Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget

For the period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027

Colonial School District

Presented to the Board of Education on July 14, 2026

Jeffrey D. Menzer, Ed.D., Superintendent
Emily Falcon, Chief Operating & Financial Officer

Colonial
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Members of the Board of Education
2026-2027

Christopher Piecuch

Christine Smith

Ron Handy

Dr. Keenan Dorsey

Phila Breeding

Carlos Dipres

Jeffrey D. Menzer, Ed.D., Executive Secretary

District Administration

Jeffrey D. Menzer, Ed.D., Superintendent

Nneka Jones, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent

Emily Falcon, Chief Operating & Financial Officer

Holly Sage, Executive Director of Human Resources

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item	Page Number
Executive Summary	4
Summary of Revenue	5-6
Summary of Expenditures	7-8
Detailed Budgets	
General	9
Child Nutrition	9
Transportation	9
Leach Special School	9
Major Capital Funding	10
Property Tax Receipts	11

Colonial SCHOOL DISTRICT

Executive Summary

The Colonial School District is a school district located in New Castle County in the State of Delaware. We serve students from age 3 to 22. There are fourteen (14) schools located within the district. The enrollment as of September 30, 2025 was 8,273 students.

Due to an ongoing quality review of commercial property reassessment being conducted by New Castle County, the deadline for setting a tax rate for FY 2027 has been pushed to October by the General Assembly. This delay obviously does not allow the district to suspend operations or payroll obligations. Therefore, the Preliminary Fiscal Year 2027 Budget represents the initial spending authority approved by the Board of Education based on revenue assumptions, assuming that the tax rate to support those revenues will be approved before the October deadline. Due to this unique situation, most budgets have been set to a lower level than usual to ensure the most flexibility in managing any unforseen circumstances. Because of this, the budget hasn't been 'balanced' to avoid setting inaccurate expectations.

The Colonial community approved an operating and capital referendum in February 2024. It included operating rate increases in FY 25, FY 26 and FY 27 and renovation projects that will be funded and conducted through FY 2029. The estimated operating revenue for FY 2027 was advertised at $1.6 million. This increase in revenue as well as the increased funds needed for the debt service of the capital projects will be factored into the tax rate when it is finalized in October. Additionally, an increase of the tuition tax rate will be recommended to account for increasing special education expenses.

The State of Delaware budget for FY 2027 includes salary increases based on the recommendations of the Public Education Compensation Committee (PECC) and are incorporated into the state salary budgets. New bargaining agreements for our Nutrition and Transportation employees were finalized and effective for FY 2027. All other negotiated salary increases are budgeted. Additionally, state funding for Division II All Other Costs funds was restored to FY 2018 levels, which adds roughly $1.8 million in discretionary state funds. This also eliminates the reduction plan process that has been in place for the last six years.

The Preliminary budget for FY 2027 is $186 million. Due to the reduced spending level of this budget, making comparisons to prior year budgets is difficult. Colonial continues to look for ways to minimize budget growth as Colonial's enrollment continues to decline. We are actively exploring opportunities to consolidate work efforts and maximize the efficiency of our existing staff.

The Colonial School District has a citizen financial oversight committee consisting of residents of the district to oversee the budget and review financial reports and information prior to submission to the Board of Education. This budget was reviewed by that committee on July 7, 2026.

