WICHITA PUBLIC SCHOOLS®

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2026-2027

Budget At-A-Glance

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Highlights

A **balanced budget** for FY27

Base aid of **$5,778** per full-time student

Federal funds for **at-risk students** anticipated for FY27

Maintain flat overall mill levy of **51.400 mills**

Five-year plan guiding capital outlay budget

Resources prioritized to **students and the classroom**





Addi Lowell

A Letter From the Chief Financial Officer

Certificate of Achievement FOR EXCELLENCE IN Financial Reporting

CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

Dear Stakeholders,

Wichita Public Schools (WPS) is pleased to present the 2026–27 Budget-At-A-Glance. As a supplement to our annual budget, we hope this document continues to break down barriers and create greater understanding of the complexities of Kansas school finance.

This year, our work is grounded in a clear vision: to be the premier district of choice, where each student and staff member can thrive and become future ready. Our strategic plan gives us direction, and our budget is one of the most important tools we have to turn that direction into action. It reflects our responsibility to align limited resources with the outcomes that matter most for students—academic achievement, graduation, and readiness for life, college, and career.

As we make those investments, we are strengthening the district's approach to long-range financial stewardship. The 2026–27 budget reflects not only the resources needed for the year ahead, but also a more intentional focus on the sustainability of our operations, facilities, and workforce. We are working to ensure that every dollar is aligned to our strategic priorities, that our systems reduce unnecessary workload for staff, and that our financial decisions support both immediate needs and the district's long-term stability.

This year, WPS is advancing a more transparent approach to capital planning. The newly published Capital Improvement Plan and Five-Year Capital Plan provide a clearer view of the facilities needs that must be addressed over time. By including a capital plan embedded in the adopted budget, we are connecting those needs to a disciplined financial strategy—one that helps the community understand what our priorities are, what they will cost, and how we intend to plan responsibly for them.

This work is especially important as we enter a period of uncertainty in school finance. Kansas' current school-finance formula is scheduled to expire in 2027, and the decisions made at the state level in the coming years will have a meaningful impact on public education. These dynamics require us to remain proactive, disciplined, and focused on building financial resilience. They also reinforce the importance of making thoughtful choices today that protect our ability to serve students tomorrow.

Our ongoing community engagement is central to that work. This year, we have engaged parents, staff, and community members in new and more intentional ways—sharing information, listening to concerns, and inviting honest conversations about the financial and operational challenges before us. Those conversations will continue as our community considers the November 2026 bond election and the long-term needs of our schools.

The 2026–27 budget reflects a commitment to responsible stewardship, transparent planning, and a future-ready Wichita Public Schools. Together, we are building the financial foundation our students deserve.

Warm regards,

Addi Lowell,
Chief Financial Officer

WPS Board of Education





DIANE ALBERT
District 1



JULIE HEDRICK
District 2
2026 Vice-President



BROCK BOOKER
District 3



STAN REESER
District 4
2026 President



AMY JENSEN
District 5



AMY WARREN
District 6



SHEILA BROWN-KINNARD
At-Large Member

Legislative Update

The 2026 Kansas Legislature considered a wide range of proposals affecting public schools, students, and educators. Major themes included school funding, literacy, student safety, personal electronic devices, school choice, open enrollment and oversight of educational institutions. The 2026 session concluded the 2025–2026 legislative biennium, meaning bills that did not become law will not automatically carry over into 2027.

Major bills passed into law during the session impacting the district include:

State Budget and Education Funding
HB 2513, the State Budget bill for 2026-27, included increased funding for K–12 schools, with the state aid per pupil increasing 2.9% to $5,778 per student. The final budget included an additional $6 million for Special Education State Aid, bringing that appropriation to approximately $617 million. For school districts, the practical impact is that special education funding increased, but the appropriation still fell woefully short of the state's statutory special education reimbursement formula and districts' actual excess costs.

Governor Laura Kelly line-item vetoed a $6 million cut to the Mental Health Initiative Team program, but that veto was overridden, resulting in a $645,000 reduction in funding for the district. Another line-item veto overridden allows a financial penalty to be assessed to districts equal to the superintendent's salary for each day of an unauthorized student walkout.

Personal Electronic Device and Social Media Policies
Senate Substitute for HB 2299 requires public school districts and accredited nonpublic schools to adopt policies generally prohibiting students from accessing or using personal communication devices during the school day. Devices must normally be turned off and stored in a location that is not on the student's person and is inaccessible during the school day. The law permits exceptions for emergencies, health needs, individualized education programs, Section 504 plans and other circumstances established by local policy. It addresses school employees' use of social media platforms to communicate with students. Virtual schools are excluded from certain requirements. No additional funding was provided to school districts to comply with this mandate. Districts had to review student handbooks, disciplinary procedures, storage practices, parent notification processes and employee communication policies before implementation by September 1, 2026.

Literacy, Scholarships and Workforce Programs
HB 2485 became one of the session's broadest education measures. Among other provisions, it requires use of a statewide universal literacy screening tool beginning in the 2027–2028 school year; expands requirements for individual reading-improvement plans, assessments, progress monitoring and parent communication; places additional Science of Reading and structured-literacy expectations on teacher-preparation programs; and requires districts to employ a licensed reading specialist for each elementary school in the district.

For districts, the most significant operational effects will likely involve literacy screening, intervention documentation, staff training, curriculum alignment and expanded reporting.

Federal Scholarship Tax Credit Participation
SB 361 authorizes Kansas to participate in a new federal income tax credit for individual contributions to qualifying scholarship-granting organizations beginning with tax years after December 31, 2026. The final bill focused on federal participation rather than the foreign exchange student provisions originally contained in the measure.

This measure may increase resources available for scholarships to private schools, although its ultimate effect will depend on federal implementation and participation by scholarship-granting organizations.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Determination Requirements
HB2402 requires each district with one or more schools where at least 50% of students are directly certified for free meals to determine whether those schools are eligible for the federal CEP and to formally consider participation. CEP allows all students in participating schools to receive meals at no charge. If a district chooses not to participate, the board of education must publicly determine and document in an open meeting that doing so would create a financial hardship. This law will require school boards to publicly weigh the benefits of universal free meals for students and families against the potential financial implications for the district. Once significant consideration is the likely reduction in completed Household Economic Surveys (HES), which districts must rely on to identify economically disadvantaged students for at-risk weighting. Without strong participation in the HES, districts will under identify eligible students and receive less at-risk funding than they would otherwise.

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET TIMELINE

JANUARY 9
Budget 101

JANUARY 30
Optimizing Resources

MARCH 6
Legislative Update

APRIL 6
Bond Update

MAY 1
Legislative/Budget Update with Kansas State Department of Education

MAY 29
Capital Improvement Plan, Budget Simulator

JULY 16
Building Needs Assessment Workshop, Revenue Neutral Rate Workshop

Understanding the legislation that did not become law is nearly as important as understanding the legislation that did. Failed bills and sustained vetoes help school leaders anticipate future policy discussions and prepare for issues that are likely to return in subsequent legislative sessions.

Critical bills that did not pass into law include:

Required Civics Examination and Instruction on Political Ideologies
HB 2412 would have required instruction on the negative effects of communist, fascist and socialist regimes and ideologies in non-elementary grades. It also would have required students entering ninth grade to pass an American civics examination before receiving a high school diploma. The Legislature passed the measure, but the Governor vetoed it and the veto was not overridden.

Expansion of Scholarship Tax Credits
HB 2468 would have authorized Kansas to participate in the federal scholarship contribution tax credit and increased the state cap on the Tax Credit for Low Income Students Scholarship Program. The Governor vetoed HB 2468, and the veto was sustained. A narrower federal participation provision subsequently became law through SB 361, but the proposed expansion of the state tax credit cap did not.

Mandatory Elementary Recess
SB 339 would have required a minimum amount of daily recess or physical activity for elementary students, restricted the withholding of recess for disciplinary purposes and established a state fitness assessment.

Education Inspector General and Misconduct Registry
SB 491 would have created an Office of Education Inspector General with authority to audit and investigate educational institutions. It also proposed an educator misconduct registry, mandatory reporting requirements, expanded criminal background checks and civil penalties.

