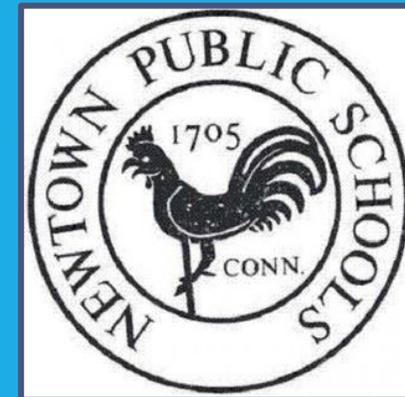




Newtown Public Schools
Board of Education
2024-2025
Operational Plan



PROPOSED BUDGET

2024-2025



Board of Education

Alison Plante, *Chair*

John Vouros, *Vice Chair*

Don Ramsey, *Secretary*

Todd Higgins

Shannon Tomai

Christopher Gilson

Doria Linnetz

Central Office

Christopher Melillo ~ Superintendent of Schools

Anne Uberti ~ Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Tanja Vadas
Director,
Business & Finance

Deborah Mailloux-Petersen
Director,
Pupil Services

Kara DiBartolo
Director,
Teaching & Learning

John Barlow
Director, Operations

Dennis Colclough
Director, Technology

Mark Pompano
Director, Security

Suzanne D'Eramo
Director,
Human Resources

Michelle Hiscavich
Director,
Performing & Fine Arts

INVESTING IN OUR STUDENTS



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Newtown Public Schools,
a partnership of students, families, educators and community,
is to **INSPIRE EACH STUDENT TO EXCEL**
in attaining and applying the knowledge, skills and attributes
that lead to personal success
while becoming a contributing member of a dynamic global community.

We accomplish this by creating
an unparalleled learning environment characterized by

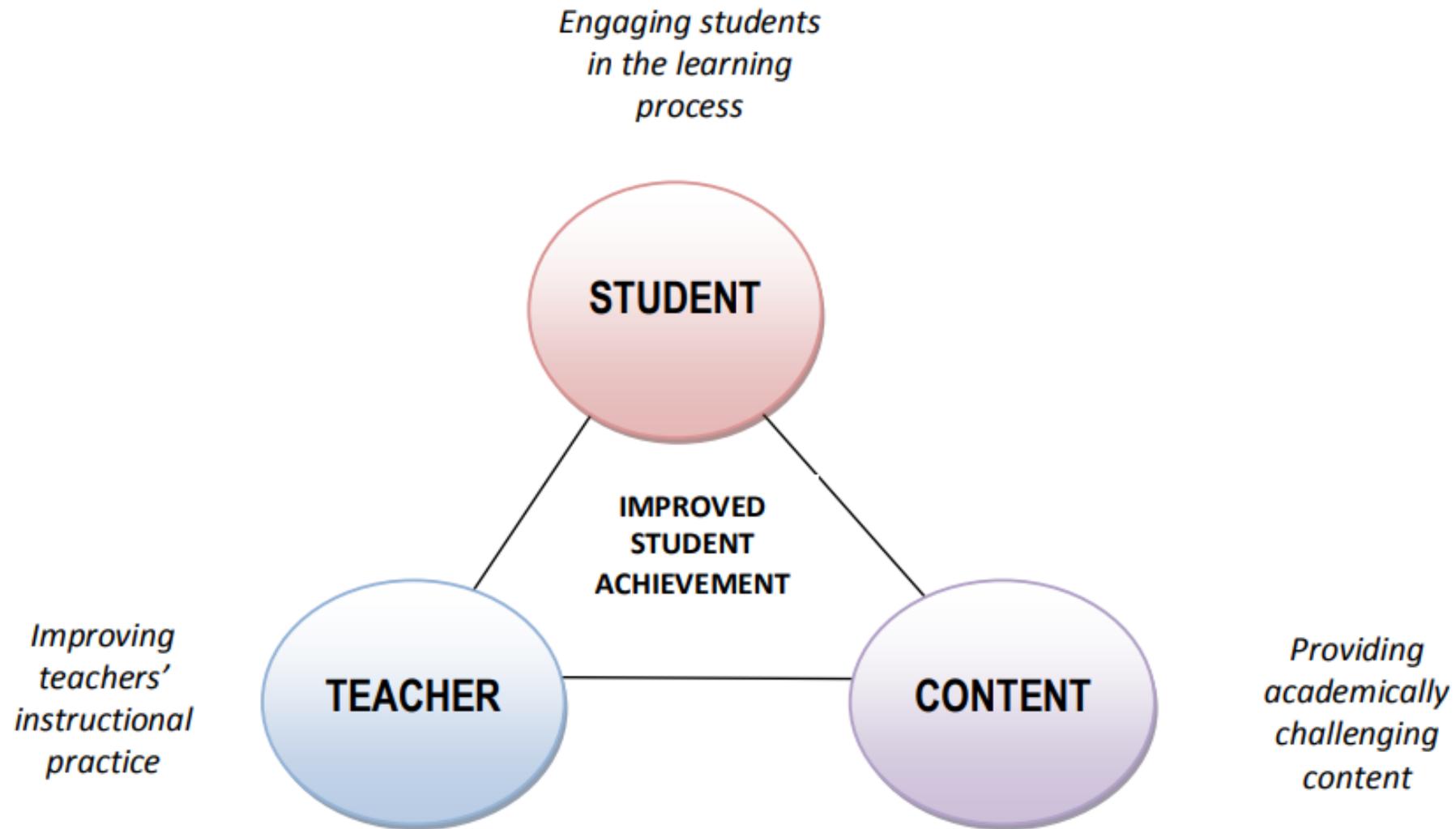
- High expectations · Quality instruction ·
- Continuous improvement · Civic responsibility ·



