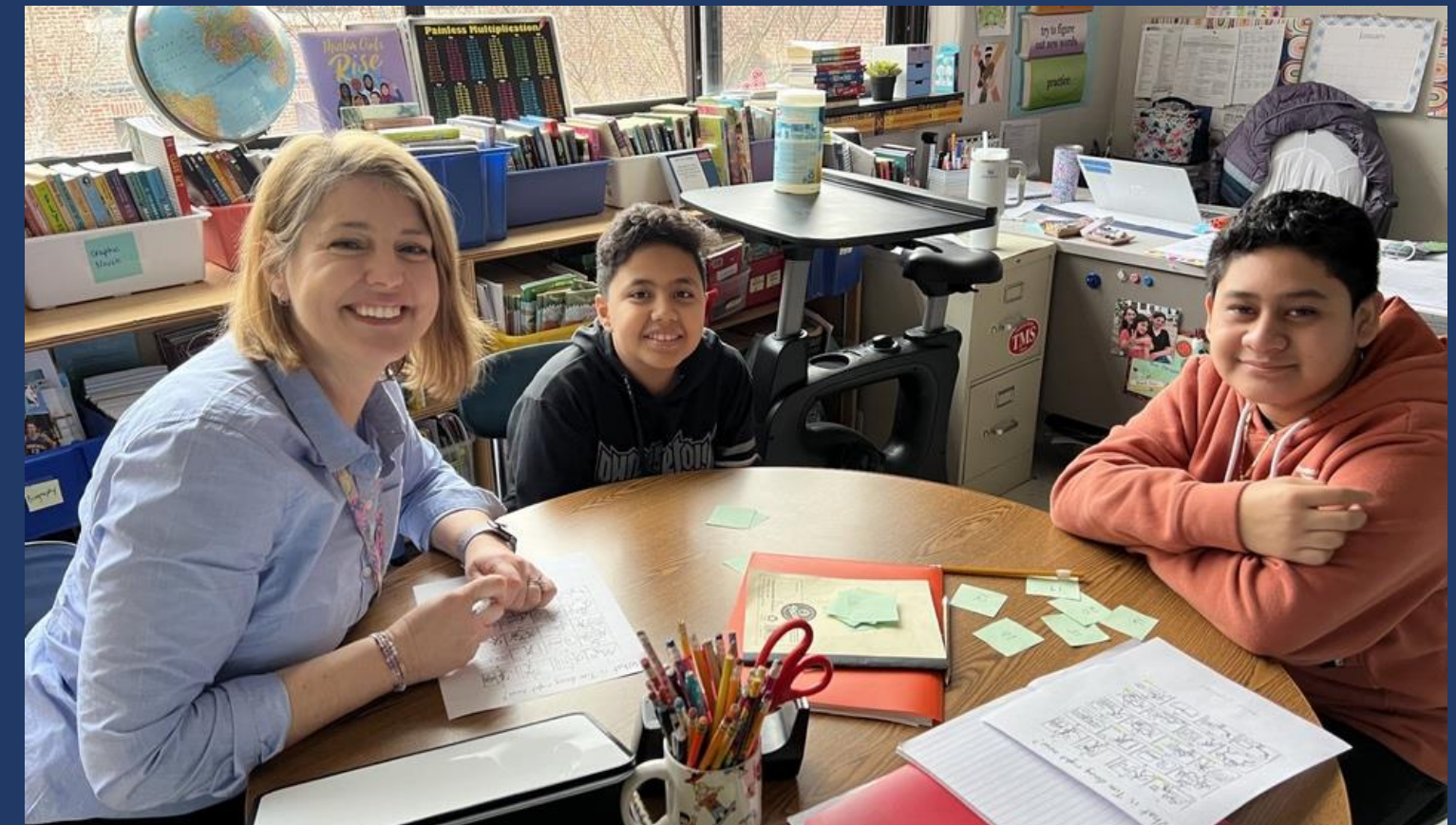


# Board of Education proposed

budget

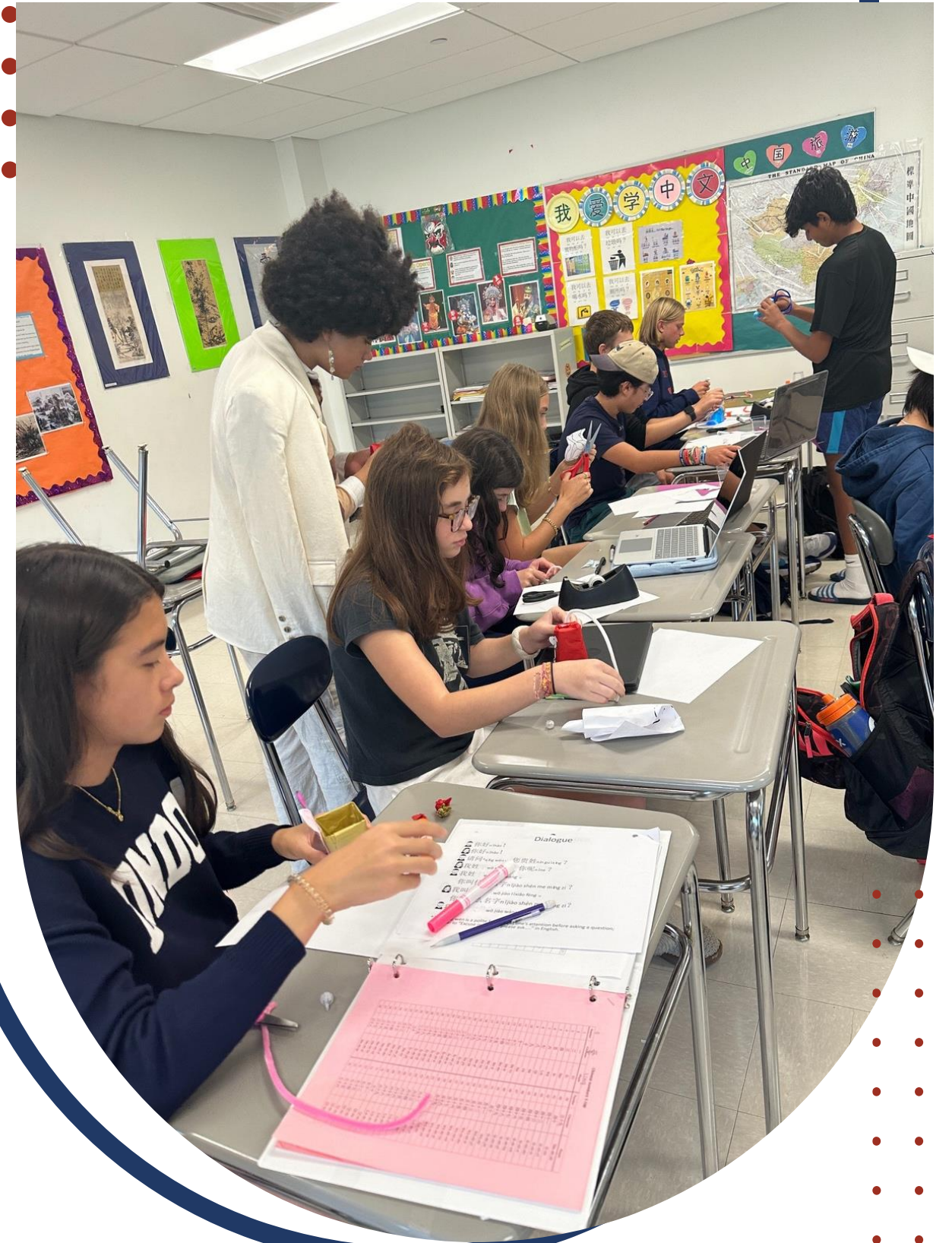


## FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026



# MISSION POSSIBLE

The mission of the Fairfield Public Schools, in partnership with families and community, is to ensure that every student acquires the knowledge and skills needed to be a lifelong learner, responsible citizen, and successful participant in an ever-changing global society through a comprehensive educational program.





