

Annual Financial Accountability Management Report

For the Year Ending June 30, 2025



Dr. Kevin Bott - Superintendent of Schools
Alejandro Sanchez - Chief Financial Officer

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Santa Fe Independent School District Annual Financial Accountability Management Report

Introduction

This is the 22nd year of School FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas), a financial accountability system for Texas school districts developed by the Texas Education Agency in response to Senate Bill 875 of the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999 and amendments under House Bill 5, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2013. The primary goal of School FIRST is to achieve quality performance in the management of school districts' financial resources, a goal made more significant due to the complexity of accounting associated with Texas' school finance system. As part of School FIRST, each school district must prepare an annual financial accountability report after receiving their School FIRST rating.

The School FIRST accountability rating ensures that Texas school districts are accountable not only for student learning, but also for achieving these results cost effectively and efficiently. The information provided by the School FIRST system will guide us in our continued efforts to maximize each taxpayer's dollar.

The Texas Education Agency assigns one of four financial accountability ratings to Texas school districts, with the highest being "A" for Superior Achievement, followed by "B" for Above-Standard Achievement, "C" for Standard Achievement and "F" for Substandard Achievement. For 2024-2025 Santa Fe ISD received a rating of "A - Superior Achievement".

Overview of the Worksheet

The reporting tool for School FIRST is the Financial Accountability Ratings Worksheet. This worksheet was developed by representatives of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Business & Education Council (TBEC) and the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO). It is administered by the TEA and calculated on information submitted to the Agency via our PEIMS submission in January each year upon completion and approval of the annual external audit. The tool evaluates district data from the previous year to score the indicators.

This worksheet consists of 21 indicators broken into three categories: Critical, Solvency and Financial Competence.

Critical Indicators

Indicators #1 through #5 are the critical indicators. Any “No” response in this category is considered an indicator of fiscal distress and automatically results in failure of FIRST. Accordingly, these indicators are of utmost importance. These five indicators revolve around:

- # 1 - Timely filing of the Annual Financial Report (AFR)
- # 2 - Auditor opinion with no unmodified opinion
- # 3 - Compliance with the payment terms of all debt agreements
- # 4 - Timely payment of all payroll taxes
- # 5 - Total net assets greater than zero

- Santa Fe ISD easily passed all the critical indicators.

Solvency Indicators

Indicators #6 through #14 concern the solvency of Santa Fe ISD, and some rely on technical accounting practices. These nine indicators focus on:

- # 6 - Fund balance
- # 7 - Cash and investments on hand
- # 8 - Current asset to current liability ration
- # 9 - Revenue compared to expenditures
- #10 - Budgeted to actual revenue variance (not evaluated in 2024-2025)
- #11 - Long-term liability to total asset ratio
- #12 - Debt service coverage ratio
- #13 - Administrative cost ratio
- #14 - Student to staff ratio

Santa Fe ISD scored the maximum points on Indicator #9, #10, #12, #13, #14 and #15.

On Indicator #6, which measures the change in fund balance over 3 years, this indicator is a ceiling that limits the number of points that the District may obtain. This ceiling was passed as the changes in fund balance did not exceed the percentage change set forth by the State of Texas.

On Indicator #7, which measures cash and investments on hand in the general fund enough to cover operating expenditures, we scored 8 out of 10 points. This is an increase from the previous year of 0 of 10. The school district was able to increase the amount of cash available during this time which allowed the district to increase its score.

On Indicator #8, which measures current assets to current liabilities to determine if a school district has enough short-term assets at the end of the fiscal year to pay off short-term liabilities, we scored 8 out of 10 points. The district has been responsible with the debt and leverage used and this has allowed the district to maintain a short current ratio. This ratio stands at 2.8, where anything above a 3.0 is considered a perfect score.

On Indicator #9, which looks at district revenues against expenditures, we scored 10 out 10

points. This was a significant improvement from the previous year score of 0 of 10. The district has reduced costs substantially by monitoring expenses and restructuring efforts. This has been done through reductions in force, increase in class sizes, and reduction in staff through attrition.

