

Board of Directors Meeting  
School District 4J, Lane County  
4J Education Center / Hybrid  
(in-person or via Zoom)  
200 North Monroe Street  
Eugene, Oregon 97402  
Wednesday, December 3, 2025

**NOTICE:** The Special Board Meeting will be open to the public to attend in person, via live broadcast on KRVM 1280-AM and 98.7 FM, on the internet at <https://icecast.4j.lane.edu/board> and via Zoom Webinar at: <https://4j-lane-edu.zoom.us/j/96516386055?pwd=wjpcvmmABm8P5kFspA1Eg9RslX0dRb.1>, Webinar ID 965 1638 6055

The board will not hear public testimony during the special board meeting.

**6:00 PM  
Special Board Meeting**

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call
- II. Board Chair Welcome
- III. Introduction of Guests and Superintendent's Report
- IV. **Items for Information**
  - 1. School District Budget Process 2  
Presenters: Dr. Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent and Matt Brown,  
Director of Finance  
Guest Presenters: Dr. Krista Parent and Dr. Candace Pelt
- V. Adjourn

INFORMATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING:  
Closed Captioning is available during Board meetings through a zoom live feed  
which is also displayed at in-person meetings.



## ITEM FOR INFORMATION

**Date of Meeting:**

December 3, 2025

**Title:**

School District Budget Process

**Presenters:**

Dr. Miriam Mickelson, Superintendent, Matt Brown, Director of Finance,

**Guest Presenters:** Candace Pelt and Krista Parent, from COSA (Coalition of Oregon School Administrators)

**Description:**

Eugene School District 4J's budget process is guided by a clear set of values and priorities that center students, promote equity, and ensure responsible operation of a large public school district. Every decision reflects our collective commitment to coherence, care, transparency, and accountability.

Members of the Budget Committee will join the School Board to review best practices for the budget process and discuss the district's vision, goals, spending priorities, and the philosophy guiding development of the budget.

Superintendent Mickelson has invited Krista Parent and Candace Pelt to facilitate the discussion of the budget committees roles and responsibilities training. Dr. Parent is the executive director of COSA and Dr. Pelt teaches a school law and finance class for COSA in partnership with the University of Oregon. They both have knowledge of the current budget realities for school districts across the state and can share information on state and federal funding impacts to Oregon schools.

**Background:**

School district budgets guide how resources are allocated to support students, staff, and schools. Although the majority of school funding comes from the state, local budget committees play an essential role in shaping district priorities and ensuring community involvement in financial decision-making.

Oregon law requires every school district to adopt an annual budget that outlines how funds will be used to maintain quality schools, manage programs and facilities, and comply with state and federal requirements. This process is highly structured and emphasizes transparency and citizen participation. Budgets must cover at least one fiscal year, running from July 1 through June 30. Districts may also choose to develop a two-year budget, which requires certifying property taxes for both years.

The school district budgeting process includes three major phases: preparation, budget committee approval, and formal adoption by the school board. A designated budget officer—usually the superintendent or business manager—begins by preparing the initial draft budget. The budget committee then reviews the proposal and invites public input through hearings and comment opportunities. After finalizing its recommendations, the committee forwards the approved budget to the district board for adoption before the June 30 deadline.

The budget committee serves as the community’s official avenue for participation in school budgeting. The budget committee helps to ensure that the budget reflects the district’s values. Once the committee submits the approved budget to the school board, its authority concludes until the next annual budget cycle begins.

## **Budget Planning for 2026-27**

4J is facing a projected shortfall of about \$30 million for the upcoming 2026–27 school year. This challenge is largely the result of increasing personnel costs and end of one-time federal funding during the pandemic, coupled with declining enrollment across Lane County — linked to a lower birth rate and a state funding model tied to student count.

The district recognizes difficult choices lie ahead about programs, staffing and district operations.

### **Key Budget Reduction Questions**

- What must we protect or preserve? Why?
- What can we preserve but scale back? Why?
- What can we pause until financial conditions improve? Why?
- What can we de-implement (acknowledging we cannot fund everything)? Why?
- What are the trade-offs? Why?