# FPS Teamwork

## Board Members

Jeff Peterson Board Chair  
Carol Guernsey Board Vice-Chair  
Kathryn Anne Flynn Board Secretary  
Nick Aysseh Board Member  
Jennifer Jacobsen Board Member  
David Krasnoff Board Member  
Jason Li Board Member  
Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly Board Member  
Tracey Rinaldi Board Member

## Administration & Executive Directors

Michael J. Testani Superintendent of Schools  
  
Dr. Zakia Parrish Deputy Superintendent  
Dr. James Zavodjancik Chief Academic Officer  
Dr. Nicole Danishevsky Executive Director of K-12 Mathematics and STEM  
Janine Goss Executive Director of PK-12 Literacy  
Courtney LeBorious Chief Financial Officer  
Kanicka Ingram Executive Director of Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator  
Robert Mancusi Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services  
Angelus Papageorge Executive Director of Operations

## Directors

Rachael Chappa Director of Communications  
Sal Morabito Director of Construction & Energy Management  
Marco Taddei Director of Information Technology





# BUDGET OVERVIEW

1

Critical Investments

2

Mandates and Service Needs

3

Efficiencies





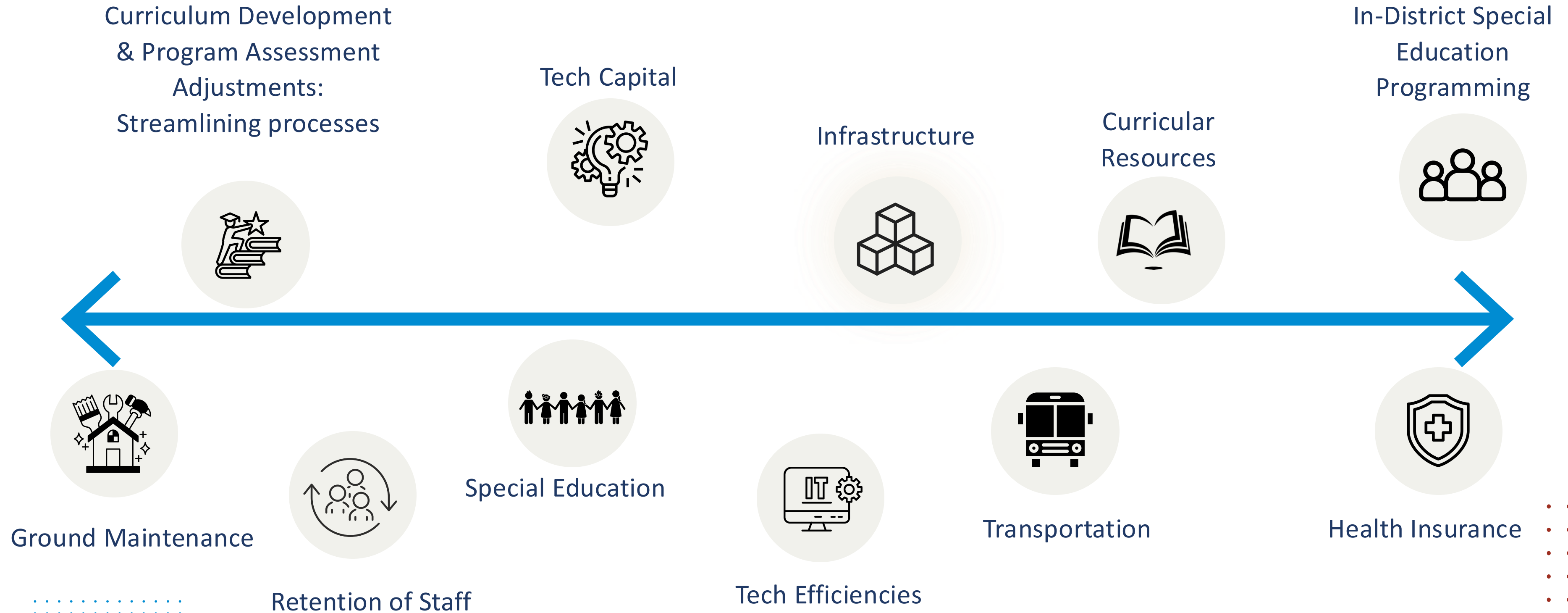
# BALANCING NECESSARY INVESTMENTS WITH EFFICIENCIES, ENSURING RESOURCES CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EXCEPTIONAL OUTCOMES FOR OUR STUDENTS