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

SUMMARY OF REVENUE

	PRELIM BUDGET FY 2026	FINAL BUDGET FY 2026	PRELIM BUDGET FY 2027	CHANGE from FY 2026 FINAL
REVENUE				
DISCRETIONARY STATE REVENUE				
Division II Costs, AOC	$ 2,126,350	$2,178,161	$ 2,156,379	-1.0%
Division III Equalization	$ 4,770,420	$4,985,232	$ 4,935,380	-1.0%
Educational Sustainment	$ 1,756,877	$1,832,771	$ 1,814,443	-1.0%
SUBTOTAL	**$8,653,647**	**$8,996,164**	**$8,906,202**	**-1.0%**
RESTRICTED STATE REVENUE				
State formula salaries	$ 97,777,718	$ 102,773,064	$ 105,856,256	3.0%
Cafeteria Salaries	$3,998,905	$ 3,903,986	$4,021,106	3.0%
Division II Costs, AOC - Voc	$0	$ -	$150,000	-
Division II Costs, Energy	$1,832,646	$ 1,852,121	$1,833,600	-1.0%
State Transportation	$11,107,058	$ 11,405,897	$11,519,956	1.0%
Drivers Ed	$0	$ -	$30,000	-
Unique Alternative	$275,000	$ 728,120	$300,000	-58.8%
Related Services	$0	$ 499,708	$250,000	-50.0%
Professional Development	$0	$ -	$100,000	-
Technology Block Grant	$0	$ -	$220,000	-
Student Success Block Grant	$305,805	$ 305,805	$327,765	7.2%
Opportunity Funding	$4,769,638	$ 4,796,638	$4,476,586	-6.7%
Other State Revenue	$500,000	$ 1,046,086	$700,000	-33.1%
John G. Leach	$6,617,963	$ 6,869,650	$7,075,740	3.0%
ECAP (Pre-K State grant)	$362,700	$ 362,700	$362,700	0.0%
Minor Capital Improvements	$1,689,231	$ 1,689,231	$1,644,992	-2.6%
Safety & Security grant	$666,067	$ 646,488	$633,558	-2.0%
SUBTOTAL	**$129,902,731**	**$136,879,494**	**$139,502,258**	**1.9%**
TOTAL STATE REVENUE	**$138,556,378**	**$145,875,658**	**$148,408,460**	**1.7%**

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

SUMMARY OF REVENUE

	PRELIM BUDGET FY 2026	FINAL BUDGET FY 2026	PRELIM BUDGET FY 2027	CHANGE from FY 2026 FINAL
REVENUE				
DISCRETIONARY LOCAL REVENUE				
Current Expense Tax Receipts	$70,307,410	$69,039,005	$70,639,005	2.3%
Interest	$2,595,329	$1,604,354	$1,650,000	2.8%
Athletics	$26,300	$19,800	$20,000	1.0%
Indirect Costs	$115,000	$375,000	$350,000	-6.7%
CSCRP	$98,000	$325,000	$325,000	0.0%
Building Rental	$17,500	$14,250	$25,000	75.4%
Charter (Reduction)	$ (11,000,000)	$ (11,238,669)	$ (12,000,000)	6.8%
Choice (Reduction)	$ (2,975,000)	$ (2,878,480)	$ (3,022,404)	5.0%
SUBTOTAL	**$50,945,382**	**$53,391,910**	**$57,986,601**	**8.6%**
RESTRICTED LOCAL REVENUE				
Debt Service Tax Receipts	$1,190,991	$1,309,669	$5,000,000	281.8%
Tuition Receipts (excl. Leach)	$6,128,514	$6,940,008	$8,950,000	29.0%
John G. Leach (tuition revenue)	$2,000,000	$2,000,000	$2,000,000	0.0%
Match Tax Receipts	$2,928,981	$3,750,710	$3,750,710	0.0%
Technology Maintenance Match	$480,231	$480,231	$480,231	0.0%
Cafeteria	$5,050,672	$4,700,000	$4,700,000	0.0%
Donations	$125,000	$110,000	$50,000	-54.5%
Other Local Revenue	$350,000	$355,000	$200,000	-43.7%
Charter Tuition (Reduction)	$ (136,391)	$ (162,641)	$ (180,000)	10.7%
SUBTOTAL	**$20,740,867**	**$24,302,475**	**$24,950,941**	**2.7%**
TOTAL LOCAL REVENUE	**$71,686,249**	**$77,694,385**	**$82,937,542**	**6.7%**
FEDERAL REVENUE				
IDEA Part B (611)	$2,732,867	$ 2,815,091	$2,699,332	-4.1%
IDEA Pre-K (619)	$121,697	$ 122,554	$119,304	-2.7%
Title I	$4,520,494	$ 4,520,494	$4,518,250	0.0%
Title II	$758,325	$ 758,943	$721,620	-4.9%
Title III	$136,504	$ 174,577	$151,126	-13.4%
Perkins	$282,327	$ 282,327	$268,035	-5.1%
Title IV	$507,460	$ 507,460	$512,810	1.1%
Other Federal Funds	$750,000	$ 1,426,808	$1,000,000	-29.9%
TOTAL FEDERAL REVENUE	**$9,809,674**	**$10,608,254**	**$9,990,477**	**-5.8%**
TOTAL REVENUE	**$220,052,301**	**$234,178,297**	**$241,336,480**	**3.1%**