Age-appropriate School Device Standards
SB 350 would have established restrictions and safety standards for school-issued devices used in specified grade levels and would have allowed parents to opt students out of certain device uses.

Property Tax Reform
Despite being one of the Legislature's top priorities, comprehensive property tax reform ultimately stalled during the 2026 session. Lawmakers debated multiple proposals, including constitutional amendments to limit property valuation increases and legislation to restrict local government property tax growth. However, disagreements between the House and Senate prevented constitutional amendments from receiving the required support, and Governor Laura Kelly vetoed the Legislature's primary property tax relief bill, leaving no significant statewide property tax reform enacted for 2026. The issue remains a top legislative priority and is expected to return as a major focus in the 2027 session.

Summary

The 2026 session produced several new statewide mandates that will require implementation, yet none were accompanied by additional funding to support implementation. While the Legislature continued to meet its obligation under the Gannon decision by increasing the base state aid per pupil for inflation, it did not make meaningful progress toward fully funding special education, and reduced funding in other key areas, including the Mental Health Intervention Team grant. As a result, Wichita Public Schools will continue to rely on general operating funds to cover state funding shortfalls, limiting the district's ability to invest those resources in other educational priorities.

The 2027 Kansas Legislative Session is shaping up to be one of the most consequential for public education in the past decade. With all 125 House seats on the ballot in November 2026, the Kansas School Equity and Enhancement Act scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2027, and several major policy proposals left unresolved during the 2026 session, the Legislature will face critical decisions affecting school finance, governance, and educational policy. In addition to determining the future of the state's school finance formula, lawmakers are expected to revisit issues such as special education funding, property tax reform, and other education initiatives that failed to advance in 2026. The convergence of these issues makes the 2027 session a pivotal moment that will influence the direction of Kansas public education for the remainder of the decade.

JULY 20
Year End Report, Estimated Revenues, Revenue Neutral Rate

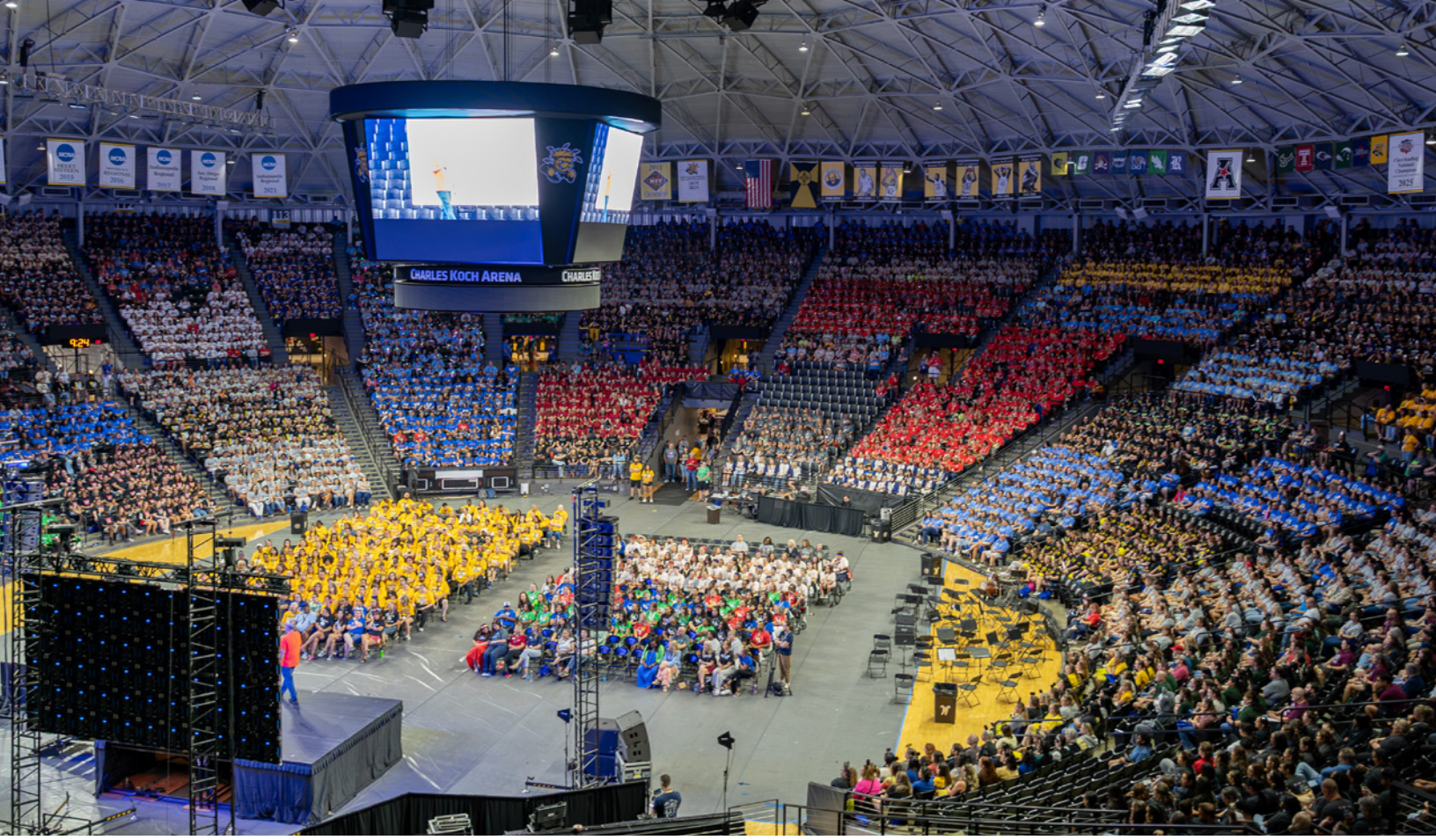
AUGUST 7
Five-Year Capital Plan

AUGUST 10
Newspaper Publication for Revenue Neutral Notice and Notice of Hearing

SEPTEMBER 14
Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing, Budget Hearing and Budget Adoption

SEPTEMBER 20
Budget Submission to Kansas Department of Education

OCTOBER 1
Budget Submission to Sedgwick County



Accomplishments

1. **Graduation Rate Strategic Plan Milestone Achieved:** The Class of 2025 achieved an 85.1% graduation rate, surpassing the Every Student Future Ready Strategic Plan goal of increasing the district's graduation rate from 79.9% to 85% by 2029. Wichita Public Schools reached this milestone in just two years, reflecting sustained investments in student achievement, targeted interventions, and innovative programming.

2. **Expanded FutureReady Career Pathways:** Wichita Public Schools expanded college and career opportunities through new workforce partnerships and programs. In partnership with WSU Tech, the district opened the FutureReady Center for Instructional Technology, giving students opportunities to earn industry-recognized IT credentials while in high school. The district also launched a Mental and Behavioral Health Career Pathway for the 2026–27 school year, preparing students for careers in one of the region's fastest-growing fields.

3. **Strengthened Long-Range Capital Planning:** Wichita Public Schools strengthened long-range financial planning by developing a Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and a complementary Five-Year Capital Plan to guide investments in technology, safety and security, facilities repairs and maintenance, major capital improvements, and strategic programs. Together, these plans improve transparency, prioritize investments, and align long-term capital needs with available resources. The district also developed a community-informed bond proposal for November 2026, incorporating feedback from districtwide listening tours and facility engagement sessions.

4. **Expanded Technology Innovation:** Wichita Public Schools opened Verizon Innovative Learning Labs at Brooks, Coleman, Curtis, and Hamilton Middle Schools, expanding access to artificial intelligence, augmented and virtual reality, 3D printing, and other emerging technologies. These learning environments help students develop the technical skills needed for future careers. These labs are in addition to a lab at Marshall Middle School.

5. **Expanded Innovative Learning Opportunities:** Following a successful implementation, Creative Minds doubled its capacity by adding two classrooms at Benton Elementary School for the 2026–27 school year. The expansion reflects growing demand for personalized, student-centered learning and the district's commitment to innovative educational opportunities.