At Our Core



THE INSTRUCTIONAL CORE



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

01

Ensure Stimulating, Engaging, and Challenging Learning Opportunities Tailored to the Individual Needs of Students

02

Prepare Students to Thrive Post-graduation

03

Hire, Retain, and Develop a Diverse and Exceptional Faculty and Staff

04

Strengthen District, Family, and Community Partnership

Strategic Priority #1: Ensure Stimulating, Engaging, and Challenging Learning Opportunities

Innovative Curriculum to Engage Our Students

- Expansion of new reading curriculum to Grades 6-8
- Curriculum enhancement to better meet the evolving needs of students, align with up-to-date knowledge and skills, and foster a more engaging and effective learning experience
- Implementing a Kindergarten Readiness pilot program
- Purchasing of new world language programs at NHS and NMS

Professional Development to Enhance Instruction

- Professional development for new reading curriculum for Grades 6-8
- Continued professional learning and supplemental materials for new K-5 reading program
- Facilitating curriculum and planning committees (PDEC, Curriculum Council, Elementary Cross Grade Level Meetings)
- Delivering DEAI professional learning opportunities across the district
- Offering Grades 5-8 Inquiry training for science and social studies teachers

Student Supports across Academic and Social-Emotional Needs

- Providing multiple tiers of academic support (MTSS) for students needing support
- Addressing student behaviors with Dean of Student positions at NMS and NHS
- Building teacher capacity with Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) at the elementary level
- Expanding summer school programs to address diverse student needs (academic enrichment and social-emotional support)
- Expansion of career pathways (grant-funded)

Strategic Priority #2: Prepare Students for Life Beyond Graduation

- **Enhancing professional learning on the Portrait of the Graduate** at Newtown High School to provide educators opportunities for skill development, collaboration, and reflection to align instructional practices with the school's vision
- **Offering students the opportunity to visit colleges and universities** provides them with first hand exposure to campus life, academic programs, and the overall collegiate experience
- **Career Days at NMS and NHS** which allow students to explore diverse career paths through interactive workshops and networking opportunities
- **Expanding dual-enrollment courses** to provide students with early exposure to higher education and a head start on their academic and career pathways (grant-funded)
- **Offering more clubs and activities** to enrich educational experiences, leadership qualities, and interpersonal skills
- **Strong commitment to the fine arts**
- **Supporting internships at NHS** to provide students with professional exposure, established by forging meaningful partnerships with local businesses and organizations
- **Supporting career readiness projects** such as the Newtown High School food truck project enhances students' practical skills, entrepreneurial mindset, and readiness for future employment opportunities.