To maintain the high-quality education that Fairfield Public Schools is known for, we must invest strategically in competitive salaries and benefits, key infrastructure, and critical instructional resources. At the same time, we've proactively identified operational efficiencies in areas such as utilities, print management, technology support, and maintenance cycles to offset costs wherever possible.





# BALANCING NECESSARY INVESTMENTS WITH OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES





**2025-2026**

**Board of Education Proposed  
Budget Increase  
6.68%**

**For a total budget  
\$234,932,226**





How did we get  
here?

Superintendent's  
Proposed Budget:  
**\$234,425,547**



Transportation increase  
**\$1,694,924**



Heath Insurance Increase  
**\$887,510**



Town Pension Increase **\$208,987**



# Board of Education Budget Before Preemptive Reductions

**\$237,054,226**

**Total Impact  
First Selectman's  
Budget Reductions**

**\$7,013,939**





# Responsible Budget Reductions

BOE Strategic Reductions to Ensure Fiscal Responsibility While Maintaining Essential Services

**2.1M in Savings**



**\$942K** - Personnel Changes (9.0 FTE Reduction)



**\$574K** – Technology Spending Cuts



**\$356K** – Phased Rollout of the New World Language Curriculum

**\$250K** – Maintenance Budget Adjustments







Fixed costs driving the Budget Increase: **Majority of the Budget Increase (6.25% of 6.68%) are fixed costs** that are essential and unavoidable.

**Contractual Salary and Benefit Obligations:**

Retaining and attracting high-quality teachers.

Health insurance premiums with a projected 8% increase.

**Critical Building Maintenance:**

Essential projects like elevator replacements and fire safety upgrades.

**Inflationary Impacts on Operational Costs:**

Rising costs in transportation (fuel and labor).

Increased utility expenses due to energy price hikes.



# What's Driving The Budget Increase?

**More than two thirds of budget increase is “fixed costs”:**  
Teacher Compensation, Contract Obligations, and Benefits.

## Salary & Benefits

25-26 Request	\$ 183,673,788
Difference from Prior Year	\$ 10,419,005



4.73% of the

6.68% Budget  
request



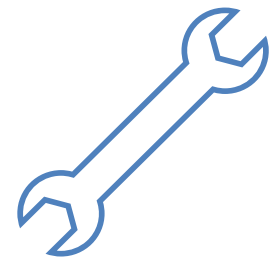


# What's Driving The Budget Increase?

Another 22% of the increase is related to critical operations and maintenance

## Transportation & Maintenance

25-26 Request	\$ 24,763,173
Difference from Prior Year	\$ 3,336,762



1.52%

Of the 6.68%  
Budget Request





# What's Driving The Budget Increase?

The bulk of the remaining budget increase is allocated to vital special education services necessary to support student needs.

Special Education	
25-26 Request	\$ 16,509,914
Difference from Prior Year	\$ 1,052,310



0.48%

Of the 6.68%





# MANDATES & SERVICE NEEDS



## Special Education

- Increased tuition costs, specialized programming and support needs drive essential expenses for compliance and student success

## Transportation

- Rising labor and fuel costs challenge our ability to provide safe, reliable transportation