On Indicator #11, which looks at long-term liabilities and compares them to total assets, we scored 6 out of 10 points. This indicator saw a decrease from the previous year. This is due to a decrease in students from the benchmark year of 2020. In comparison to that year, the district saw a decrease of ~125 students, if this trend was to continue the district would need to continue to make additional adjustments in staff to reduce costs to maintain an effective district.

On Indicator #12, which looks at debt ratio to support future debt repayments, we scored 10 out of 10 points, this was equal to the previous year.

Financial Competence Indicators

Indicators #15 through #21 identify if there are any serious deficiencies in the financial management of the District. These six indicators focus on:

- #15 - Submission of accurate ADA pupil projections to TEA
- #16 - Quality of Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) financial data compared to the Annual Financial Report (AFR) result in less than a 3% variance.
- #17 - Instances of material weakness in internal controls noted by the external independent auditor.
- #18 - Instance(s) of material noncompliance noted by the external independent auditor.
- #19 - Required financial information posting.
- #20 - Meeting requirement of public board meeting to discuss property values.
- #21 – Adjusted repayment schedule for over-allocation of Foundation School Program (FSP) because of financial hardship.

Santa Fe ISD met all seven of these indicators. The district submitted accurate pupil projections to TEA, PEIMS data submitted as compared to the AFR and the AFR noted no instance of material noncompliance or weakness in internal controls. All required financial information is posted on the website in accordance with guidelines, and the school board members held a required public meeting to discuss the district's property value.

2024-2025 RATINGS BASED ON SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024 DATA - DISTRICT STATUS DETAIL

Name: SANTA FE ISD(084909)		Publication Level 1: 8/8/2025 12:54:09 PM	
Status: Passed		Publication Level 2: 8/8/2025 4:49:42 PM	
Rating: A = Superior Achievement		Last Updated: 8/8/2025 4:49:42 PM	
District Score: 92		Passing Score: 70	
#	Indicator Description	Updated	Score
1	<u>Was the complete annual financial report (AFR) and data submitted to the TEA within 30 days of the November 27 or January 28 deadline depending on the school district's fiscal year end date of June 30 or August 31, respectively?</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Yes
2	<u>Was there an unmodified opinion in the AFR on the financial statements as a whole? (The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) defines unmodified opinion. The external independent auditor determines if there was an unmodified opinion.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Yes
3	<u>Was the school district in compliance with the payment terms of all debt agreements at fiscal year end? (If the school district was in default in a prior fiscal year, an exemption applies in following years if the school district is current on its forbearance or payment plan with the lender and the payments are made on schedule for the fiscal year being rated. Also exempted are technical defaults that are not related to monetary defaults. A technical default is a failure to uphold the terms of a debt covenant, contract, or master promissory note even though payments to the lender, trust, or sinking fund are current. A debt agreement is a legal agreement between a debtor (= person, company, etc. that owes money) and their creditors, which includes a plan for paying back the debt.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Yes
4	<u>Did the school district make timely payments to the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and other government agencies? (If the school district received a warrant hold and the warrant hold was not cleared within 30 days from the date the warrant hold was issued, the school district is considered to not have made timely payments and will fail critical indicator 4. If the school district was issued a warrant hold, the maximum points and highest rating that the school district may receive is 95 points, A = Superior Achievement, even if the issue surrounding the initial warrant hold was resolved and cleared within 30 days.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Yes Ceiling Passed

			1 Multiplier Sum
5	<u>Was the total net position in the governmental activities column in the Statement of Net Position (net of accretion of interest for capital appreciation bonds, net pension liability, and other post-employment benefits) greater than zero? (If it is not, the maximum points and highest rating that the school district may receive is 79 points, C = Meets Standard Achievement, unless the school district has an increase of students in membership over 5 years of 7 percent or more or 1,000 or more students in membership. If the school district has an increase of students in membership over 5 years of 7 percent or more or 1,000 or more students in membership, the maximum points and highest rating that the school district may receive is 89 points, B = Above Standard Achievement.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Ceiling Passed
6	<u>Was the average change in (assigned and unassigned) fund balances over 3 years less than a 25 percent decrease or did the current year's assigned and unassigned fund balances exceed 75 days of operational expenditures? (If the school district fails indicator 6, the maximum points and highest rating that the school district may receive is 89 points, B = Above Standard Achievement.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Ceiling Passed
7	<u>Was the number of days of cash on hand and current investments in the general fund for the school district sufficient to cover operating expenditures (excluding facilities acquisition and construction)? See ranges below in the Determination of Points section.</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	8
8	<u>Was the measure of current assets to current liabilities ratio for the school district sufficient to cover short-term debt? See ranges below in the Determination of Points section.</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	8
9	<u>Did the school district's general fund revenues equal or exceed expenditures (excluding facilities acquisition and construction)? If not, was the school district's number of days of cash on hand greater than or equal to 60 days? See ranges below in the Determination of Points section.</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	10
10	This indicator is not being evaluated.		10
11	<u>Was the ratio of long-term liabilities to total assets for the school district sufficient to support long-term solvency? (If the school district's increase of students in membership over 5 years was 7 percent or more or 1,000 or more students in membership, then the school district passes this indicator.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	6