Strategic Priority #3: Hire, Retain, and Develop a Diverse and Exceptional Faculty and Staff

- **Train hiring committees** to ensure fair evaluations and reviews
- **Require support and training for new teachers**
- **Create mentorship programs** to encourage staff growth
- **Continue to enhance orientation protocols and training** for support staff
- **Hiring, Retention and Development Plan** for paraprofessionals and job coaches
- **Provide robust professional learning opportunities** to teaching and support staff for continuous learning, growth
- **Attend various career fairs** to compete for the very best candidates
- **Develop an Increasing Education Diversity Plan and Committee**
- **Increase security guard wage** to ensure we can hire the best talent and increase diversity

Strategic Priority #4: Strengthen District, Family, and Community Partnership

- **Establish clear and consistent communication channels** between the school district, families, and the community by utilizing newsletters, websites, and social media
- **Actively involve parents and community members** in community forums where diverse perspectives can be shared and considered
- **Enhance website design**
- **Upgrade the school district's messaging software** to a more streamlined and efficient platform that will lead to improved engagement and information dissemination between educators, parents, and the community
- **Develop community partnerships** through programming that incorporates career pathways
- **Supporting internships at NHS** by forging meaningful partnerships with local businesses and organizations to provide students with professional experience

The 2024-2025 Budget: A Closer Look



Numerous Fiscal Challenges...

Rising Cost of Benefits

Contractual Increases

Aging Facilities

Inflationary Environment



Unfunded State Mandates

Lingering Effects of Interrupted Learning

Fiscal Cliff

...but a need to invest in instruction.

Budget Drivers

Major Object	\$ Increase
Salaries	\$1,978,394
Benefits	\$995,194
Supplies	\$721,700
Purchased Property Services	\$587,073
Other Purchased Services	\$240,208
Property and Equipment	\$148,063

OBJECT SUMMARY



SALARIES AND BENEFITS

Contractual Salary Increases

Salaries are expected to increase by 3.58%. This equates to \$1,978,394 and represents 41.59% of the total budget increase.

- Teachers Union will receive 1.50% and 2.0% for top step only
- Administrator Union will receive a 2.75% wage increase
- Custodial and Maintenance Union will receive 3.0% wage increase
- Educational Personnel Union (Secretaries) will receive 3.0% wage increase.
- Nurses union will be undergoing negotiations.
- Paraeducator Union will receive 2.0% with step movement.

Benefits

Benefits are expected to increase by 7.78%. This equates to \$995,194 and represents 20.92% of the total budget increase.

- Medical & Dental self funded health insurance are expected increase by \$847,816 or just under 9%.
- Pensions are expected to increase by \$46,173 or 4.84%. This increase comes primarily from our defined contribution or 401(a) plan.
- FICA & Medicare expenses are expected increase by \$84,538 or 4.97%
- Other accounts include premiums & fees, life insurance, tuition reimbursement, unemployment, workers compensation and employee assistance program all of which account for a total increase of \$16,667

SUPPLIES

Supplies are expected to increase by 22.72%. This equates to \$721,700 and represents 15.17% of the budget increase.

Drivers behind this increase include:

- Textbooks are requiring \$598,530 or 12.58% of the total increase.
- This area was subject to a reduction initiated by the Legislative Council during our budget process last year. In order to accommodate this adjustment, the BOE had to pre-purchase \$220,183 worth of materials.
- Instructional and office supplies are expected to increase by \$130,511 or 2.74% of the requested increase. Similar to textbooks, \$27,187 was pre-purchased to fulfill a portion of the Legislative Council's reduction and \$65,000 was reduced by the superintendent.
- The increase in these two areas represents the reinstatement of spending levels plus educational enhancements and anticipated needs.

PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES DRIVERS

This area of the budget is expected to increase by \$587,073 and makes up 12.34% of the requested budget increase.

Drivers behind this increase include:

- Building & Site Maintenance Projects request at **\$455,911**
 - These projects occur each year as repair and replacements are required to maintain all of our schools. Costs for these projects typically average ~\$500,000.
 - For the past several years, the Town has funded these projects in full (with the exception of the current year that was reduced by the Board of Finance by \$185,000).

