IMPACT OF LONGEVITY IN DISTRICT ON NSCAS SCORES

LONGEVITY MATTERS

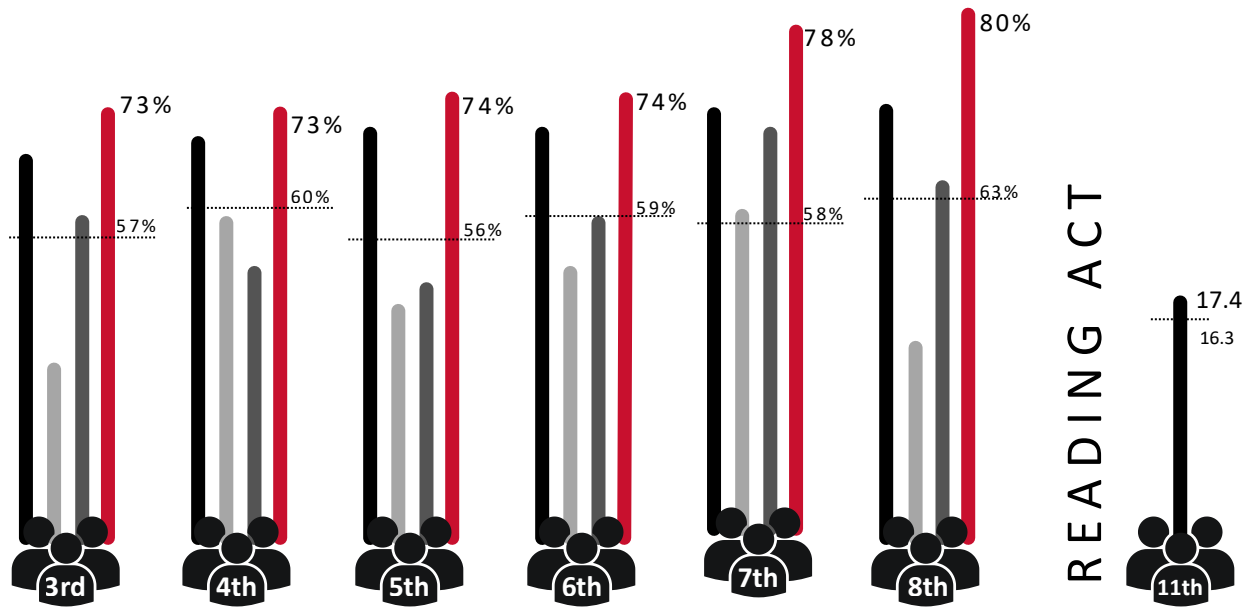
This is a breakdown of how our students performed on the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessments System (NSCAS) tests last spring. You will see that the percentage of our students who met or exceeded proficiency increases the longer they remain in our school district. This shows that our talented teachers and the viable curriculum they teach is working at a high level.



- LEGEND**
- WCS DISTRICT OVERALL
 - STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WCS FOR 1 YEAR OR LESS
 - STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WCS FOR 1-3 YEARS
 - STUDENTS ENROLLED AT WCS FOR 3 OR MORE YEARS
 - NE STATE RESULTS



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS NSCAS



READING ACT



FINANCES

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Westside Community Schools' FY26 budget reflects a strong commitment to fiscal responsibility while continuing to invest in students, staff, and facilities. The budget is thoughtfully structured, with a stable General Fund supporting day-to-day operations and strategic investments in salaries, programming, and services. The district maintains healthy reserves and stays within budget authority, demonstrating careful planning and sustainability. Capital and bond funds support long-term facility improvements without increasing tax rates, honoring commitments to the community. Overall, the budget balances growth with stewardship, ensuring resources are aligned to support high-quality educational experiences now and into the future.