12	<u>What is the correlation between future debt requirements and the district's assessed property value?</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	10
13	<u>Was the school district's administrative cost ratio equal to or less than the threshold ratio? See ranges below in the Determination of Points section.</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	10
14	<u>Did the school district not have a 15 percent decline in the students to staff ratio over 3 years (total enrollment to total staff)? If the student enrollment did not decrease, the school district will automatically pass this indicator.</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	10
15	<u>Was the school district's ADA within the allotted range of the district's biennial pupil projection(s) submitted to TEA? If the district did not submit pupil projections to TEA, did it certify TEA's projections? See ranges below in the Determination of Points section.</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	5
16	<u>Did the comparison of Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data to like information in the school district's AFR result in a total variance of less than 3 percent of all expenditures by function? (If the school district fails indicator 16, the maximum points and highest rating that the school district may receive is 89 points, B = Above Standard Achievement.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Ceiling Passed
17	<u>Did the external independent auditor report that the AFR was free of any instance(s) of material weaknesses in internal controls over financial reporting and compliance for local, state, or federal funds and free from substantial doubt about the school district's ability to continue as a going concern? (The AICPA defines material weakness.) (If the school district fails indicator 17, the maximum points and highest rating that the school district may receive is 79 points, C = Meets Standard Achievement.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Ceiling Passed
18	<u>Did the external independent auditor indicate the AFR was free of any instance(s) of material noncompliance for grants, contracts, and laws related to local, state, or federal funds? (The AICPA defines material noncompliance.)</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	10
19	<u>Did the school district post the required financial information on its website in accordance with Government Code, Local Government Code, Texas Education Code, Texas Administrative Code and other statutes, laws and rules that were in effect at the school district's fiscal year end?</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	5
20	<u>Did the school district's administration and school board members discuss any changes and/or impact to local, state, and federal funding at a board meeting within 120 days before the district adopted its budget?</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Ceiling Passed

21	<u>Did the school district receive an adjusted repayment schedule for more than one fiscal year for an over-allocation of Foundation School Program (FSP) funds because of a financial hardship?</u>	4/23/2025 6:09:50 PM	Ceiling Passed
			92 Weighted Sum
			1 Multiplier Sum
			(100 Ceiling)
			92 Score

DETERMINATION OF RATING

A.	Did the school district fail any of the critical indicators 1, 2, 3, or 4? If so, the school district's rating is F for Substandard Achievement regardless of points earned.	
B.	Determine the rating by the applicable number of points.	
	A = Superior Achievement	90-100
	B = Above Standard Achievement	80-89
	C = Meets Standard Achievement	70-79
	F = Substandard Achievement	<70
No Rating = A school district receiving territory that annexes with a school district ordered by the commissioner under TEC 13.054, or consolidation under Subchapter H, Chapter 41. No rating will be issued for the school district receiving territory until the third year after the annexation/consolidation. The school district receives an F if it scores below the minimum passing score, if it failed any critical indicator 1, 2, 3, or 4, if the AFR or the data were not both complete, or if either the AFR or the data were not submitted on time for FIRST analysis.		

CEILING INDICATORS

Did the school district meet the criteria for any of the following ceiling indicators 4, 5, 6, 16, 17, 20, or 21? If so, the school district's applicable maximum points and rating are disclosed
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below. Please note, an F = Substandard Achievement Rating supersedes any rating earned as the result of the school district meeting the criteria of a ceiling indicator.

