



SYCAMORE
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**FINANCIAL
PROSPECTUS
2025**

A Letter from the Treasurer/CFO



Dear Sycamore Community,

Our community has long shared a commitment to academic excellence, fiscal responsibility, and transparency. We are honored to share this financial prospectus - an overview of how Sycamore Community Schools continues to balance responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars with our dedication to students, families, and staff. Through your support, we have built a tradition of trust, accountability, and long-term financial stability that keeps our schools strong.

In 2016, you placed your confidence in Sycamore by approving an operating levy designed to last five years. Through careful planning and disciplined spending, we have extended those dollars to support nearly twice that time.

As we look ahead to fiscal years 2026-2030, the Board of Education has reaffirmed this promise by adopting new financial parameters that limit average annual expenditure growth to 3.5 percent, ensuring we can continue meeting students' needs while protecting the community's investment.

This report is more than a set of numbers. It reflects our shared values: transparency, collaboration, and thoughtful planning for the future. By continuing to share our financial story openly, we strengthen the partnership between our schools and our community.

Thank you for your trust, engagement, and ongoing support as we work together to sustain the excellence that defines Sycamore Community Schools.

Sincerely,

Jenni L. Logan

Outgoing Treasurer/CFO

Brody Burson

Incoming Interim Treasurer/CFO

OUR MISSION

Create a culture of academic excellence through inclusive and innovative learning opportunities for the whole child.

OUR VISION

Empower all learners to reach their full potential in a globally competitive world.

OUR COMMITMENT

Sycamore Community Schools continues to deliver exceptional educational value through careful financial stewardship. The district's long-range planning, responsible spending, and community partnerships have extended the life of the last operating levy, approved in 2016, well beyond its original five-year promise.

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Where Our Funding Comes From

REVENUE SOURCES

Local Revenue – 85%

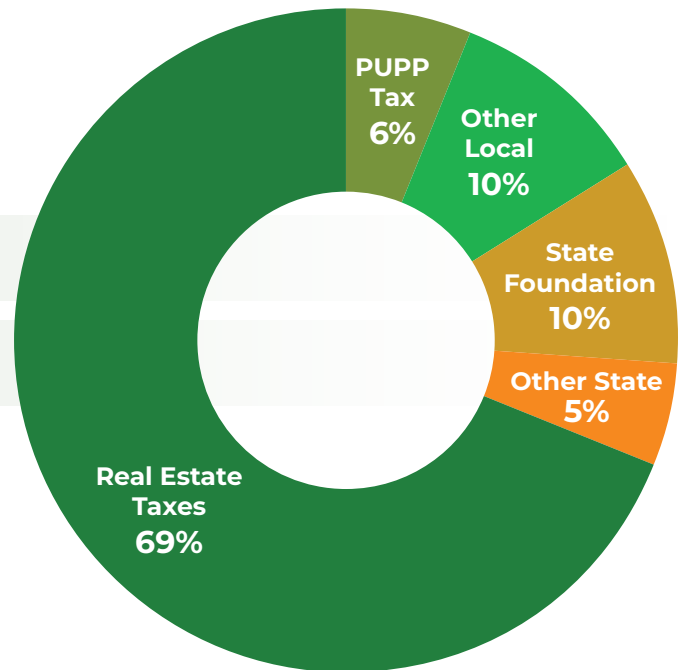
State Revenue – 15%



LOCAL REVENUE – 85% OF OUR FUNDING

Sycamore Schools is fortunate to have a strong local tax base, with 85% of our funding coming from the community. Most of this comes from real estate taxes, paid by both homeowners and businesses. Residential properties make up the majority of our tax base at 67%, while businesses account for 30%, and the remaining 3% comes from public utility personal property (PUPP).

Other local revenue sources include interest earnings, tuition from kindergarten and preschool programs, and payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) from Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. A TIF redirects the new tax revenue created by development to pay for infrastructure, while schools continue receiving taxes on the property's original value. In most of our TIF districts, we have agreements that also make the district whole on the developed portion.



STATE REVENUE – 15% OF OUR FUNDING

The state provides the remaining 15% of our funding, mainly through foundation funding, which is now distributed under the Fair School Funding Plan. This plan is designed to better reflect both student needs and a district's local ability to raise revenue. In addition, we receive state reimbursement for property tax credits, which replaces revenue the state reduces for homeowners on levies approved prior to November 2013.