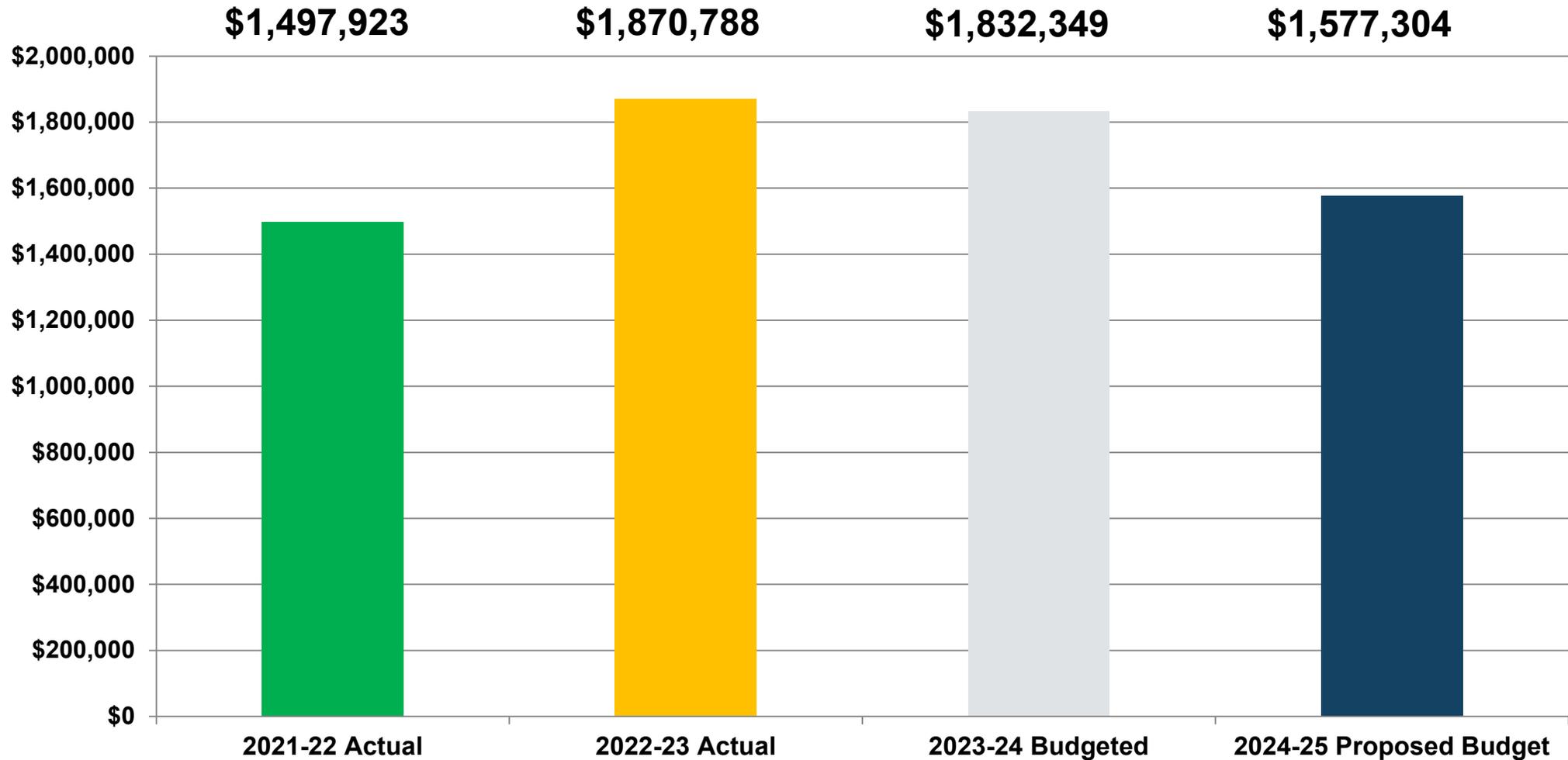
OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES

This area of the budget is expected to increase by \$240,208 and makes up 5.05% of the requested budget increase.