6. **Expanded Student Opportunities Through Partnerships:** Through a partnership with the Kansas City Chiefs, Wichita Public Schools launched girls flag football at its comprehensive high schools, expanding athletic opportunities while promoting leadership, teamwork, and equitable access to extracurricular activities.

7. **Strategic Priorities Guided by Stakeholder Feedback:** Wichita Public Schools completed two rounds of districtwide listening tours and facility engagement sessions to gather input from employees, and created new ways to engage with families and community members. This feedback informed the district's strategic priorities, which focus on becoming the region's district of choice through future ready facilities, innovative programming, operational excellence, and initiatives that support thriving students and staff.

Challenges

1. **Facilities Modernization and Infrastructure Investment:** Wichita Public Schools continues to manage the significant challenge of maintaining and modernizing an aging portfolio of school facilities in Kansas. Nearly 60 schools are more than 75 years old, and the district's facilities have an average age of 61 years, creating substantial ongoing needs for repairs, maintenance, and building modernization. While the district has established a comprehensive Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Five-Year Capital Plan to strategically prioritize investments, available funding remains insufficient to address the full scope of facility needs. The district continues to engage the community on a November 2026 bond proposal designed to address long-term facility needs and preserve safe, functional, and future-ready learning environments that support teaching and learning.

2. **Changing Enrollment and Financial Sustainability:** Changing enrollment patterns continue to influence the district's financial outlook. Demographic shifts and increased educational choice require Wichita Public Schools to strategically align staffing, facilities, and operations while preserving educational opportunities and maintaining high-quality services. Becoming the district of choice through innovative programming, future-ready facilities, and operational excellence remains essential to sustaining enrollment and long-term financial stability.

3. **Supporting Thriving Students and Staff:** Wichita Public Schools is committed to creating an environment where both students and employees can thrive. Meeting the increasingly complex academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students requires continued investment in exceptional educators and support staff. At the same time, rising healthcare and benefit costs, increasing competition for talent, and evolving employee expectations require the district to maintain competitive total compensation, professional growth opportunities, and workplace supports while ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

4. **State and Federal Funding and Legislative Uncertainty:** Wichita Public Schools continues to navigate evolving education policy, funding, and legislative activity at both the state and federal levels. Frequent policy changes, evolving compliance requirements, and legislation enacted within compressed implementation timelines require the district to remain agile while balancing operational, financial, and educational priorities. The expiration of Kansas' current school finance formula at the end of fiscal year 2027, coupled with the Education Funding Task Force's evaluation of a new or altered funding model, adds further uncertainty to long-range financial planning. These factors reinforce the need for prudent budgeting, financial flexibility, and thoughtful long-term planning.



Budget Foundations

At Wichita Public Schools, most of our operating funds are supplied from the State of Kansas and administered as a product of enrollment. These state-provided funds are often restricted, with specific guidelines regarding the types of expenditures, programs, and student populations they can support. Additionally, a portion of our revenue is generated through local taxes levied from property owners in the WPS boundary. The district upholds a commitment to fiscal responsibility by maintaining consistent mill levies, which are annually reviewed and approved by the Board of Education. A detailed breakdown of our funding sources is provided below:



FEDERAL REVENUE (12.3%)
Ongoing federal revenue is predominantly allocated to child nutrition programs, special education, and various other highly-regulated federal initiatives. A significant portion of federal funding is provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title funds, which support key programs aimed at improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged students, including Title I for low-income schools, Title II for teacher quality, and Title III for English language learners. These federal funds, while exempt from Kansas budget laws due to differing fiscal years and spending guidelines, are reported in compliance with state budgeting requirements.



STATE REVENUE (69%)
State revenue, primarily sourced from sales, income, and property taxes, is distributed to school districts through varying formulas established by the Kansas Legislature. Twenty mills of this revenue are levied locally and remitted to the state for equitable distribution among all Kansas districts. General fund revenue is determined based on a per-pupil funding amount ($5,778) and audited enrollment, with additional weightings for students in vocational training, bilingual education, at-risk and low-income categories, and those requiring transportation over 2.5 miles. Additionally, state funding for the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERS) is included under this category.



LOCAL REVENUE (18.7%)
Local revenue sources encompass property taxes, investment income, and contributions from local grants and businesses. The district benefits greatly from community partnerships and expresses gratitude for the continued local support in advancing the education of our students.

This structured approach to funding enables Wichita Public Schools to strategically manage resources, ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations while optimizing the educational experience for all students.

HOW WE RAISE FUNDS LOCALLY

Wichita Public Schools' Board of Education remains steadfast in its commitment to fiscal responsibility and its dedication to local taxpayers. Each year, the Board takes a conservative and thoughtful approach to evaluating and assessing the mill levy, ensuring that the district's financial needs are met without overburdening the community. Despite facing legislative changes and budget pressures, the Board has successfully maintained a comparatively flat mill levy.

This year, the Board approved a mill levy of 51.400, demonstrating their commitment to fiscal prudence by passing along savings to local taxpayers. This careful stewardship will generate $76.73 million to support the Supplemental General Fund, ensuring that our schools receive the necessary funding while keeping property taxes as low as possible. The Board's efforts reflect their ongoing dedication to balancing the needs of the district with the financial well-being of the community.

*% Restricted: The percentage of the program that is funded with restricted revenue

**Other District Initiatives: Latchkey, District-wide Intervention, Local Gift and Grants, Summer School, Special Assessment, Parents As Teachers, Special Liability, District Leadership, Family and Community Engagement

SPENDING BY PROGRAM

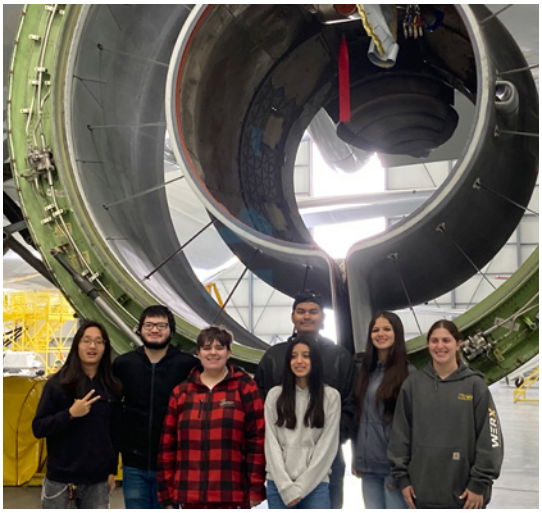
	Elementary Education	Pre-K Program	Secondary Education	Career and Postsecondary Education	At-Risk Educational Supports	Virtual Education	Bilingual Education	Curriculum and Instructional Support	Student Support Services	Special Education Services	Behavior Supports	Other District Initiatives**
Budget	$121.9M	$15.9M	$145.6M	$12.7M	$30.3M	$3.6M	$17.9M	$17.2M	$48.9M	$95.4M	$8.2M	$69.7M
% of Total	11.8%	1.5%	14.1%	1.2%	2.9%	0.3%	1.7%	1.7%	4.7%	9.2%	0.8%	6.7%
% Restricted*	40.2%	99.8%	36.8%	100%	100%	100%	99.0%	54.1%	93.6%	94.0%	85.2%	76.2%