### **Guiding Questions**

**Alignment:** Does it align with 4J’s values and priorities (academic excellence, equity, student and staff well-being, inclusion, and transparency in decision-making)?

**Student Impact:** Is there a direct impact on students? Does it improve student outcomes, especially for focal populations? Is there evidence that benefits and impact justify the cost?

**Equity & Access:** Does it reduce disparities and remove barriers?

**Sustainability** Is the funding source ongoing or one-time? Will it create future financial obligations that exceed available capacity?

**Focus and Efficiency:** Does it streamline operations and focus resources on what matters most for students, and not add complexity or spread resources too thin?

**Community Voice:** Have we considered input from students, families, staff, and community members, and how does it align with their expectations or needs?

**CBA/Legal/Fairness:** Is it compliant with CBAs and legal requirements and is it fair to employee groups?

# Welcome

Superintendent Miriam Mickelson



# Eugene School District 4J Budget Committee

December 3, 2025

Presented by:

Dr. Krista Parent, Executive Director

Dr. Candace Pelt-Perez, Deputy Director

# Budget Committee Reminders

- “School budgeting is one part science, and one part educated guesses, seasoned with unforeseen circumstances and a pinch of hopeful thinking baked under a constant heat of state and federal requirements. Few of the key numbers are under school leaders’ control”.
- The Oregon Department of Education recalculates school districts’ State School Fund allotment right up to the biennium’s end. School boards won’t know for sure until the end of the 2027 fiscal year how much they actually have to spend in the budget they must approve by June 30 this year.

# Budget Committee Reminders . . .

- The State School Fund allocation \$11.4 billion adopted in the 2025-27 state budget gave school budget officials a biennial number that gets split 49% in the first year and 51% in the second year but it's no guarantee.
- Board Policy DI “Financial Management Policies” gives the Board and staff further guidance regarding the budget.

# District Budget Process



DISTRICT STAFF  
PROPOSED BUDGET



BUDGET COMMITTEE  
APPROVED BUDGET

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SCHOOL BOARD  
ADOPTED BUDGET

# Board Policy DBEA – “BUDGET COMMITTEE”

- Made up of 14 members – 7 Board members and 7 members appointed by the Board. One member must be a member of the District's Equity Committee.
- A majority of the committee is required for passing an action item (8 votes).
- At the first “official” Budget Committee meeting, a Chair and Vice Chair shall be selected from the community appointed members.
- ORS 294.414 is state law regarding Budget Committees.

## Roles & Responsibilities of the Budget Committee

- The district's budget committee shall hold one or more meetings to receive the budget message, the budget document and to provide members of the public with an opportunity to ask questions about and comment on the budget document.
- All meetings of the budget committee are open to the public.
- It is the function of the budget committee to approve appropriations for expenditures before the start of each new fiscal year as presented by the Budget Officer to the committee. (At the Function Level)

## Roles & Responsibilities of the Budget Committee

- The budget committee may choose to change appropriation levels; however, it does not have authority to make programmatic changes.
- Once the budget committee approves the budget it is sent to the School Board for final adoption after a public hearing.

# Key Dates Leading to the Proposed Budget



# Our Core Values

- ✓ **Student-Centered** – We place students at the heart of every decision. Resources, systems, and structures are evaluated through the lens of their impact, direct and indirect, on student learning, belonging, and success.
- ✓ **Equity** – We allocate resources to close opportunity gaps, remove barriers, and ensure that every student, especially those furthest from opportunity, has access to the support they need to thrive.
- ✓ **Academic Excellence** – We invest in effective, evidence-based practices that strengthen teaching, learning, and student achievement.
- ✓ **Inclusion and Wellness** – We prioritize safe, welcoming, and caring environments that nurture belonging, connection, and well-being for all students and staff.
- ✓ **Responsibility and Sustainability** – We steward public resources wisely, balancing immediate needs with long-term financial stability. We commit to operate our large, complex public agency responsibly, effectively and aligned with the law, professional standards and community expectations.
- ✓ **Transparency and Trust** – We make decisions openly, document our rationale, and communicate with clarity, dignity, and care.

# Our Budget Priorities

Protect What Is Essential – Safeguard programs and services core to student learning, safety, legal mandates, and operational continuity.