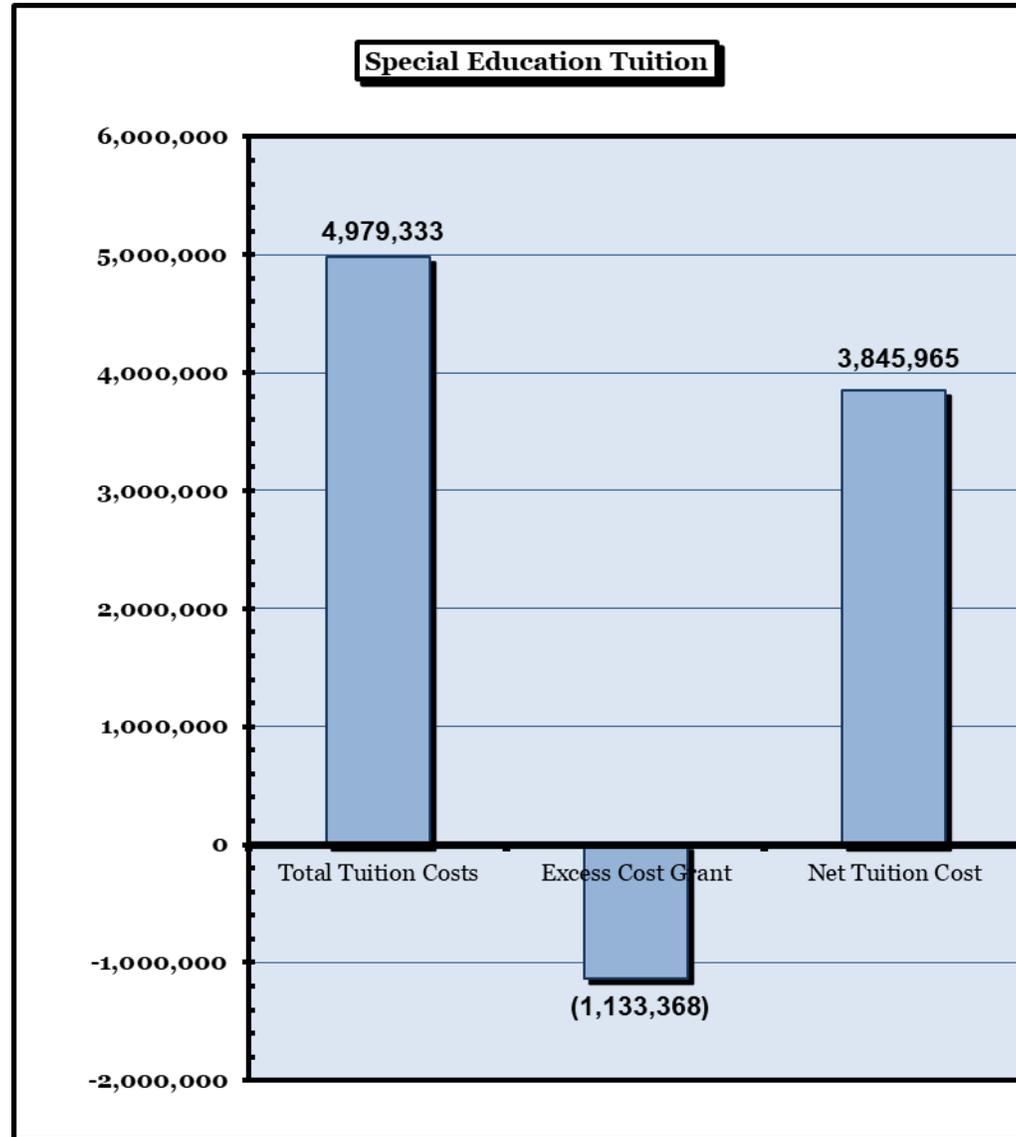
Drivers behind this increase include:

- Transportation is expected to increase by \$222,747 increasing by 4.54% over the current year.
 - 2024-25 will be the third year of a five year contract for our local in-district transportation. The main in-district portion of this contract calls for an increase of 3.88%
 - Out-of-district transportation is expected to increase by \$19,971. This increase is based on the number of vehicles required for our special education students that require education outside of NPS. EdAdvance provides transportation for many of these students and we are in our final year of a five year contract with them.