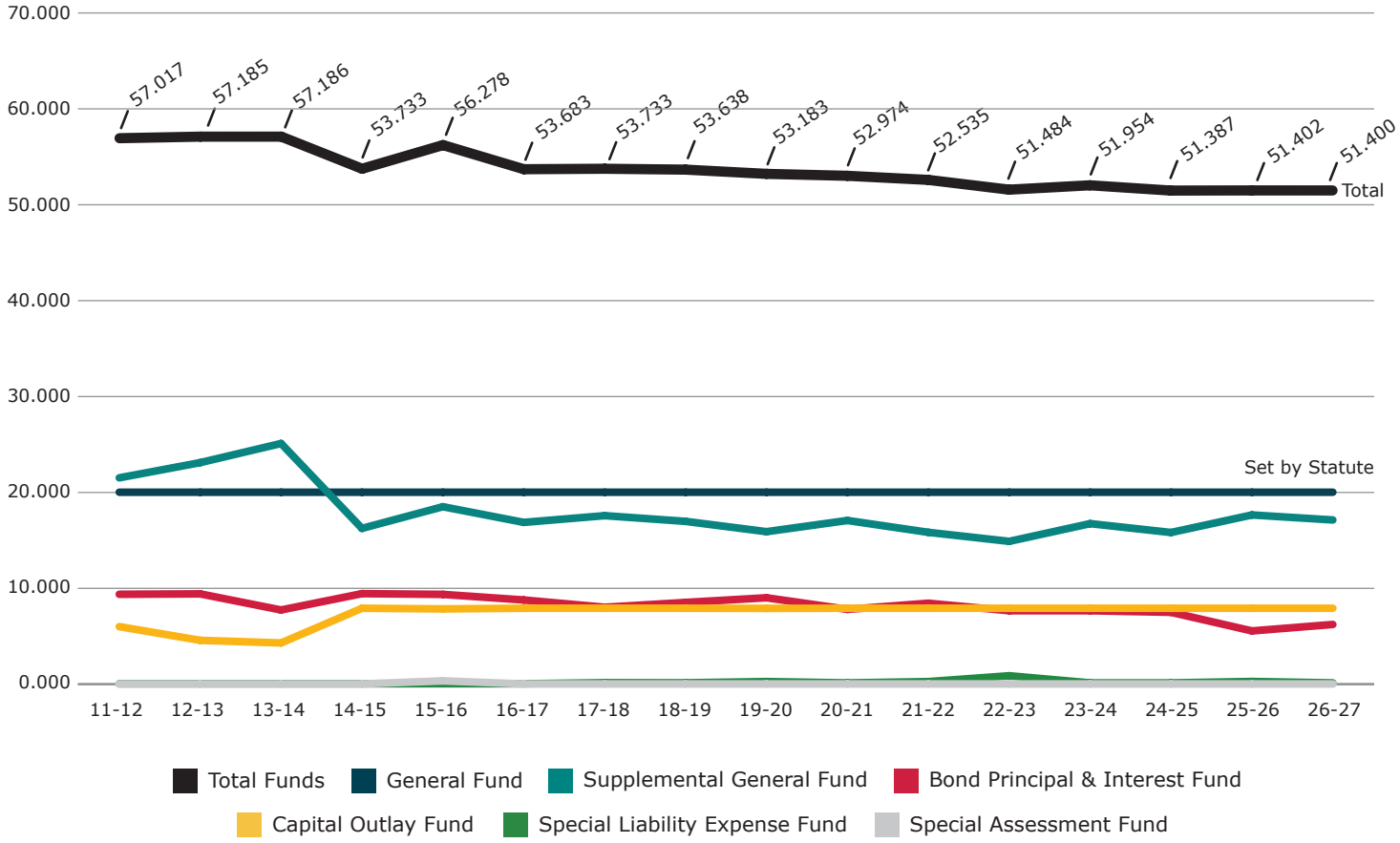




SPENDING BY PROGRAM

	Transportation	Nutrition Services	Safety and Environmental Services	Information Services and Technology	Employee Benefits and Insurance Management	KPERS State Retirement	Business and Operations	Debt Management	Facilities Services	Energy Management	Design and Construction	Capital Budget Reserves
Budget	$54.5M	$38.6M	$10.7M	$26.8M	$6.3M	$58.7M	$17.8M	$53.6M	$42.6M	$23.6M	$59.2M	$57.5M
% of Total	5.3%	3.7%	1.0%	2.6%	0.6%	5.7%	1.7%	5.2%	4.1%	2.3%	5.7%	5.5%
% Restricted*	0.0%	100%	32.2%	65.3%	14.5%	100%	10.1%	100%	16.0%	0.0%	100%	100%

WPS Mill Levy History



How to Calculate a Mill Levy

Understanding how property taxes are calculated can be confusing, but one key component is the mill levy, which determines how much a homeowner will pay based on the value of their home. A mill levy represents the amount of property taxes due per thousand dollars of assessed property value. This example explains how to calculate a mill levy using a simple example, making it easier to understand how the mill rate impacts what a homeowner will pay.

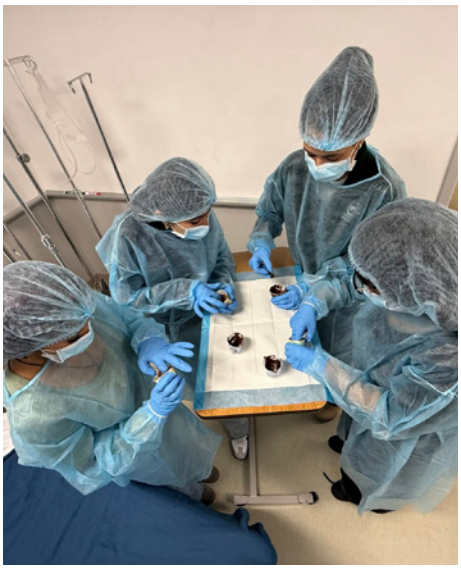
To calculate a mill levy on a home, start with the appraised value of the property and determine the assessed value. The assessed value is a percentage of the appraised value, which for residential properties is 11.5%. In this example, we'll calculate the mill levy for a $200,000 home with an assessment rate of 11.5% and a mill rate of 7.500 mills.

1. **Determine the assessed value:** The assessed value is calculated by multiplying the appraised value by the assessment rate:

So, the assessed value of the $200,000 home is $23,000.

2. **Apply the mill rate:** A mill is one-thousandth of a dollar, meaning 1 mill = $1 per $1,000 of assessed value. To calculate the taxes owed, multiply the assessed value by the mill rate, then divide by 1,000:

The taxes owed on a $200,000 home is $172.50.







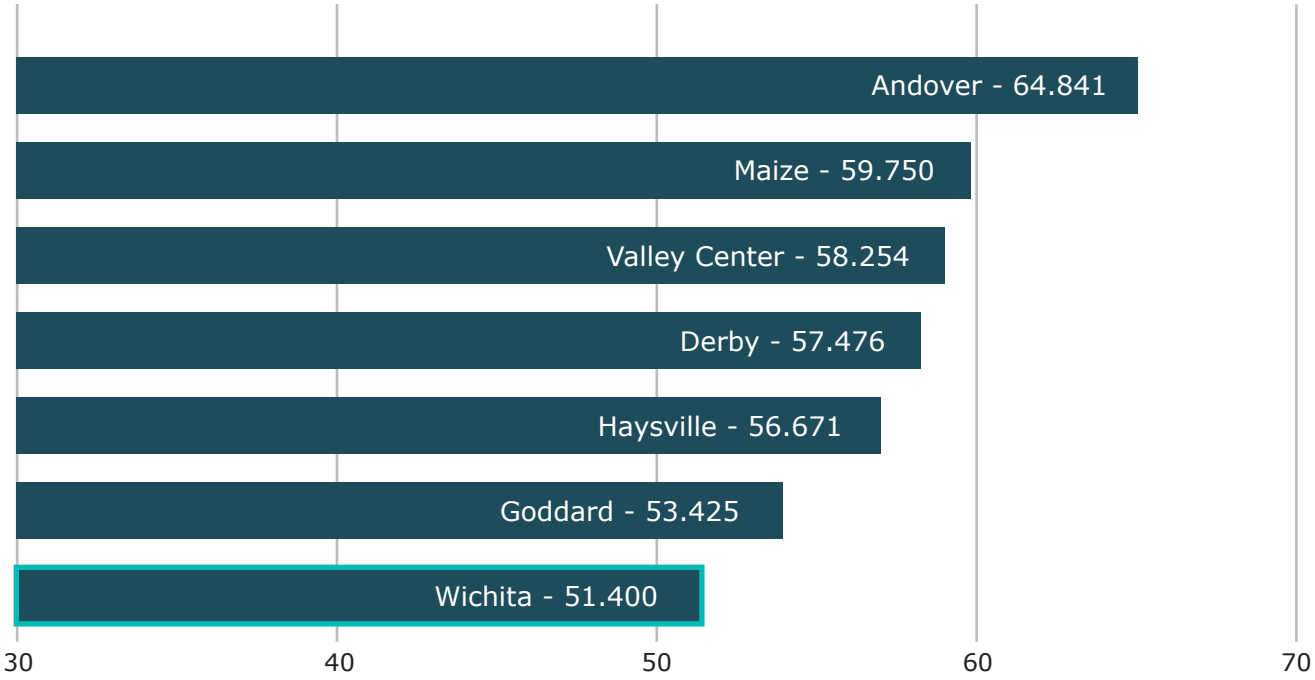








2026-27 Mill Rates



In Wichita Public Schools, every dollar is a deliberate investment in possibility and progress. The heartbeat of our budget is people—teachers, leaders, and support staff whose passion and expertise transform classrooms into launchpads for student success. Because education is a deeply human endeavor, we devote the largest share of our resources to compensation, understanding that empowering our workforce is the most powerful way to shape learning outcomes, inspire innovation, and build a thriving community.