How We Invest in Education

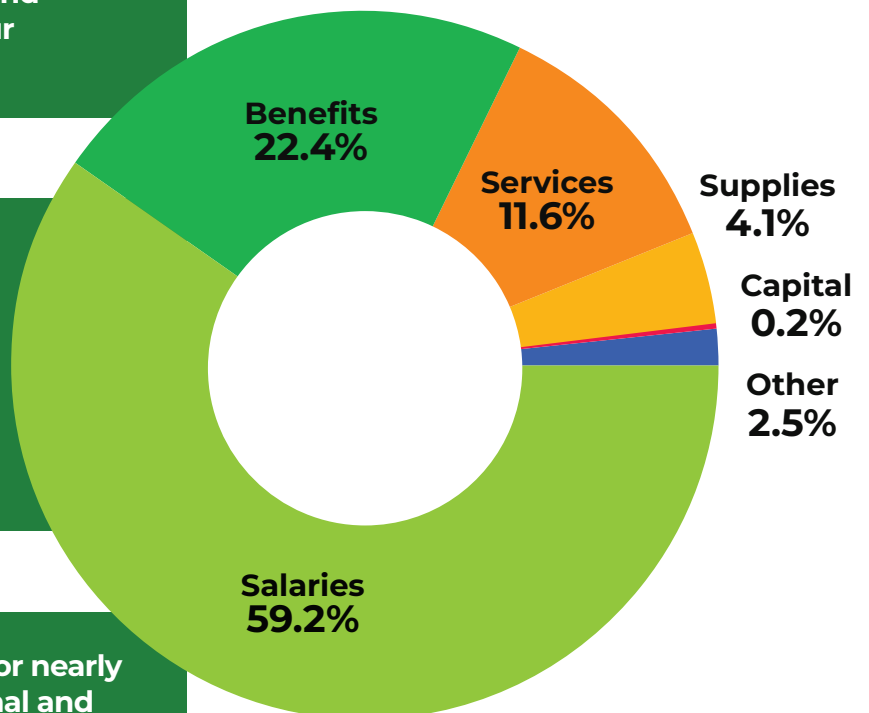
Like most high-performing districts, the majority of our spending supports the people who make learning possible for our Aviators - over 6,000 strong. We also invest in safe facilities, instructional technology, transportation, and the programs that give our students real-world opportunities.

SPENDING BY OBJECT

Nearly 82% of operating expenditures support our 887 employees - teachers, aides, counselors, custodians, and administrators, etc. - who directly impact student learning. We have implemented a responsible staffing model that allows us to protect student opportunities while carefully managing resources. By thoughtfully reviewing positions and taking advantage of retirements and resignations when they occur, we're able to align staffing levels with student needs and maintain the high-quality experiences our community expects.

Our school district is not isolated from the continued rise in health care premiums. Participating in an insurance consortium, offering three plan designs, and incentivizing annual health screenings help the district responsibly manage these growing costs.

Our purchased services, which account for nearly 12% of our budget, encompass professional and legal support, utilities, professional development, and a range of contracted services designed to meet student needs. Many of these services provide essential support for students with specialized learning plans, reflecting our commitment to both fiscal responsibility and equitable opportunities for all learners.

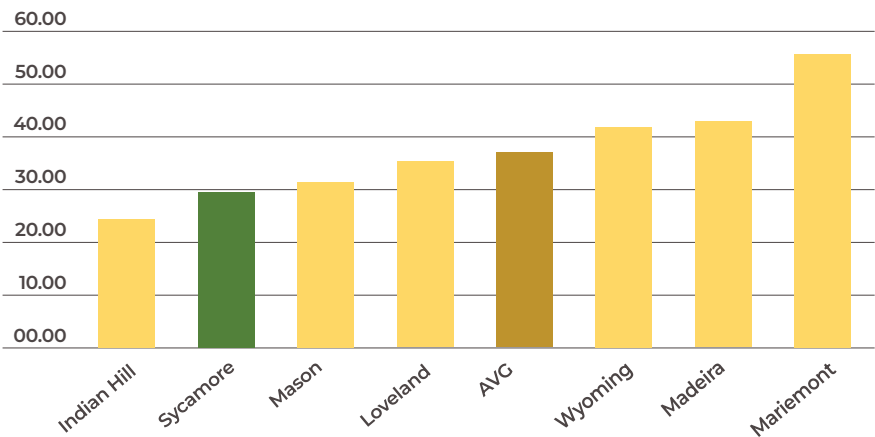


The Board's Financial Parameters Resolution limits average annual expenditure growth to 3.5%, reinforcing fiscal discipline.

How We Compare

The chart to the right compares the effective residential millage rates among our neighboring school districts. Sycamore's rate is below the average of comparable districts, showing that the community supports strong schools while maintaining a lower overall tax burden. This reflects the district's long-standing commitment to responsible financial management and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