Special Education - Excess Cost Grant



SPECIAL EDUCATION TUITION – IN AGGREGATE



2024-25 BOARD OF EDUCATION OPERATIONAL REQUEST

BUDGET REDUCTIONS



Administrators' Initial Budget Requests	\$90,114,977	5.93%
Superintendent's Total Budget Reduction	-\$796,935	-0.94%
Superintendent's Requested Operational Plan	\$89,318,042	4.99%
Board of Education's Requested Operational Plan	\$89,826,756	5.59%

BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET – MAJOR OBJECTS 2024-2025

MAJOR OBJECT	2024-25 REQUEST	\$ INCREASE	% INCREASE
Salaries	\$57,255,763	\$1,978,394	3.58%
Employee Benefits	\$13,792,372	\$995,194	7.78%
Purchased Professional Services	\$678,730	\$81,307	13.61%
Purchased Property Services*	\$2,395,055	\$587,073	32.47%
Other Purchased Services	\$11,097,142	\$240,208	2.21%
Supplies*	\$3,897,910	\$721,700	22.72%
Property & Equipment*	\$528,707	\$148,063	38.90%
Other Objects	\$81,077	\$5,166	6.81%
Special Education Contingency	\$100,000	\$0	0.00%
TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET	\$89,826,756	\$4,757,105	5.59%

STAFFING ALLOCATIONS



Certified Staffing Requests – Additions

Certified Staff	Position	F.T.E.	Salary
Head O'Meadow	Classroom Teacher	1.00	\$67,139
Middle School	Dean of Students	1.00	\$72,510
High School	Dean of Students	1.00	\$73,853
Special Education	BCBA	1.00	\$75,000
Pupil Personnel	Social Worker	0.15	\$12,595
Total Additions		4.15	\$301,097

Certified Staffing Requests – Reductions

Certified Staff	Position	F.T.E.	Salary
Sandy Hook	Classroom Teacher	-1.00	-\$67,139
High School	Classroom Teacher	-2.00	-\$134,278
Total Reductions		-3.00	- \$201,417

Net Change Certified	1.15	\$99,680
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Non-Certified Additions to Staff

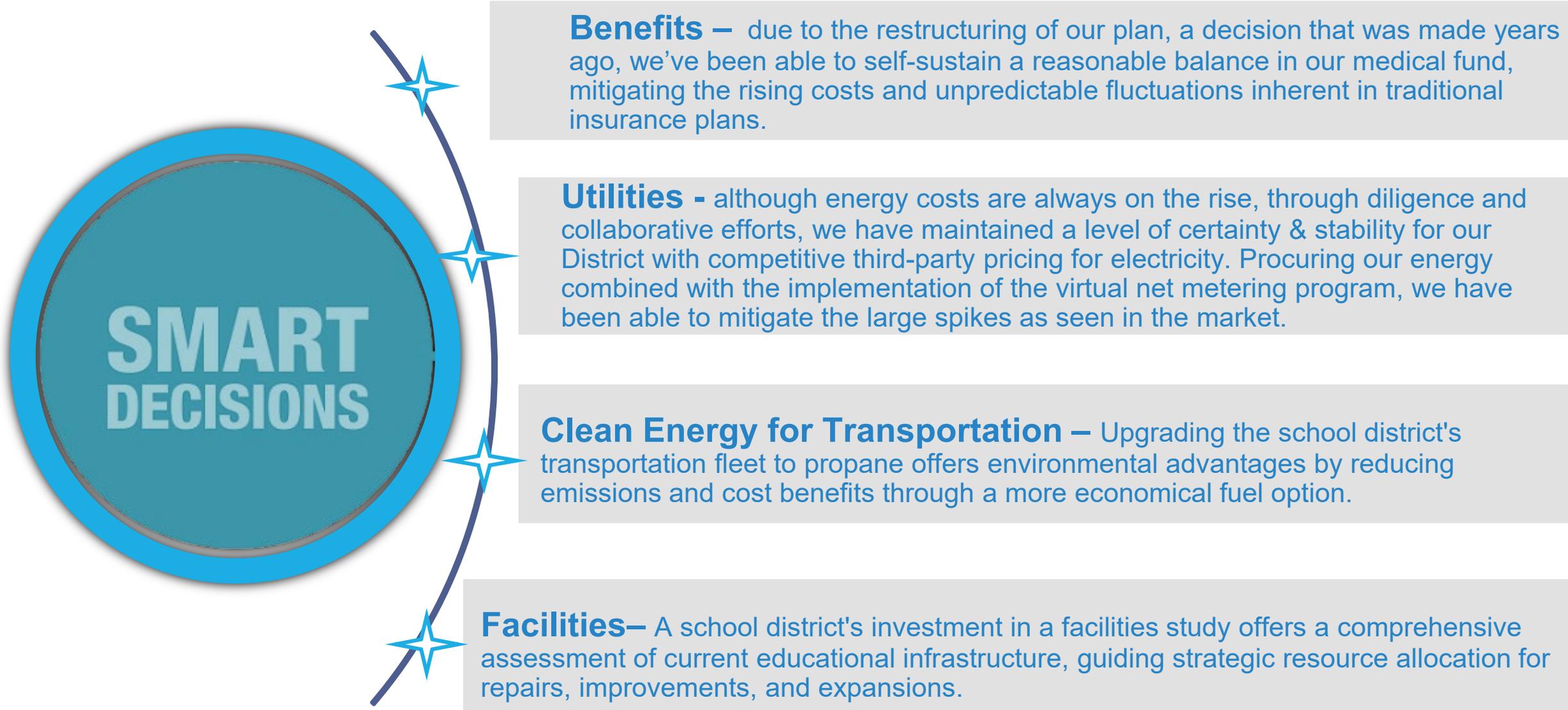
Non-Certified Staff Position		F.T.E.	Salary
Hawley	Increase in Hours	0.20	\$5,433
Sandy Hook	Increase in Hours	0.20	\$5,433
Middle Gate	Increase in Hours	0.20	\$5,433
Head O'Meadow	Increase in Hours	0.20	\$5,433
NHS	Athletic Trainer	0.50	\$29,428
Total Additions		1.30	\$51,160