Center Students – Use student learning as the primary lens when determining what to protect, scale back, pause, or de-implement.

Advance Equity and Access – Focus resources where they most effectively reduce disparities and improve outcomes for focal student groups.

Ensure Fiscal Sustainability – Align all expenditures with ongoing capacity and avoid creating unfunded future obligations.

Promote Focus, Efficiency, Alignment, and Coherence – Coordinate decisions across departments and schools to streamline systems and focus efforts where they matter most.

Lead with Care and Clarity – Communicate budget decisions with transparency, empathy, and accountability, ensuring that all stakeholders understand the “why,” “what,” and “how” behind each choice.

# Best Practices for the Budget Committee Process

- ✓ Training on the budget committee process, calendar, expectations for committee members, etc.
- ✓ Overview of how the State School Fund (SSF) works and how Oregon funds its schools.
- ✓ Orientation on the budget document, the fund structure, and the types of activities or programs and expenditures made from each fund in the budget.

# Best Practices for the Budget Committee Process

- ✓ General discussion of vision and goals, spending priorities, or philosophy used to develop the proposed budget.
- ✓ Assumptions used in the development of the budget (SSF estimates, enrollment, federal allocations, etc.).
- ✓ General economic projections by the finance officer of possible changes in resources or requirements expected next year.

## Budget Committee Work (Best Practices)

- **The primary function** is to receive and review the Superintendent's proposed budget and budget message, then make a formal recommendation to the School Board about whether to adopt it, adopt it with modifications, or reject it.

- The Committee also:

1. Tests the budget against the District's goals and core values
2. Approves the District's spending authority
3. Certifies property tax amount submitted to County Assessor
4. Ensures the budget is balanced
5. Provides opportunity for public input
6. Can provide priority input if there is opportunity to return programs

## Budget Committee Work (Best Practices)

• Here are things an Oregon school district budget committee does NOT do:

- Make final budget decisions
- Determine specific program cuts
- Manage day-to-day spending
- Set educational policy
- Negotiate labor contracts
- Have ongoing oversight authority
- Approve budget transfers or changes



Questions?

# Tools & Guides

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Planning for the 2026-27 school year

# 4J Budget Decision-Making Guide 2026-27

## Eugene School District 4J – Budget Values and Priorities Statement

Eugene School District 4J's budget process is guided by a clear set of values and priorities that center students, promote equity, and ensure responsible operation of a large public school district. Every decision reflects our collective commitment to coherence, care, transparency, and accountability.

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### Our Budget Priorities

- Protect What Is Essential – Safeguard programs and services core to student learning, safety, legal mandates, and operational continuity.
- Center Students – Use student learning as the primary lens when determining what to protect, scale back, pause, or de-implement.
- Advance Equity and Access – Focus resources where they most effectively reduce disparities and improve outcomes for focal student groups.

## Key Budget Reduction Questions (*Use the criteria below to answer the “why?”*)

- What must we protect or preserve? Why?
- What can we preserve but scale back? Why?
- What can we pause until financial conditions improve? Why?
- What can we de-implement (acknowledging we cannot fund everything)? Why?
- What are the trade-offs? Why?

	Guiding Questions
Alignment	Does it align with 4J's values and priorities (academic excellence, equity, student and staff well-being, inclusion, and transparency in decision-making)?
Student Impact	Is there a direct impact on students? Does it improve student outcomes, especially for focal populations? Is there evidence that benefits and impact justify the cost?
Equity & Access	Does it reduce disparities and remove barriers?
Sustainability	Is the funding source ongoing or one-time? Will it create future financial obligations that exceed available capacity?
Focus and Efficiency	Does it streamline operations and focus resources on what matters most for students, and not add complexity or spread resources too thin?
Community Voice	Have we considered input from students, families, staff, and community members, and how does it align with their expectations or needs?
CBA/Legal/Fairness	Is it compliant with CBAs and legal requirements and is it fair to employee groups?