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES

Operating Unit	Program Code		PRELIM FY 2026		FINAL FY 2026	PRELIM FY 2027	Change from FY 26 FINAL
		DISCRETIONARY SCHOOL BUDGETS					
9340410A	99999	Carrie Downie Elementary	35,306	$	44,970	22,485	-50%
9340412A	99999	Castle Hills Elementary	49,388	$	64,050	32,025	-50%
9340418A	99999	Pleasantville Elementary	40,800	$	59,850	29,925	-50%
9340420A	99999	Wilmington Manor Elementar	32,509	$	50,340	25,170	-50%
9340422A	99999	Wilbur Elementary	110,756	$	153,465	76,733	-50%
9340427A	99999	Southern Elementary	79,575	$	121,455	60,728	-50%
9340432A	99999	New Castle Elementary	42,476	$	55,515	27,758	-50%
9340456A	99999	Eisenberg Elementary	48,278	$	69,225	34,613	-50%
9340470A	99999	Gunning Bedford Middle	96,098	$	138,390	69,195	-50%
9340474A	99999	George Read Middle	73,226	$	104,205	52,103	-50%
9340476A	95437	McCullough Library	70,208	$	97,335	48,668	-50%
9340490A	95048	William Penn - ROTC	8,250	$	11,000	5,500	-50%
9340490A	95073	William Penn - Music Choir	22,500	$	30,000	15,000	-50%
9340490A	95437	William Penn - Library	13,500	$	18,000	9,000	-50%
9340490A	95602	William Penn - Athletics	161,250	$	220,000	110,000	-50%
9340490A	99999	William Penn High School	234,281	$	348,225	174,113	-50%
		SUBTOTAL	**1,118,400**		**1,586,025**	**793,013**	-50%

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES

Operating Unit	Program Code		PRELIM FY 2026		FINAL FY 2026	PRELIM FY 2027	Change from FY 26 FINAL
		DISCRETIONARY STATE & LOCAL BUDGETS					
99900000	99999	Board of Education	15,000	$	28,000	14,000	-50%
99900100	99999	Legal	73,125	$	98,000	49,000	-50%
99900300	95228	Substitutes & Homebound	1,125,000	$	1,500,000	750,000	-50%
99900300	95494	Teacher of the Year	9,750	$	13,000	6,500	-50%
99900300	99999	General District Expenses	1,273,572	$	1,258,572	629,286	-50%
99910000	99999	Communications	90,469	$	120,000	60,000	-50%
99910010	95411	Copy Center	90,000	$	175,000	87,500	-50%
99910010	99999	District Administration	183,750	$	245,000	122,500	-50%
99910100	99999	Superintendent	25,500	$	34,000	17,000	-50%
99910100	16301	Equity	52,875	$	52,875	26,438	-50%
99910100	3P27G	Strategic Planning	22,500	$	30,000	15,000	-50%
99970675	95430	Elementary Wellness	375,000	$	500,000	250,000	-50%
99920000	99999	Curriculum/Instruction	84,375	$	112,500	56,250	-50%
99920000	95435	Common Core/Curriculum	168,750	$	225,000	112,500	-50%
99920000	90850	Music/Art Curriculum	45,000	$	60,000	30,000	-50%
99920100	99999	Discipline Programs	277,500	$	600,000	300,000	-50%
99920110	99519	Security/Constables	450,000	$	650,000	325,000	-50%
99920110	95064					0	
99920700	99999	Middle school Athletics	45,000	$	60,000	30,000	-50%
99920900	99999	Library	27,225	$	36,300	18,150	-50%
99930300	99999	Student Services	75,000	$	75,000	37,500	-50%
99930400	99999	Behavioral Health	48,750	$	65,000	32,500	-50%
99940000	99999	Business Office	28,875	$	38,500	19,250	-50%
99940400	99999	Local Salaries & Benefits	47,564,622	$	48,562,935	31,565,908	-35%
99940900	99999	CEA Tuition Reimbursement	92,500	$	92,500	46,250	-50%
99950000	99999	Personnel	30,750	$	35,000	17,500	-50%
99950000	95459	Recruiting	13,500	$	15,000	7,500	-50%
99940050	99999	Facilities Maintenance	825,000	$	1,100,000	550,000	-50%
99960200	99531	Custodial Services	531,563	$	725,000	362,500	-50%
99970680	99999	School Supervision	48,750	$	35,000	17,500	-50%
99970680	99569	Digital Learning	20,250	$	22,000	11,000	-50%
		SUBTOTAL - DISCRETIONA	**53,713,950**		**56,564,182**	**35,566,531**	-37%