Non Certified Reductions in Staffing

Non-Certified Staff Position		F.T.E.	Salary
NMS	Para	-0.93	-\$22,886
NHS	Para	-0.29	-\$6,175
Total Reductions		-1.22	-\$29,061

Net Change Non-Certified	0.08	\$22,099
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Total		
	F.T.E.	Salary
Net Change Certified	1.15	\$99,680
Net Change Non-Certified	0.08	\$22,099
TOTAL DISTRICT CHANGE	1.23	\$121,779



SMART DECISIONS

Benefits – due to the restructuring of our plan, a decision that was made years ago, we've been able to self-sustain a reasonable balance in our medical fund, mitigating the rising costs and unpredictable fluctuations inherent in traditional insurance plans.

Utilities - although energy costs are always on the rise, through diligence and collaborative efforts, we have maintained a level of certainty & stability for our District with competitive third-party pricing for electricity. Procuring our energy combined with the implementation of the virtual net metering program, we have been able to mitigate the large spikes as seen in the market.

Clean Energy for Transportation – Upgrading the school district's transportation fleet to propane offers environmental advantages by reducing emissions and cost benefits through a more economical fuel option.

Facilities– A school district's investment in a facilities study offers a comprehensive assessment of current educational infrastructure, guiding strategic resource allocation for repairs, improvements, and expansions.