Determination of rating based on meeting ceiling criteria.	Maximum Points	Maximum Rating
Indicator 4 (Timely Payments) - School district was issued a warrant hold.	95	A = Superior Achievement
Indicator 5 (Total Net Position) - Negative total net position and do not have 7% or more or 1.000 or more increase in growth in students in membership over 5 years.	79	C = Meets Standard Achievement
Indicator 6 (Average Change in Fund Balance) - Response to indicator is <i>No</i> .	89	B = Above Standard Achievement
Indicator 16 (PEIMS to AFR) - Response to indicator is <i>No</i> .	89	B = Above Standard Achievement
Indicator 17 (Material Weaknesses) - Response to indicator is <i>No</i> .	79	C = Meets Standard Achievement
Indicator 20 (Property Values and Tax Discussion) - Response to indicator is <i>No</i> .	89	B = Above Standard Achievement
Indicator 21 (FSP Repayment Plan) - Response to indicator is <i>Yes</i> .	70	C = Meets Standard Achievement

Other Data Concerning the District's Operations

The purpose of this section of the report is to discuss other aspects of our business operations not covered by the worksheet but suggested by law as indicators of significance meriting discussion. We should view the worksheet as a good basic tool with which to assess our primary business practices. However, we should not stop there. We should always be working towards improvement in all aspects of our operation to maximize funds available to campuses for educational purposes and to our ancillary departments that support our campuses.

Below is a review of several business practices not covered by the Financial Accountability Worksheet directly but that we feel are worthy of notation.

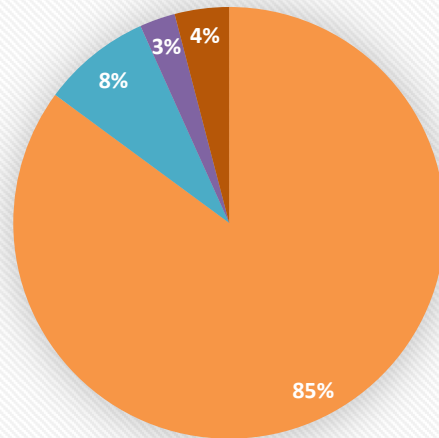
Financial Strength

The State of Texas advises that we address financial strength in this report. This topic is complex, as there are various measures of financial strength, each with its own merits, making it challenging to identify the most effective indicator. For Santa Fe Independent School District (ISD), we consider the fund balance to be the most significant indicator of our financial strength. Although we have experienced a reduction in our fund balance in recent years, this has allowed the district to maintain effective operations. Factors beyond our control, such as rising insurance costs, utilities, and general inflation, have contributed to these challenges. Day-to-day operations have faced double-digit inflationary pressures, prompting the district to utilize the fund balance as a resource. In the 2024-2025 school year reduction in costs and the use of a maintenance tax note to cover maintenance projects, which freed assigned budget and allowed for the fund balance to be increased slightly.