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES

Operating Unit	Program Code		PRELIM FY 2026		FINAL FY 2026	PRELIM FY 2027	Change from FY 26 FINAL
		RESTRICTED FUNDING WITH LOCAL INVESTMENT					
99940810	99999	Tech Equipment & Repair	1,497,656	$	1,996,875	998,438	-50%
99960200	95419	Energy/Utilities	2,617,774	$	2,800,000	1,400,000	-50%
99960400	99999	Transportation	14,071,184	$	12,384,356	6,192,178	-50%
		SUBTOTAL - RESTRICTED/LOCAL	**18,186,614**		**17,181,231**	**8,590,616**	-50%
		OTHER RESTRICTED BUDGETS					
99920110	99595	State Security Grant	666,067	$	666,067	299,730	-55%
99920200	99999	Extra Time	270,000	$	270,000	135,000	-50%
99920500	99999	Professional Development	77,252	$	103,000	100,000	-3%
99920800	99999	Drivers Education	19,500	$	26,000	30,000	15%
99921000	95512	Opportunity Funds Personnel	4,149,360	$	4,149,360	3,923,940	-5%
99921000	99999	Opportunity Funds Programn	1,851,164	$	1,851,164	1,000,000	-46%
99921000	95063	Opp Funds Mental Health & R	884,349	$	884,349	552,646	-38%
99940200	99999	Division I Salaries	97,777,718	$	102,773,064	105,856,256	3%
99940300	99999	Division II Vocational	127,412	$	180,000	150,000	-17%
99940410	95037	Spanish Immersion	7,500	$	9,500	4,750	-50%
99940410	99999	Competitve Grants - State	221,250	$	1,046,086	523,043	-50%
99940500	99999	Federal Funds	9,809,674	$	10,608,254	9,990,477	-6%
99940700	99999	Private Grants/Donations	101,250	$	45,000	22,500	-50%
99960000	99999	Child Nutrition Operations	7,215,252	$	9,653,300	4,826,650	-50%
99970000	99999	Debt Service	2,446,480	$	3,425,000	1,712,500	-50%
99970680	95063	SSBG K-4 Reading	164,390	$	408,449	204,225	-50%
99970200	99999	Minor Capital	2,815,385	$	2,815,385	2,153,694	-24%
		SUBTOTAL - RESTRICTED	**128,604,003**		**138,913,978**	**131,485,411**	**-5%**

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES

Operating Unit	Program Code		PRELIM FY 2026		FINAL FY 2026	PRELIM FY 2027	Change from FY 26 FINAL
		RESTRICTED/TUITION FUNDED BUDGETS					
99970600	95030	Preschool (Colwyck building	65,684	$	89,156	44,578	-50%
99970600	99532	PreK Payroll	3,414,505	$	2,862,000	1,431,000	-50%
9340427A	95521	Southern special programs	84,150	$	65,000	32,500	-50%
9340470A	95521	GB Special programs	27,000	$	15,000	7,500	-50%
9340474A	95521	George Read Special Program	42,394	$	24,000	12,000	-50%
9340490A	95521	WPHS Special Programs	81,375	$	50,000	25,000	-50%
99920300	99999	LEP/ESL	435,000	$	235,000	117,500	-50%
99921050	99999	Special Education Services	412,500	$	1,999,708	999,854	-50%
99930200	95454	Private Placement	697,496	$	290,000	145,000	-50%
99930200	99999	In State Tuition	708,750	$	900,000	450,000	-50%
99930200	95236	Exceptional Children payroll	2,781,510	$	3,135,454	1,567,727	-50%
99930300	99546	Assistive Technology	21,000	$	28,000	14,000	-50%
		SUBTOTAL - TUITION	**8,771,364**		**9,693,318**	**4,846,659**	**-50%**
See detailed budget		**Leach - Special School**	**9,657,969**	**$**	**9,876,863**	**4,938,432**	**-50%**
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			**220,052,300**		**233,815,597**	**186,220,660**	**-20%**