# Resolution No. 2025-26-05 (Adopted 11/5/25)

## NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

1. The board has determined that a reduction in force for the 2026-27 fiscal year is necessary. Due to the scale of reductions anticipated, the Board will direct the Superintendent concerning overall reduction levels at future Board meeting(s). The Superintendent is authorized to and shall determine which positions to be eliminated within the levels authorized by the Board: No further action by the Board is necessary.
2. At Board meetings over the next three months, the Superintendent shall present components of a comprehensive budget reduction plan to include recommendations about the overall level of positions to be reduced district-wide, the elimination or reduction of programs and services, and other means of achieving cost savings as the Superintendent deems advisable. The Board intends to act on the Superintendent's recommendations at the Board meeting following the meeting in which they were presented and no later than February 4, 2026.
3. The Board directs the Superintendent to present a proposed 2026/27 budget in April 2026 that reflect Board-authorized reductions.

# Budget Roadshow

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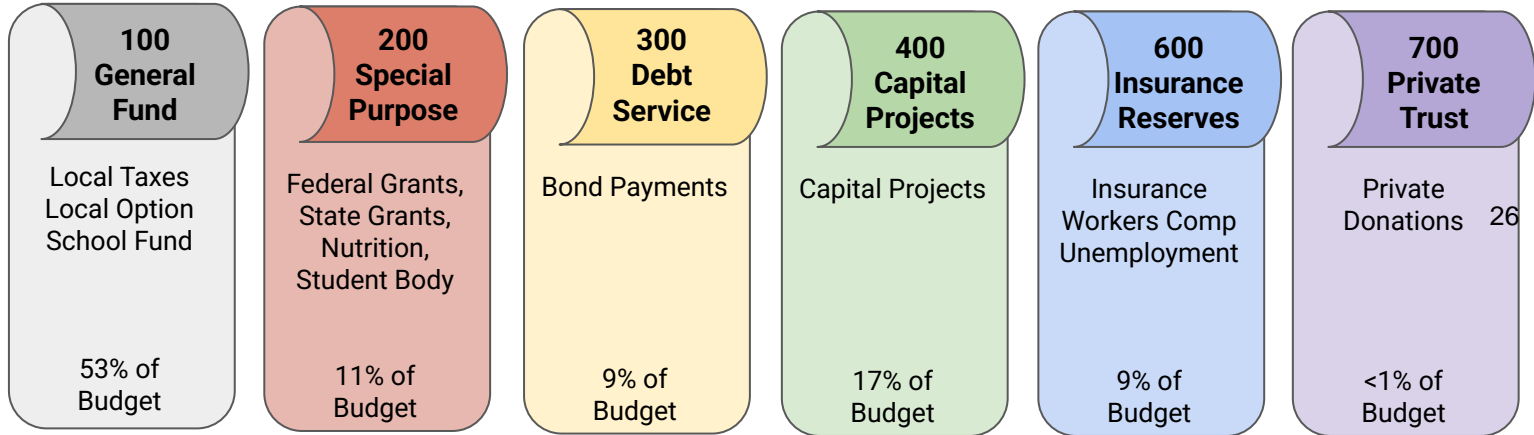
Budget Preparation for the 2026-27 school year  
[4j.lane.edu/budget](https://4j.lane.edu/budget)

# Budget Roadshow

- Budget Buckets
- State School Fund
- Enrollment & Staffing Trends
- Forecasting the Future
- Looking at our Past
- Timeline & Next Steps