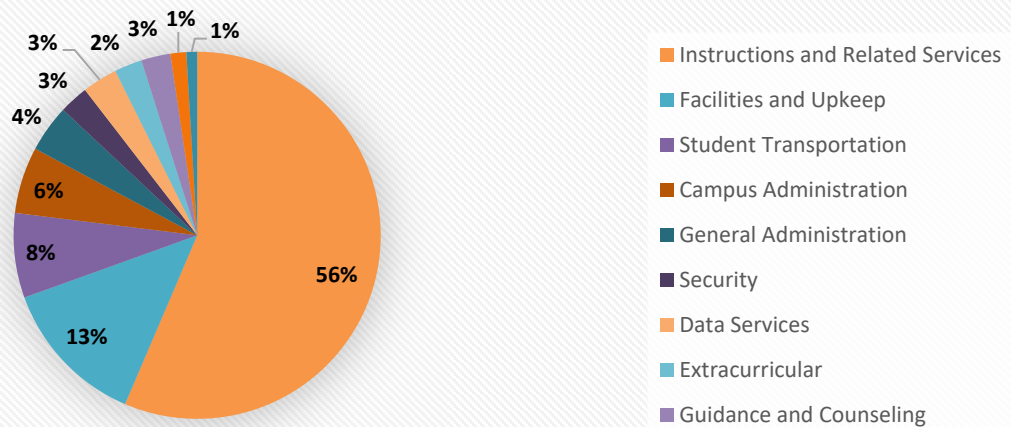
Operating Cost Management

As illustrated below, only a small portion of our total General Fund expenditures is flexible or variable in nature. Appraisal district fees, payroll costs, property insurance, and utility payments account for approximately 95.9% of the District's operating budget each year. Once you remove these four large expenditures from the operating budget, you are left with only a small portion of the budget that covers all other expenditures of the District. The charts below illustrate the breakdown of the operating budget.

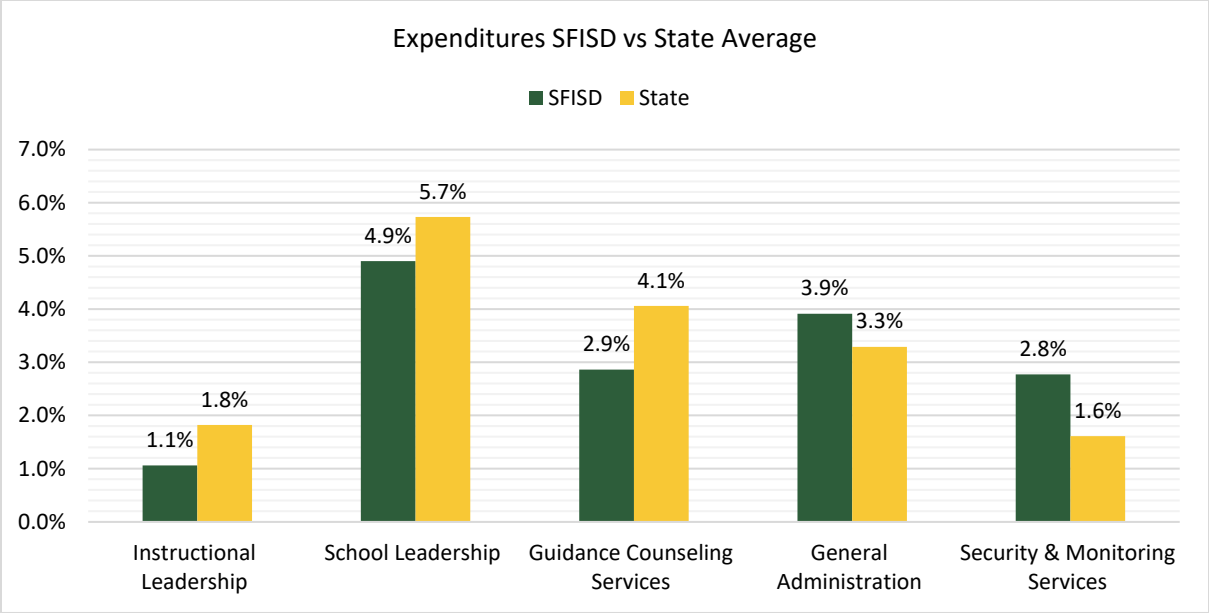
Operating Budget by Purpose



Operating Budget by Purpose



Another measure the state of Texas uses to indicate operating efficiency is to compare district to state information by function. Santa Fe ISD's commitment to instruction is demonstrated by spending 56.4% on direct classroom instruction. The commitment to guidance counseling services and security is evident in the chart below as well as the district's ongoing diligence to keep administrative costs low.



Personnel Management

The District's longstanding personnel goal is to attract and retain qualified staff, and to offer a competitive salary and benefit package to all employees. Each year, we have offered a competitive total compensation package to all our staff. Second, only to our students' welfare and education, attracting and retaining a quality staff has been a priority for Santa Fe ISD. The district has developed a culture that stands on its own and generates pride in our teachers and staff. This helps create a learning environment rivaled by only a few.

Debt Management

The district has 19 years or less for repayment of bonds for construction of facilities, even though the life of the building to be built is much longer. In no instance does the district finance bonds for a longer period than the life expectancy of the capital improvement.