But our vision reaches even further. We invest boldly in the tools, environments, and systems that make learning exceptional for every student. From dynamic instructional materials and state-of-the-art technology to safe, reliable transportation and transformative school facilities, every expenditure is purposeful.

Through strategic allocations for utilities, contracted services, and upgrades in infrastructure, we ensure that our schools are not just operationally efficient, but community-centered hubs for learning and growing. This disciplined approach empowers us to deliver on our promise: Every Student, Future Ready.

SALARIES AND BENEFITS 66.7%

All personnel costs, including salaries, extra-duty pay, health insurance, payroll taxes and fringe benefits

PURCHASED SERVICES 10.7%

Contracted services with vendors and providers to provide instructional or technical support

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS 7.0%

Items that deplete or deteriorate through use

TRANSPORTATION 5.4%

School transportation for students, including fuel

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT 2.5%

Acquiring or improving land, buildings, furniture and fixtures; technology

DEBT SERVICES 5.2%

Principal and interest on the voter-supported 2000 and 2008 bond issues

UTILITIES 2.0%

Natural gas, electricity, water, sewer, recycling, phone and internet services

OTHER EXPENDITURES 0.5%

Dues, fees, licenses, permits, etc.

WICHITA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT AT-A-GLANCE

WPS EDUCATES **more than half** OF ALL K-12 STUDENTS IN SEDGWICK COUNTY



43,643 STUDENTS

More than 85 schools
AND 5 PROGRAMS AT PARTNER FACILITIES



More than 100 languages
SPOKEN IN STUDENTS' HOMES

85.1% graduation rate
IN 2025, UP 5.9 PERCENTAGE POINTS SINCE 2024
*2026 GRADUATION RATES NOT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF PUBLICATION



3rd largest employer
IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA WITH MORE THAN 5,500 FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

RESTRICTED 75%

The majority of the district's budget is restricted, meaning the funds can only be spent on the program identified in the respective statute or grant. Examples include special education, bond and interest, nutrition services, at-risk and capital outlay.

UNRESTRICTED 25%

Just under one quarter of the overall budget is unrestricted, meaning the funds can be used to support any costs associated with regular K-12 education. The primary sources of unrestricted funds are the General Fund, the Supplemental General Fund (Local Option Budget) and Contingency Reserves.

Resources Invested in Classrooms and Schools



THE DOTTED LINE REPRESENTS THE MORE THAN 87 PERCENT OF OUR OPERATING BUDGET THAT DIRECTLY SUPPORTS STUDENTS.

- Nurses, Social Workers, Counselors, Psychologists, Speech Pathologists **9.8%**
- Librarians, Computer Labs, Teacher Training **5.5%**
- Facilities Maintenance **8.2%**
- Business Support Services **3.5%**
- General Administration **1.2%**
- Utilities **2.0%**
- Student Transportation **6.2%**
- Food Service **4.3%**
- School Administration **5.8%**
- Instruction **53.4%**
- Other Support Services **0.1%**

Building Needs Assessments

BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS AND REMOVE BARRIERS (SEE VISUAL):

- **Core Services:** Isely, Spaght, Enders, Benton, Franklin, Cessna, Griffith, Jefferson
- **Special Education Support:** McLean, Earhart, Spaght, White, Heights
- **English for Speakers of Other Languages:** Black, Enders, Price-Harris, White, Dodge, Little, Colvin, Robinson
- **Counselor, Social Worker, Psychologist (CST):** Various Schools
- **Behavior Supports:** Ortiz, Linwood, Woodland
- **Assistant Principal Supports:** Buckner, Mueller, Jackson, Harry Street
- **Small Group Instruction Paras:** Creative Minds, Benton, Heights, Cessna, White, Cloud, Little Early Childhood Center, Chirista McAuliffe Academy

AMOUNT OF TIME THE BOARD ESTIMATES IT WILL TAKE FOR EACH STUDENT TO ACHIEVE GRADE LEVEL PROFICIENCY ON THE STATE ASSESSMENTS IF THE BUDGET ACTIONS WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED:

- District Leadership recommended the Board response to 2024-25 Building Needs Assessment for 2025-26 budget planning:
  - The district goal is 32-50% of students performing at levels 3 and 4 by 2030. This would be a 2% increase each year to 2030 at the minimum.
  - Decrease the percentage of students scoring a level 1 from 47.6% to 44.6% on the spring 2026 3rd Grade Reading State Assessment.

WHAT BUDGET ACTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ADDRESS BARRIERS:

- **Attendance is the Most Consistent Barrier:** Chronic absenteeism, tardiness, transportation, and health/family challenges limit students' access to core instruction and interventions.
- **Needs of At-Risk Students Are Increasingly Complex:** Principals repeatedly identified behavior, mental health, trauma, motivation, and social-emotional regulation as barriers that reduce instructional time and require more intensive support.
- **Schools Need Greater Capacity to Respond:** Staffing, intervention support, ESOL/SPED services, family engagement, administrative staff, and other instructional resources are needed to meet academic gaps and nonacademic needs more consistently.

ALIGNING BUDGET & STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- **Program Spending Aligned to Strategic Plan:** Progress monitoring, curriculum, professional development, safety & belonging, etc.
- **Meeting the Needs of At-Risk Students (BNA Process):** Tutors, intervention programs & curriculum, summer school, extra classroom supports, additional counselors, social workers, psychologists, behavior positions.
- **SPED & ESOL Services for All Schools:** Teachers, paras, counselors, psychologists, social workers, speech, nurses, etc.
- **Core Services for All Schools:** Teachers, Administration, Custodians, Nutrition Services, Transportation, Utilities, Technology, etc.







BUILDING NEEDS ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS



8.9 OF 10 said current instructional materials are adequate and appropriate.



7.7 OF 10 said current school technology is appropriate.



6.5 OF 10 said there is adequate personnel/staff to meet the needs of the school and students under the Elementary & Secondary Education Act guidelines requiring every classroom to contain a certified educator in the content area taught and to meet the goals of the school.



5.8 OF 10 said there is adequate space for student learning.

BUILDING NEEDS ASSESSMENT BARRIERS



7.8 OF 10 said there are necessary repairs and adjustments that need to be made to facilities.



7.6 OF 10 list attendance/truancy as a barrier.



7.0 OF 10 list parent and community involvement as a barrier.



6.4 OF 10 list paraprofessional training as a barrier.



4.9 OF 10 list child study team ratios as a barrier.

FIVE-YEAR AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Why Develop a Capital Improvement Plan?

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a long-range roadmap that prioritizes the maintenance, improvement and replacement of large systems and infrastructure across district facilities. The CIP aligns facility investments with strategies identified in the Facility Master Plan and supports the goals of the district's Strategic Plan. Using a CIP can help reduce facilities-related emergency decision making and improve long-term financial planning.