AGENDA

# Budget Bucket Basics

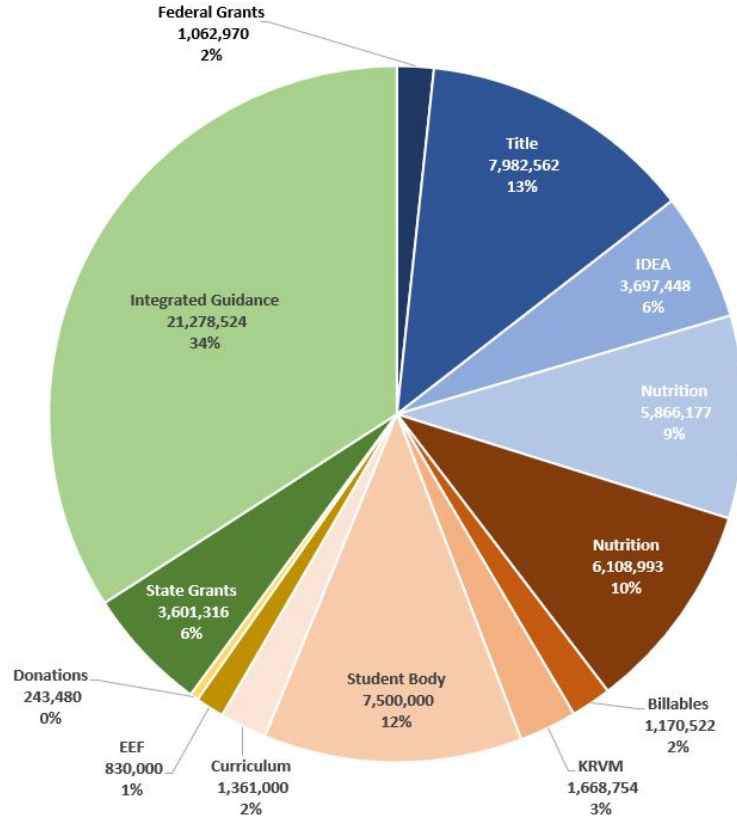


# Budget Bucket Basics

**200 Special Purpose**

Federal Grants, State Grants, Nutrition, Student Body

11% of Budget



## Funding Sources (200 Funds)

<b>Federal</b>	<b>18.6M</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>24.8M</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Private</b>	<b>1.0M</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>17.8M</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>62.2M</b>	<b>100%</b>

# The People Business

**\$0.90**

**of every dollar go to  
salaries and benefits**

# State School Fund

## Primary General Fund Revenue

### State School Fund Formula

#### **General Purpose Grant (GPG)**

$((TE * 25) + 4500) * \text{Extnd ADMw} * \text{funding ratio}$

#### **Total Formula Revenue (TFR)**

**(GF revenue coming to the District)**

GPG + Transportation Grant

#### **State School Fund Grant**

TFR - Local Revenue

**Currently provides \$118 Million  
47% of General Fund Revenue**

### Local Option Revenue

#### **Renews Every 5 Years**

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- ❖ Voter approved for years ending in 5 and 0.
- ❖ Not included in the local revenue calculation for SSF.

**Currently provides \$27 Million  
11% of General Fund Revenue**

# State School Fund Simplified Example

## Scenario A

SSF = \$1,000,000			
	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SSF Amt</u>
District 1	1,000	33%	333,333
District 2	800	27%	266,667
District 3	600	20%	200,000
District 4	400	13%	133,333
District 5	200	7%	66,667
	3,000	Total State Enrollment	

## Scenario B

SSF = \$1,000,000			
	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SSF Amt</u>
District 1	1,000	38%	384,615
District 2	400	15%	153,846
District 3	600	23%	230,769
District 4	400	15%	153,846
District 5	200	8%	76,923
	2,600	Total State Enrollment	

## Scenario C

SSF = \$1,000,000			
	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>SSF Amt</u>
District 1	800	33%	333,333
District 2	640	27%	266,667
District 3	480	20%	200,000
District 4	320	13%	133,333
District 5	160	7%	66,667
	2,400	Total State Enrollment	