BUDGET RECAP

Budget increase request is **5.59%**

Regular Education,
Curriculum and Technology
Continuing Education

\$39,557,374

Special Education, Pupil
Personnel

\$18,885,704

General Services, Benefits,
Transportation, Plant

\$31,383,678

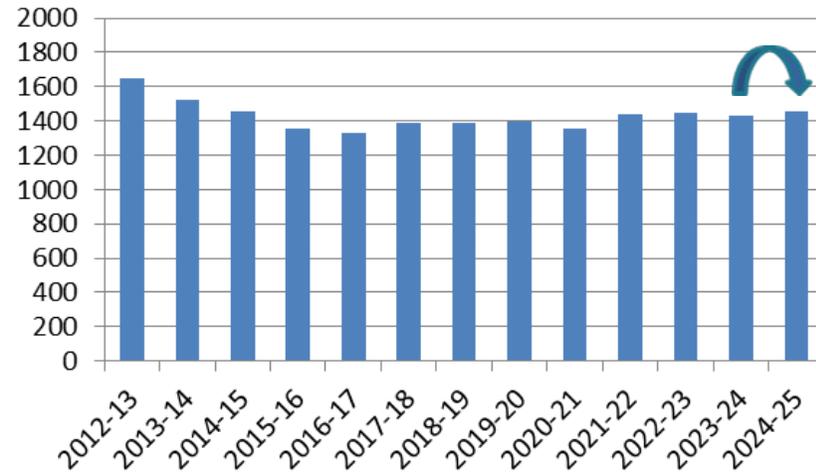
STUDENT ENROLLMENT & SUPPORTING DATA



ENROLLMENT OVERVIEW

In District Enrollment
 2023-24 actual: **3,902**
 2024-25 projected: **3,894**

PK-4 **+20**



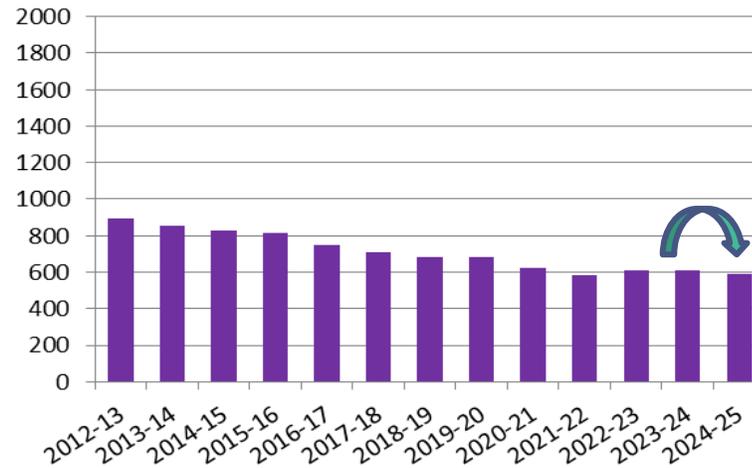
-8 decrease overall

Hawley	290
Sandy Hook	348
Middle Gate	428
Head O'Meadow	331
PreK	57

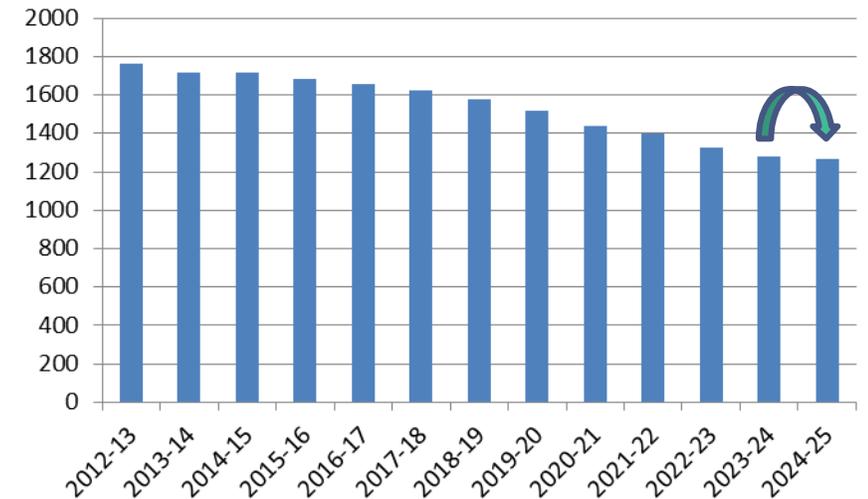
Reed Intermediate **0**



Middle School **-20**



High School **-8**





Newtown High School
Ranked 36 in
Connecticut
Top 9% Nationally



Newtown Middle School
Ranked 72 in Connecticut
Top 13% in Connecticut



Athletic Department
Michael's Cup Sportsmanship
Award



18th Best School District in Connecticut



Hawley School
Connecticut Department of
Education
School of Distinction



Head O' Meadow School
Connecticut Department of
Education
School of Distinction



Sandy Hook School
Connecticut Department of
Education
School of Distinction



Newtown Public Schools
NAMM Foundation
Best for Music Education

A Budget Commitment