The Five-Year Capital Plan

This broader financial plan includes CIP expenditures as well as planned expenses in informational technology, safety, security and some programming. The 5-year Capital Plan also captures other capital outlay revenues and expenditures

- Local Property Taxes
- State Aid
- Interest Income
- Grants
- Bond Reimbursement and More

Protect First, Improve Next

Prioritize building envelope and core systems before lower-priority interior and site enhancements.

$85.5M

Repair and Maintenance

Building envelope, roof, HVAC, electrical, plumbing and other system repairs.

$22.9M

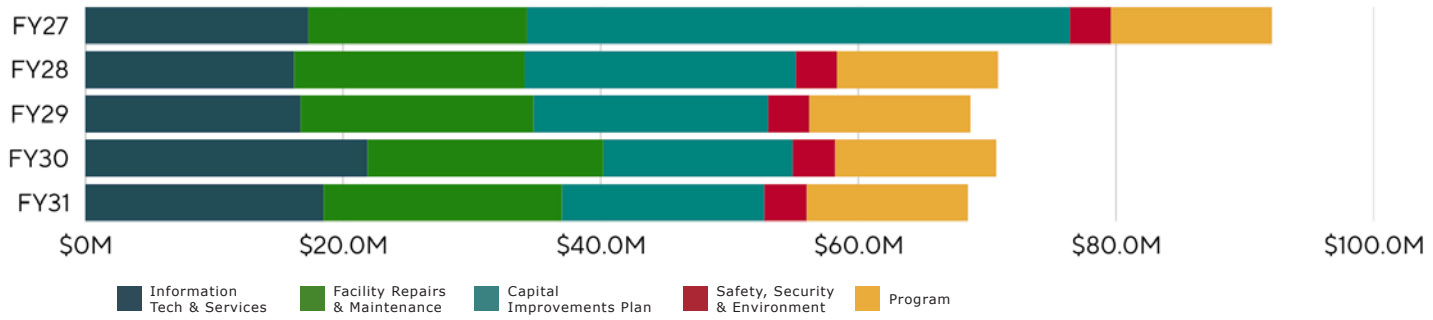
Thriving Students and Staff

Instructional interior improvements, support spaces and operation efficiencies.

$3.5M

District of Choice

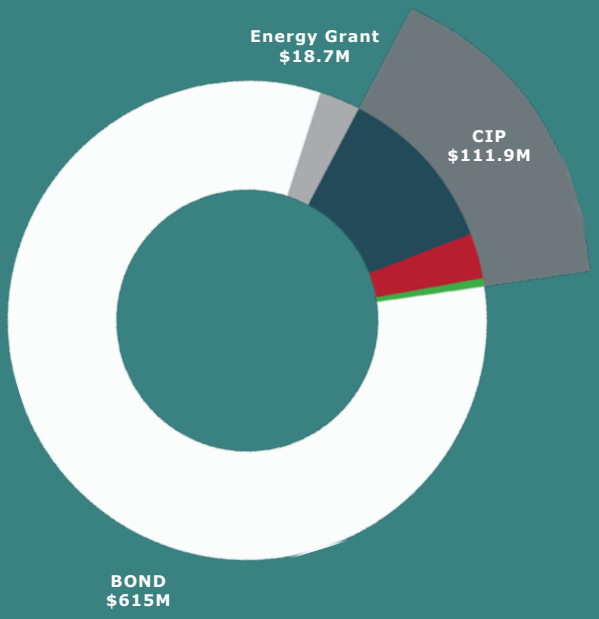
Modernization, grounds improvements, beautification, visitor and community experience.



THE BIG PICTURE

CIP at a Glance

The Capital Improvement Plan is modeled at $111.9M, with bond and energy grant projects tracked separately.

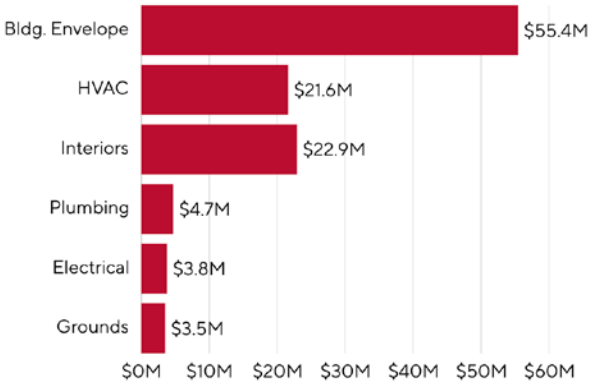


THE DETAILS

Capital Improvement Projects

Projects were selected using a variety of criteria, including facility assessment data and staff requests.

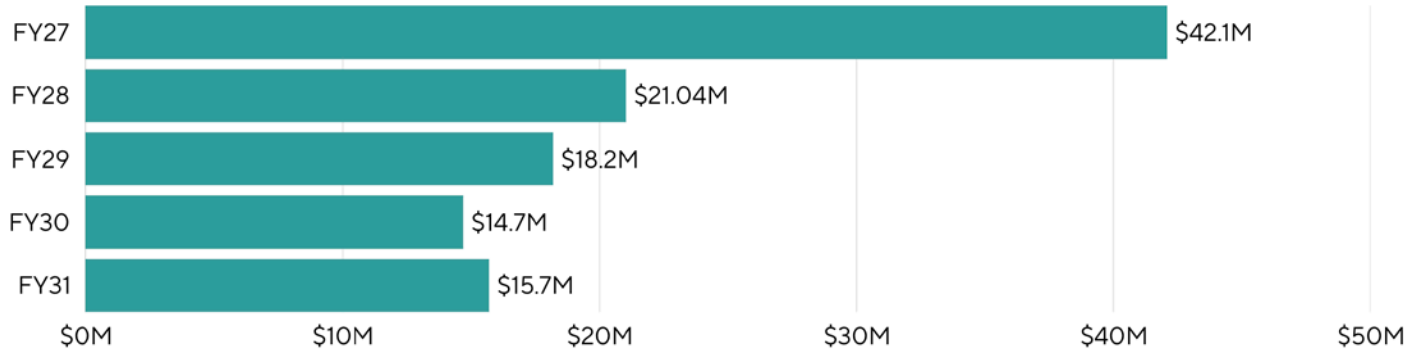
Facility Assessment	Staff Requests
166 projects	82 projects



THE TIMELINE

Capital Improvements Spending | The Next Five Years

FY2027 concentrates $42.1M across 46 projects at 34 sites, with the largest dollar amount focused on building preservation. After 2027, the plan steps down into continued preservation and targeted support projects.



Programs In Schools

Partnerships

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Elementary: Adams, Anderson, Colvin, Dodge, Spaght, Stanley, Washington

PANDO INITIATIVE
Elementary: Cloud, Colvin, Franklin, Harry Street, Jackson, Jefferson, Lawrence, Stanley, Washington, White, Woodman
Middle: Curtis, Hamilton, Marshall, Pleasant Valley, Truesdell
High: North, Southeast, West

LOVE SCHOOLS
Elementary: Adams, Benton, Buckner, Caldwell, Colvin, Enterprise, Griffith, Harry Street, Irving, Jackson, Jefferson, Kelly, Lawrence, Linwood, Mueller, Ortiz, Spaght, Washington, White, Woodland
Middle: Hamilton

EVERYDAY LABS
Elementary: Adams, Allen, Anderson, Beech, Benton, Black, Buckner, Caldwell, Cessna, Chisholm Trail, Cloud, College Hill, Colvin, Dodge, Enders, Enterprise, Franklin, Gammon, Gardiner, Griffith, Harry Street, Irving, Jackson, Jefferson, Kelly, Kensler, Lawrence, Linwood, L'Ouverture, Minneha, Mueller, OK, Ortiz, Pleasant Valley, Price-Harris, Seltzer, Stanley, Washington, White, Woodland, Woodman, Spaght
Middle: Coleman, Curtis, Hamilton, Truesdell
Alt/Special: Little Early Childhood Center