EFFECTIVE RESIDENTIAL MILLAGE RATES
COMPARABLE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

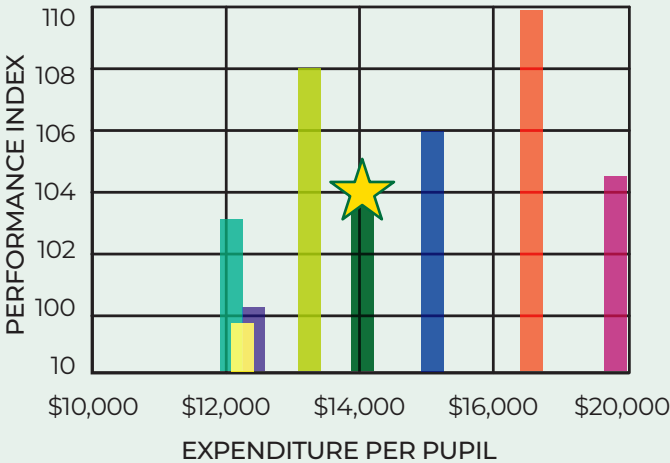


Spending and Performance (Return on Investment - ROI)

This chart below shows the relationship between spending per student and academic performance among comparable districts. Sycamore performs substantially above the state average academically while maintaining moderate spending levels, demonstrating strong results without excessive costs. The district also aligns its spending most appropriately - over 73% on classroom instruction. This balance reflects the district's efficient use of resources and its ability to achieve high performance through strategic financial management.

SPENDING PER STUDENT & ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPENDING & PERFORMANCE
ACROSS COMPARABLE DISTRICTS



School District	Performance Index	Expenditure Per Pupil
State Average	82.3	\$12,653
Loveland	101.90	\$12,986
Mason	103.40	\$12,856
Sycamore	104.10	\$14,653
Indian Hill	104.30	\$19,668
Wyoming	106.90	\$15,389
Madeira	108.60	\$13,696
Mariemont	110.10	\$17,279

Sycamore performs substantially above the state average academically while maintaining moderate spending levels, demonstrating strong results without excessive costs.



Our Facilities & Capital Investments

Sycamore operates seven school buildings—including four elementary schools, a 5–6 building, a 7–8 junior high, and a high school—along with our district office and transportation facility. Together, our facilities represent more than **\$329 million** in insured property that we maintain, protect, and steward on behalf of our community. The district also owns and operates a fleet of 59 school buses and manages thousands of student and staff technology devices.

To protect and maintain the community's investment in these facilities and equipment:

Each year, the district commits \$4.1 million from the General Fund.

A detailed study of our capital needs indicates an average \$5.4 million annually is needed, leaving an annual \$1.3 million dollar gap.

Sycamore has no dedicated Permanent Improvement (PI) levy, meaning general operations and capital needs compete for the same funds.

Capital Improvement Plan Highlights: (2026-2031)

Some highlights of this assessment and plan include:

\$6.8 million in roofing scheduled replacements & ongoing maintenance

\$3.5 million in critical updates to HVAC systems and essential building infrastructure

\$4.4 million in technology updates/replacements to support our learners

\$2 million in bus fleet replacements to maintain safe & efficient student transportation



District Community Partnerships

Many of our state-of-the-art athletic facilities were made possible through community partnerships. We celebrate the generosity of our donors and our partnership with the athletic boosters. Over \$9 million has already been received. Examples of these partnerships include the Seger Family Natatorium, the Sadler Family Baseball & Softball Complex, and the Chris Combs Field.



By the Numbers

Last Operating Levy	Nov. 2016
Local Funding	85%
Financial Parameter Expenditure Growth Cap	3.5%
FY28 Cash Balance Projection	Below 25%
Annual Capital Budget	\$4.1M
Average Annual Capital Need	\$5.4M
Number of Students	6,024
Number of Staff	887
Performance Index	104.10



Fiscal Outlook

Through prudent planning, Sycamore has doubled the life of its last levy while maintaining one of the region's highest performance indexes and among the lowest effective millage rates. As expenditures begin to outpace revenues, the district will continue transparent financial communication and strategic preparation to sustain excellence for the next generation.

Our most recent five-year forecast shows that the district's cash balance, which helps ensure financial stability, is projected to fall below the Board's minimum goal of 25% of annual operating expenditures by **Fiscal Year 2028**, with a deficit expected in **Fiscal Year 2030**.

State legislators continue to debate and approve property tax reform proposals. While these current efforts are intended to ease the burden on taxpayers, they also introduce uncertainty for school funding.

Depending on how these changes are structured, they could reduce the local revenue schools rely on to operate. Additionally, a constitutional amendment being proposed to eliminate property taxes altogether would devastate public schools, especially those like Sycamore that depend heavily on local support. We will continue to advocate for responsible policy decisions and encourage our community to stay informed as this evolving landscape becomes clearer. Even well-intentioned reforms could unintentionally weaken the stability of school finances and limit our ability to sustain essential programs and services for students.

To continue providing the high-quality education our community expects while maintaining fiscal responsibility, the district will likely need to **consider a new levy in the near future**. This would mark the first operating levy request since 2016, a period in which the district successfully doubled the expected life of that levy through disciplined financial management.

As part of this discussion, the Board is reviewing **different funding options** to place on the ballot as early as November 2026. As we move forward, the district and Board will continue to discuss these options before placing a measure on the ballot.



SYCAMORE

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Our students. Our future.

Sycamore Community Schools

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