Only District 2  
enrollment drops 50%

Statewide enrollment  
drops evenly among  
all districts

# Enrollment & Staff Trends

Enrollment

-20%

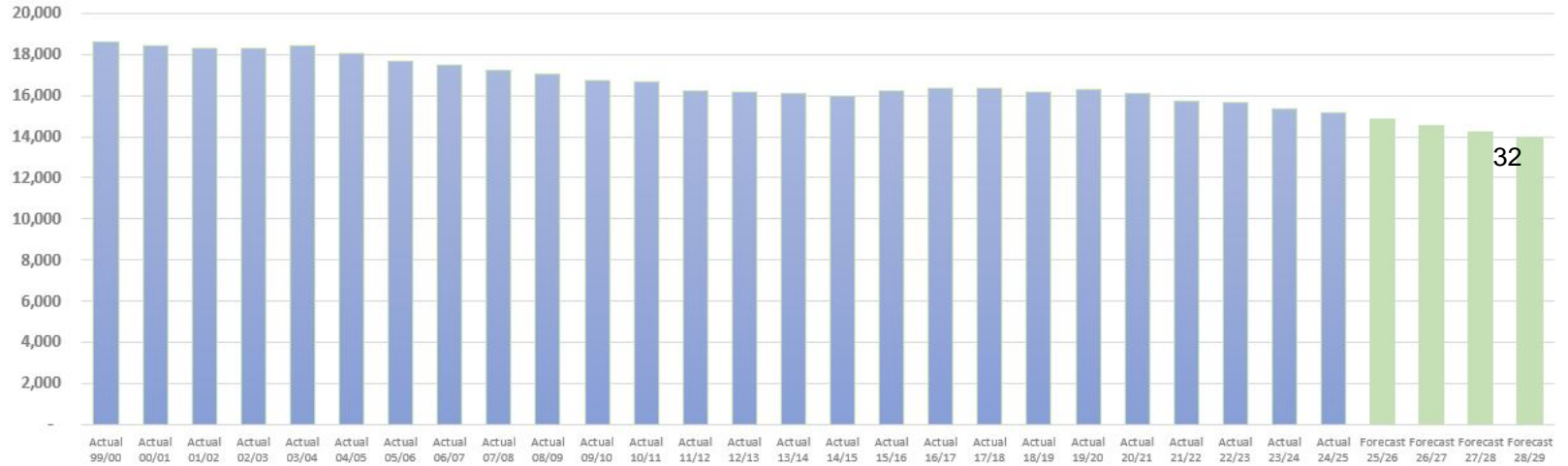
Down  
Since 2000

Staff

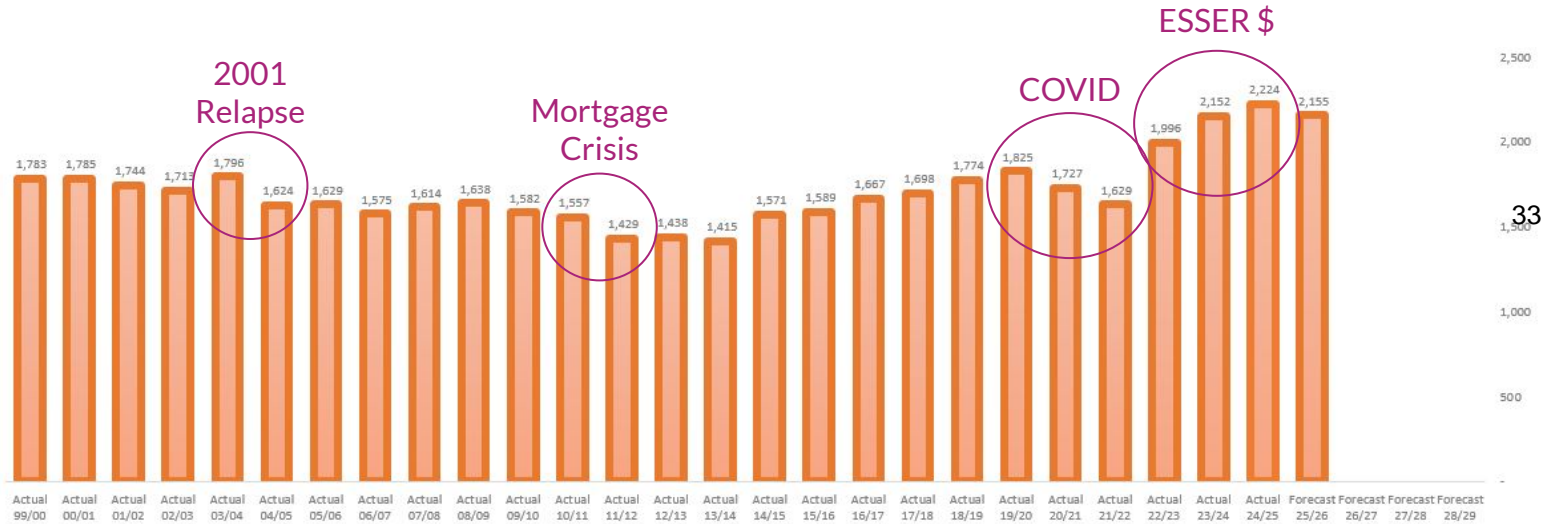
+25%

Up  
Since 2000

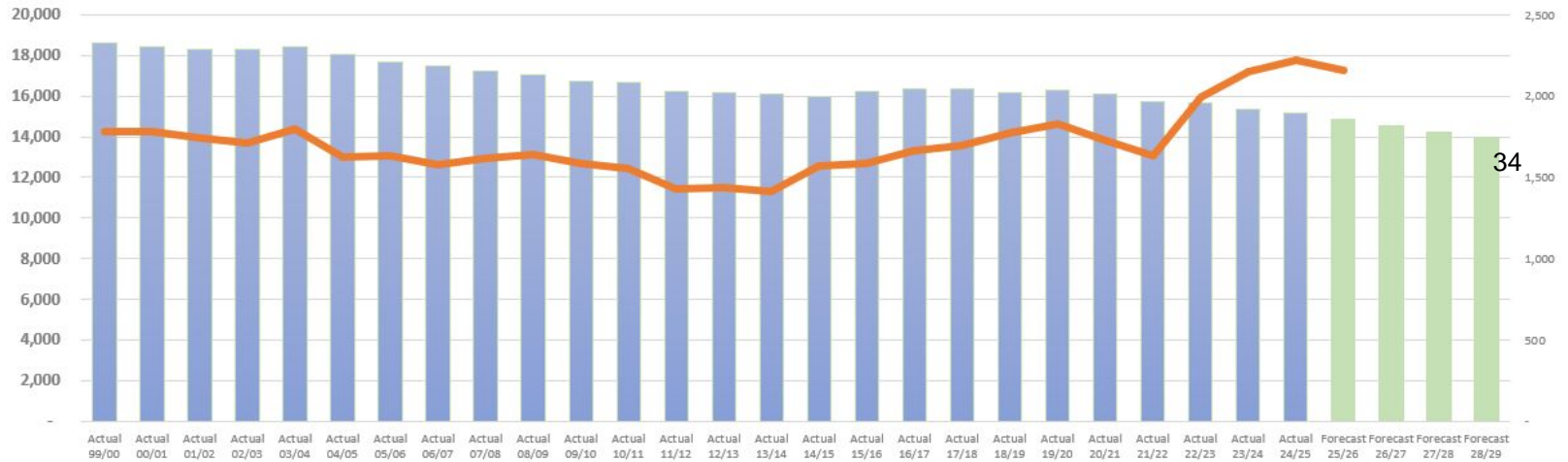
# Enrollment History



# Staffing History



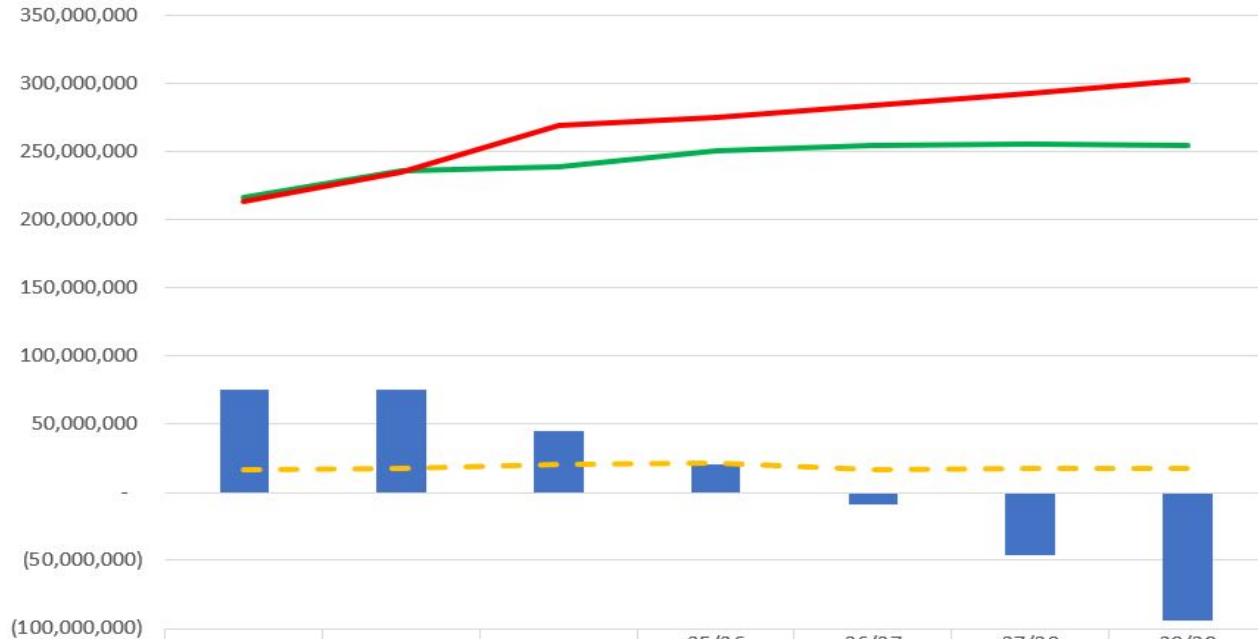
# Staffing History



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# Financial Forecast

## As of September 2025



	22/23 Actual	23/24 Actual	24/25 Actual	25/26 BUDGET	26/27 FORECAST	27/28 FORECAST	28/29 FORECAST
Ending Fund Balance	75,217,020	75,212,701	44,878,566	20,728,000	(9,017,000)	(46,279,000)	(94,441,998)
Actual Revenue	217,131,000	236,666,000	239,230,756	250,447,000	254,524,000	255,956,000	254,524,002
Total Expenditures	213,324,000	235,215,000	269,564,891	275,656,000	284,269,000	293,218,000	302,687,000

# Financial Forecast

Reductions: \$30M 2026/27 & \$8M 2027/28



# Financial Forecast

## How did we get here?

- Federal ESSER dollars with significant hiring
- Employee costs, such as COLA, retirement and insurance costs
- Enrollment decline
  - Low birth rates
  - Housing costs
  - Smaller families