Intervention Programs

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION TEACHERS
Elementary: Adams, Allen, Anderson, Buckner, Cessna, Chisholm Trail, College Hill, Colvin, Dodge, Enders, Enterprise, Gammon, Griffith, Harry Street, Irving, Jackson, Jefferson, Kelly, Lawrence, Linwood, L'Ouverture, McCollom, Mueller, Ortiz, Pleasant Valley, Spaght, Stanley, Washington, White, Woodman
K-8: Gordon Parks Academy
Middle: Curtis, Hamilton, Pleasant Valley
High: West

GAP
High: Heights
Alt/Special: Wichita Alternative

NIGHT SCHOOL
High: West
Alt/Special: Chester Lewis,

AVID
Middle: Coleman, Mead, Pleasant Valley, Robinson, Truesdell
High: East, Heights, North, Northwest, South, Southeast, West

STEALTH
Elementary: Adams, Anderson, Cessna, Colvin, Irving, Ortiz, Price-Harris, Seltzer, Washington, White
K-8: Gordon Parks Academy

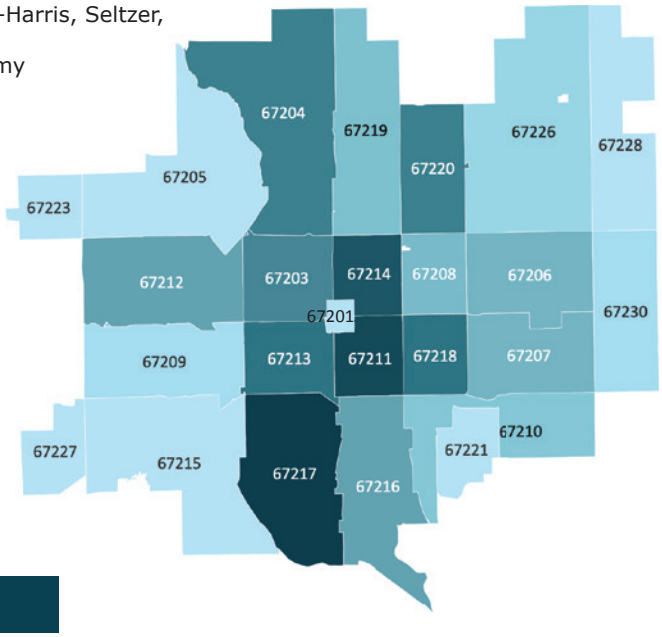
Mentor Programs

HIGH SCHOOL MENTORS
Middle: Wells
High: North, South, Southeast, West
Alt/Special: Wichita Alternative

MIDDLE SCHOOL MENTORS
Middle: Coleman, Curtis, Hamilton, Marshall, Mead, Pleasant Valley, Stucky, Truesdell

PRIME FIT
Elementary: Allen, Buckner, Colvin, Enders, Gammon, Jefferson, Kensler, Lawrence, McLean, Spaght, Stanley, Washington
K-8: Christa McAuliffe Academy, Isely
Middle: Brooks, Coleman, Curtis, Hamilton, Mead, Robinson, Stucky
High: East, North, Northwest, South, Southeast, West
Alt/Special: Wells

PEACEKEEPERS
Elementary: College Hill
Middle: Coleman, Curtis, Hamilton, Pleasant Valley, Robinson, Wilbur



At-Risk Programs by Zip Code

0 Programs — **30 Programs**


Buckner




VISUALIZE
When you visualize, you . . .
Class
127 wpm
Me
Goal : 125 wpm



Special Education Funding

20%

OF WPS STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

THAT'S NEARLY

9,000

STUDENTS AGES 3-21

IN

EVERY SCHOOL IN OUR DISTRICT

The Kansas statutory reimbursement rate is 92% of special education "excess costs." Annual legislative appropriations have fallen short of this funding requirement for 15 years.

Excess Costs for FY26: **$109.9M**

In FY26, funding was just **65%**



GAP IN FUNDING

$29.2M

WPS RESPONSIBILITY

In FY27, funding is projected to cover **just 56%** of excess costs.



TYPES OF EXCEPTIONALITIES

- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language
- Other Health Impairment
- Autism
- Intellectual Disability
- Developmental Delay/Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Deaf-Blindness
- Gifted and Multiple Disabilities

Unencumbered Cash Balances and Unrestricted Reserves

Unencumbered Cash Balances: A Foundation of Fiscal Stability
In discussions about school district finances, cash balances sometimes face criticism as being "too high" or underutilized. In truth, unencumbered cash balances are an essential part of sound financial management, providing the district with stability and flexibility to support students and staff effectively.

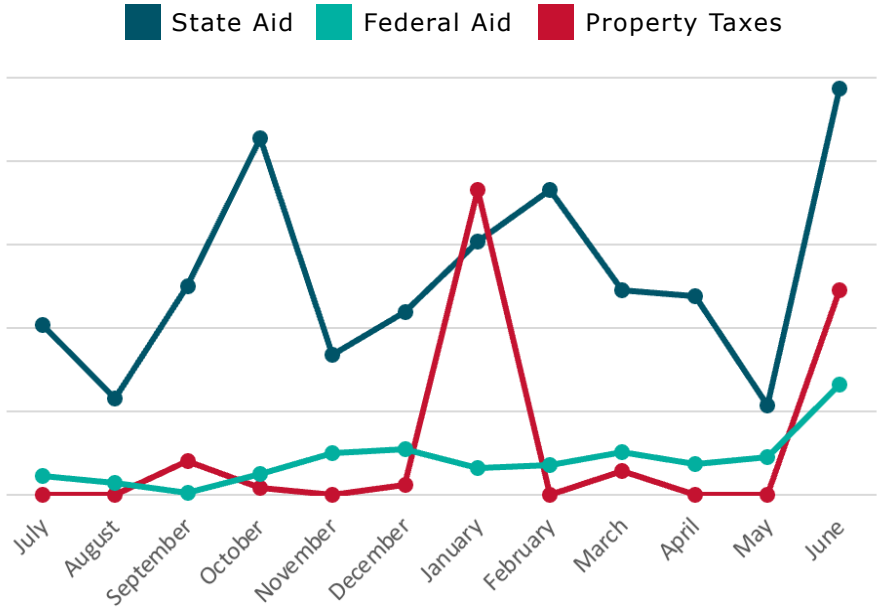
What Is Unencumbered Cash?
Unencumbered cash refers to funds available after accounting for liabilities and legal or contractual restrictions. At Wichita Public Schools (WPS), cash balances fall into two main categories: restricted funds, which are designated for specific uses such as bond payments or insurance programs, and unrestricted funds, which are held as reserves to manage operational cash flow and contingencies.

Think of unrestricted reserves as the district's working capital—money set aside to ensure the district can meet its financial obligations even when revenue timing fluctuates.

Why Does the District Maintain These Reserves?
Kansas school funding is received on a scheduled basis, creating gaps between when expenses occur and when funds arrive. Maintaining adequate reserves allows WPS to cover payroll, utilities, and classroom expenses before state aid and federal reimbursement, or ad valorem property taxes are received. Without cash on hand, WPS would not be able to pay its operating bills on time, as the district operates on a reimbursement basis for nearly every source of revenue. Moreover, reserves provide a safety net to address unexpected challenges, such as emergency repairs, enrollment shifts, or changes in state or federal funding.

Policy Framework for Reserve Levels
WPS follows its Board-approved Unrestricted Reserves Policy (P3460), which aligns with best practices recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The policy targets reserves sufficient to cover immediate operating expenses, balancing financial prudence with responsible use of taxpayer funds. Currently, the district's unrestricted reserves are within this target range, ensuring both operational continuity and fiscal flexibility.

When We Get Our Funds



*Other miscellaneous revenue not listed

Breakdown of Major Cash Balances
Out of the district's $384 million unencumbered cash balance as of 7/1/26, $252.9 million or 66% is made up of three restricted purpose funds. The district's three largest cash balances include:

1. **Bond & Interest Funds:** Dedicated exclusively to servicing voter-approved debt obligations.
2. **Self-Funded Insurance Programs:** Covering health, dental, vision, prescription benefits, short-term disability, workers' compensation, student technology, and property and liability insurance, these programs require reserves to cover ongoing claims and liabilities.
3. **Capital Outlay:** Funds allocated for facility maintenance, technology upgrades, and equipment purchases, restricted by statute or policy.