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027
DETAIL OF OPERATING UNIT EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES

Operating Unit	Program Code		PRELIM BUDGET FY 2026		FINAL BUDGET FY 2026	PRELIM BUDGET FY 2027	Change from FY 26 Budget
99900300	99999	**General District Expenses**					
		Audit	30,000	$	45,000.00	22,500	50%
		Insurance	425,000	$	444,452.00	222,226	50%
		Data Service Center	418,572	$	418,572.00	209,286	50%
		One Time items	300,000	$	300,000.00	150,000	50%
		Contingency	100,000	$	100,000.00	50,000	50%
			1,273,572		**1,308,024**	**654,012**	**50%**

A contingency line is been established to fund any emergency, unexpected items or line item budget overages. An example of items that could present an issue would be increases in utility costs or other items that cannot be controlled by the District administration or Board of Education.

99960000 99999 **Child Nutrition Operations**

A detailed budget will be prepared once the unit count is finalized.

99960400 99999 **Transportation**

A detailed budget will be prepared once the unit count is finalized.

Leach - Special School			PRELIM BUDGET FY 2026		FINAL BUDGET FY 2026	PRELIM BUDGET FY 2027	Change from FY 25 Budget
9340514A	99999	Leach Principal's Budget	52,775	$	68,144.00	34,072	50%
99900300	95228	Substitutes	90,000	$	145,000.00	72,500	50%
99900300	99999	General	560,000	$	560,000.00	280,000	50%
99940200	99999	Division I Salaries	4,907,360	$	4,951,085.00	2,475,543	50%
99940400	99999	Local Salaries & Benefits	2,253,201	$	2,315,000.00	1,157,500	50%
99960200	95419	Energy/Utilities	30,000	$	73,000.00	36,500	50%
99960300	99999	Transportation	1,750,000	$	1,750,000.00	875,000	50%
99970200	99999	Minor Capital	14,634	$	14,634.00	7,317	50%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			**9,657,969**		**9,808,719**	**4,938,432**	**50%**

The John G. Leach School is a state school that is managed by the Colonial School District. It is funded by State appropriations as determined by the unit count and through tuition funds paid by local school districts in which the students reside.

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027
MAJOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDS

MAJOR CAPITAL FUNDS

FY	Project	State Share	Local Share	Total
2024	New Leach Market Pressure funds	$3,742,241	$0	$3,742,241
2025	New Leach School	$37,455,000	$0	$37,455,000
2025	Eisenberg Renovations	$421,923	$281,282	$703,205
2025	Gunning Bedford Renovations	$653,191	$435,461	$1,088,652
2025	William Penn Renovations	$3,105,242	$2,070,162	$5,175,404
2026	Gunning Bedford Renovations	$2,245,049	$1,496,698	$3,741,747
2026	McCullough Renovations	$383,179	$255,452	$638,631
2026	New Castle Renovations	$5,642,233	$3,761,489	$9,403,722
2026	William Penn Renovations	$10,817,207	$24,997,200	$35,814,407
2026	Wilmington Manor Renovations	$227,078	$151,385	$378,463
2027	George Read Renovations	$135,962	$90,641	$226,603
2027	McCullough Renovations	$4,626,881	$3,084,587	$7,711,468
2027	Pleasantville Renovations	$215,203	$143,469	$358,672
2027	Southern Renovations	$316,903	$211,269	$528,172
2027	Wallace Wallin Renovations	$104,647	$69,765	$174,412
2027	Wilmington Manor Renovations	$2,662,106	$1,774,738	$4,436,844

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRELIMINARY BUDGET - FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027

LOCAL PROPERTY TAX RECEIPTS

Due to the delay in the tax rate deadline for FY 2027, detailed information on the tax rate is not yet available. This information will be provided later in the fiscal year when the Board of Education approves the rate and the Final Budget is prepared.