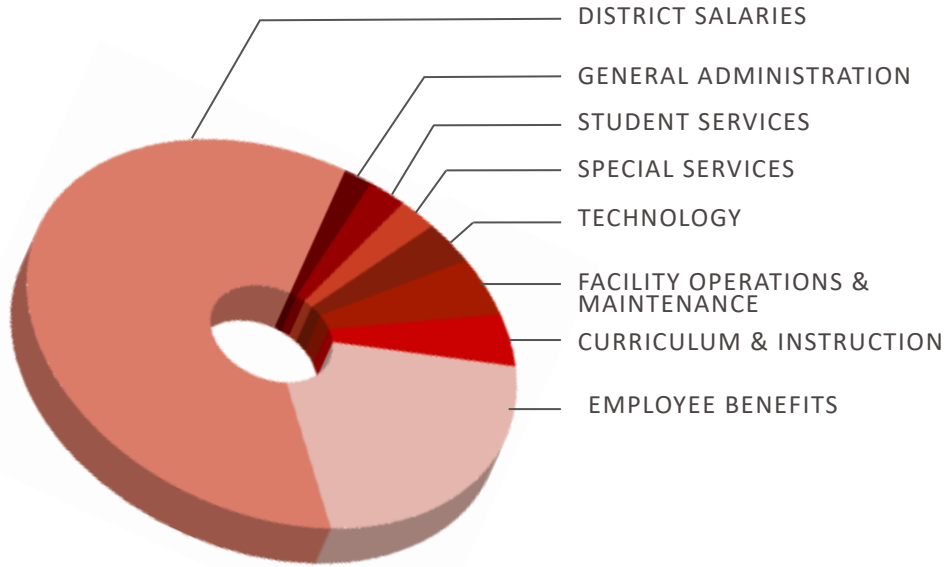
The total levy for 2025-26 is \$1.0743 compared to \$1.3824 in 2021-20. This is the 7th year in a row the Board of Education of Westside Community Schools has lowered the total tax levy from the prior year.

Westside Community Schools lost \$1.1 million in state aid from last year, which had an impact on the 2025-26 tax request.

Our 2025-26 property tax levy asks for fewer property tax dollars than in 2022-23.



FUND YEAR 2026 BUDGET EXPENDITURES



FY26 BUDGET | \$99,723,955



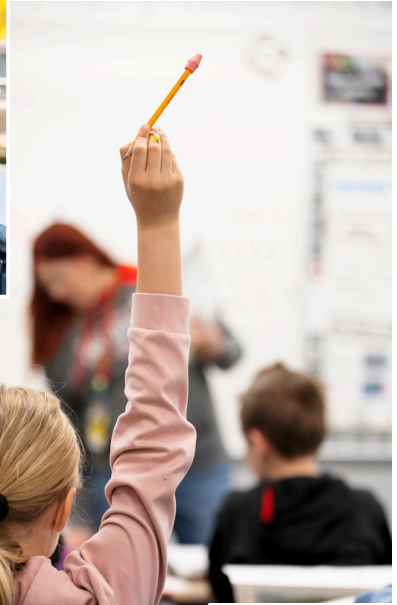
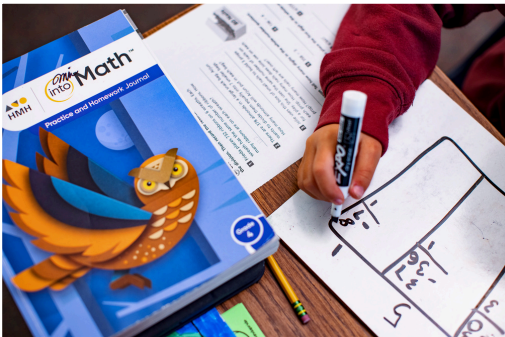
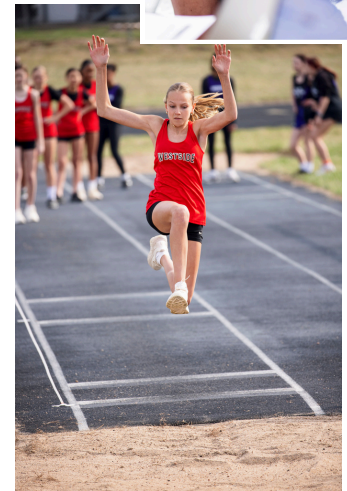
BOND PHASE II

Bond Phase II remains on time and on budget. We celebrate the completion of the new Hillside Elementary and Westgate Elementary, as well as the new cafeteria at Westside Middle School.



Construction is underway at Paddock Road Elementary and Rockbrook Elementary on new gyms, designed to double as storm shelters, and additional preschool classrooms.

Underwood Hills and Westbrook Elementary have completed key structural improvements. At Westside High School, restroom renovations are complete, and work on the cafeteria renovation has begun.



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