Maintaining healthy unencumbered cash balances is a key element of Wichita Public Schools' financial stewardship. These reserves protect the district from revenue timing issues and unforeseen expenses, allowing educators to focus on delivering quality education. Through disciplined reserve management and transparent reporting, WPS continues to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and commitment to student success.



Unrestricted Reserves

WPS Policy 3460: Unrestricted Reserves
In alignment with the best practices recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Wichita Public Schools (WPS) will maintain an unrestricted cash balance at a level sufficient to ensure financial stability, support cash flow needs, and safeguard against unexpected financial challenges. Unrestricted cash balance is defined as unencumbered cash that is not subject to restrictions or limitations, and the unrestricted funds included will be defined by Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

WPS will target an unrestricted cash balance within the following range:

- Minimum: No less than the annual average of one state aid payment, ensuring the district can withstand temporary delays or fluctuations in state funding. This is calculated by taking total state aid revenue received in a fiscal year divided into 12.
- Maximum: Up to two months of regular operating budget revenues (operating budget defined as final legal maximum General and Supplemental General funds) or two months of regular operating budget expenditures and transfers, whichever is greater.

If the unrestricted cash balance exceeds the maximum threshold, the district will evaluate the surplus and consider the following actions:

- One-time investments in areas that do not create recurring obligations (i.e. salaries), such as facility improvements or technology upgrades.
- One-time taxpayer relief measures, such as mill levy adjustments.
- Reallocation to restricted reserves for future anticipated obligations, such as capital projects or other long-term funding plans.

The adequacy of the cash balance will be reviewed annually as part of the district's budget process. If the cash balance falls below the minimum threshold, WPS will develop a financial recovery plan to restore it to the target range within a reasonable timeframe.

Minimum	
2025-26 State Aid	$567,726,310
Monthly Average	$47,310,526

Maximum	
2025-26 Operating Budget	$607,583,654
Bi-Monthly Average	$101,263,942

Unrestricted Reserves	
General	$21,699
Supplemental General	$2,355,814
Supplemental Grants	$5,683,977
Professional Development	$5,000,000
Textbooks	$27,277,999
Contingency	$45,000,000
Total	$85,339,489

Days of Operations

$777,770,977
School Operations Budget

171
Days of School

$4,548,368
Per School Day

Unrestricted Reserves

$85,339,489
Total Unrestricted Reserves

18.8
Days of Operations

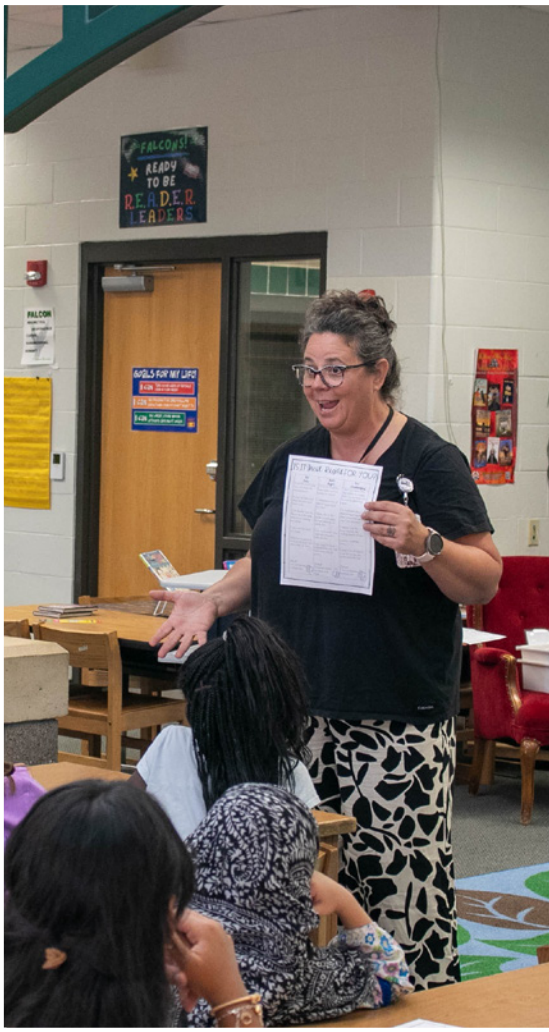
$45,000,000
Contingency Only

9.9
Days of Operations


WORLD SOCCER CUP
WICHITA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2026


adidas
STINK




FALCONS!
READY TO BE
READER LEADERS







Why Does Wichita Public Schools Need a Bond?

Despite years of significant upkeep beyond routine maintenance, many Wichita Public Schools facilities have reached a point where costly repairs are unavoidable. This bond will address many of these needs — updating aging systems and improving safety. The 2026 bond reflects a broader vision to provide students and staff with functional, inspiring and comfortable learning environments that are built for the future.

The bond proposal was developed by evaluating facility needs, understanding financial realities that exist for the school district and community, and acknowledging community priorities. Community and staff feedback guided the decision for a two-question proposal in which question 2 could only pass if question 1 passed. On Nov. 3, the community voted in favor of both questions.

WHAT'S IN THE BOND?

Question 1 — $407.1M

Build New FutureReady Center at East High School	$28.2M
Rebuild Truesdell Middle School	$103.9M
Rebuild Black Elementary School	$44.2M
Rebuild McLean Elementary School	$44.2M
Rebuild Chisholm Trail Elementary as a K–8 School	$81.3M
Middle School addition to Cessna Elementary to make it a K–8 School	$45.3M
North High School Preservation	$20M
East High School Preservation	$20M
HVAC in PE & Other Learning Spaces	$15M
Improve Traffic Flow at Select Schools	$5M

Question 2 — $207.9M

Rebuild Coleman Middle School	$106M
Rebuild Adams Elementary School	$42M
Renovate Hadley for Horace Mann & Move Irving to Horace Mann	$11M
Renovate OK Elementary into Early Childhood Center	$9M
Preservation at four 50–70-year-old High Schools	$4M
High School Improvements:	
South: CTE, safety, auditorium lighting, and HVAC	$8.4M
Northwest: CTE, safety, auditorium lighting, and HVAC	$7M
West: Multi-purpose addition, CTE, parking, and HVAC	$9.2M
Heights: CTE, HVAC, & auditorium update	$11.3M

TOTAL — $615M



ELECTION RESULTS

Q1 — YES | 62% — NO | 38%

Q2 — YES | 60% — NO | 40%

Because both Questions passed, the tax rate will increase with an anticipated impact of an additional $50 a year ($4.16 a month) for the owner of a $200,000 home compared to what is being paid today.

Home Value	Annual Anticipated Cost
$75,000	$18.75 ($1.56 a month)
$100,000	$25 ($2.08 a month)
$200,000	$50 ($4.16 a month)
$300,000	$75 ($6.25 a month)
$400,000	$100 ($8.33 a month)


THE RIDE






WICHITA
HEIGHTS
HIGH SCHOOL


CESSNA
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL




JESSIE HUNTER BLACK
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Alvin E. Morris Administrative Center
903 S. Edgemoor
Wichita, KS 67218

/wichitapublicschools
/escuelaspublicasdewichitausd259

@wichitausd259

@wichitausd259
@wpsusd259_es

wichitapublicschools

www.usd259.org



The Wichita Public Schools is committed to ensuring an environment that is free of discrimination, and to fostering a climate in which all employees and students may participate, contribute and grow to their fullest potential.

Harassment and disparate treatment will not be permitted or condoned in Wichita Public Schools.

The Wichita Public Schools does not discriminate against any legally protected classification in its programs and activities.

All Wichita Public Schools employees have the responsibility to support this statement.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquires regarding the non-discrimination statement:

Section 504 Coordinator for Adults and
Title IX Coordinator for Adults and Students
903 South Edgemoor
Wichita, KS 67218
(316) 973-4420

Section 504 Coordinator for Students
903 South Edgemoor
Wichita, KS 67218
(316) 973-4475

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