- Legislation in Salem
  - State School Fund allocations
  - Unfunded mandates

# Looking to our Past

## Significant Reductions of our past (2008-11)

The last significant reductions were over a decade ago

- Reductions lasted multiple years
- School closure and consolidation
  - Coburg, Crest Drive, Parker, Meadowlark
- Merging alternative schools with neighborhood schools
- Staff wage freezes and lower insurance contributions
- Furlough days ranging from 3-9 days
- Reduction of general purchases and move to centralized purchasing
- Reduction of ~200 FTE across all employee groups
- Transferred services to Lane ESD

# Looking to our Past

Reductions made to this year's budget

**\$20.7**

**Million**

**\$1.6M (8%)**

Elementary staffing based on enrollment declines

**\$19.1M (92%)**

Administrative staffing, materials, and one-time transfers

# Current Year Changes

## What are we doing now?

- Moving to a hybrid-centralized purchasing process
- Purchasing card reductions
- Reducing professional development
- Hiring process reviews for all positions
- No new programs or services
- Not currently looking at mid-year staffing reductions to preserve current services and current programs to students

# Next Steps

## Timeline

- October – November > ENGAGEMENT
  - Engage with leadership, departments and buildings
  - Reach out to stakeholders and community
  - Identify opportunities and review all options
- December – January – February > RECOMMENDATIONS
  - Board and Budget Committee Training - December 3
  - Superintendent presents recommendations (3 phases)
    - Phase 1 - Executive leaders
      - *Board Meeting December 10*
    - Phase 2 - Directors, principals, managers, professionals + program changes
      - *Board Meetings January 7 and 14*
    - Phase 3 - Licensed and classified staff
      - *Board Meetings January 21 and February 4*
- February – March > BUILDING
  - Staffing and contractual obligations, Budget Building for 2026-27
- April – June > ADOPTION
  - Budget Committee Meetings – March 31, April 8 and 22
  - Board Meeting - Public Hearing May 13
  - Board Meeting - Board Adopts Budget May 27

# Budget Committee Meeting Dates

- Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 6:00 p.m – Budget Committee Meeting.
- Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. – Budget Committee Meeting.
- Wednesday, April 22, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. – Budget Committee Meeting

Budget  
Committee  
Meetings