As our district continues to face the many challenges associated with rapid growth and aging facilities. With continued growth we have been able to maintain the I&S rate stable without any spikes in the past 11 years. The District has also been able to maximize its bond repayment efforts and defeased debt. The District continually monitors outstanding debt and takes opportunities to reduce interest costs when available.

Cash Management

Santa Fe ISD has state and local board policies that require us to invest funds with objectives to maximize returns and honor taxpayers. State and local policy specify what types of securities can be purchased. Santa Fe ISD does not purchase investments that fall outside these policy restrictions. We strive to maintain diversity in our portfolio, balancing cash in money market pools and directly owned securities such as Treasury Bills and other government agency issues. Each quarter we benchmark our portfolio's yield to the three- and six-month Treasury Bill rates, the Federal Funds rate and the Jumbo CD rate. We use these as a comparison only to determine if our portfolio is yielding a comparable market rate of return each quarter. A Cash & Investment Report is included quarterly in the Board of Trustees meeting agenda for review and approval.

Tax Collections

Although the current worksheet no longer addresses tax collections, we felt that mention was warranted since 37.4% of the District's operating revenue came from local property taxes during 2024-2025. The District has its own Tax Office and current year collection rates historically exceed 96.08%. Collection rates for the last four years are as follows:

For Fiscal Year Ended	Current Year Tax Collections
6/30/2021	96.5%
6/30/2022	97.8%
6/30/2023	99.5%
6/30/2024	96.1%

Budgetary Planning & Financial Allocations

The District's budget process usually begins in late fall each year. In early spring budget allocations are developed for each campus and department and budget manual is updated for the new year and distributed to all budget managers and bookkeepers.

Most school districts have some rational basis for allocating funds to campuses and operating departments. In Santa Fe ISD, the budgeting process is based on previous year expenditures, with justification of any increases needed in the budget.

By March, we begin attempting to calculate state and local tax revenues and the budget starts to take on some form. For teacher recruiting purposes, the optimal time for making a public salary decision is March. By the end of May we are able to give the Board and the public a preliminary view of how the next year's budget looks. April and May are busy months budget-wise, with Board workshops and meetings with the District's Finance Committee. Decisions are made on special project requests; revenue data is fine-tuned, and a final budget is submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval in June. In odd-numbered years, the legislature is in session, and that complicates and delays our budgeting process.

Our budget process is a proactive and highly participatory one, where campuses and departments are given a great deal of discretion as to how to budget their funds. After the budget is adopted, each campus or department is given equal latitude regarding amending their budget when their plans or needs change. This decentralized style of budget management is required by the State of Texas to a certain degree. We call it site-based decision making and it's our version of campus empowerment. Most importantly, it is a system that works best in the long run for all of us by allocating resources where they are needed, even when those needs change.

Awards

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO)

Meritorious Budget Award

Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO)

Purchasing Award of Merit

Reporting Requirements for Superintendent and Board of Trustees

Superintendent Outside Compensation

Kevin M. Bott, Ed.D. did not receive any outside compensation or fees for professional consulting or other personal services for the twelve-month period ended June 30, 2025.

Executive Officers and Board of Trustees Gifts

Executive Officers and Board Members did not receive gifts that had an economic value of \$250 or more in aggregate for the twelve-month period ended June 30, 2025.

Superintendent and Board of Trustees Travel Expenditures

For the twelve-month period ended June 30, 2025

	Superintendent Dr. Kevin Bott	President J.R. "Rusty" Norman	Vice-President Eric E. Davenport	Secretary James Grassmuck
Meals	-	-	18.54	-
Lodging	4,656.28	1,319.60	1,319.60	1,319.60
Transportation	206.05	-	-	-
Motor Fuel	-	-	-	-
Other	2,523.00	450.00	450.00	450.00
TOTAL	\$7,385.33	\$1,769.60	\$1,788.14	\$1,769.60

	Trustee Clay Hertenberger	Trustee Patrick Kelly	Trustee John Couch III	Trustee Angie Lambert
Meals	-	18.54	18.54	-
Lodging	485.00	1,319.60	216.41	410.74
Transportation	-	-	-	-
Motor Fuel	-	-	-	-
Other	-	450.00	450.00	450.00
TOTAL	\$485.00	\$1,788.14	\$684.95	\$860.74