## Health Insurance

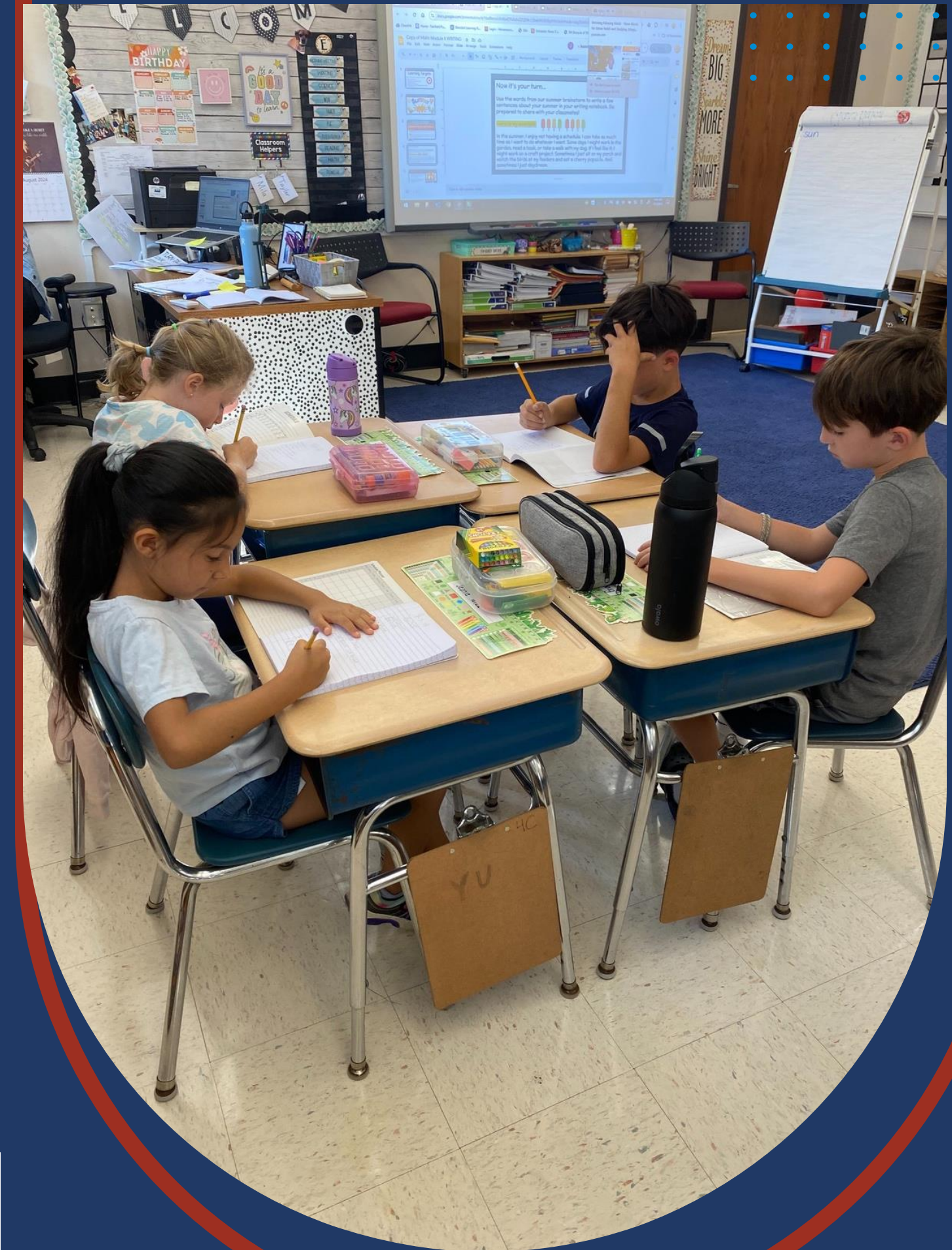
- 12% premium increase drives higher costs to sustain quality health care benefits



# SERVING OUR STUDENTS IN-HOUSE

OUTPLACED / IN-DISTRICT COST COMPARISON (in 000's) ^								
Specialized Program	Students	SpEd Teachers	SW/Psych	Ed Trainers	Paras	Avg Outplacement \$117,778	Est. in-district cost \$55,705	Cost Avoidance \$62,074
CLC-ECC FWHS/STR	20	2	0	5	6	\$2.52	\$1.28	\$1.23
CLC-Burr	17	2	0	1	11	\$2.14	\$1.25	\$0.89
CLC-Mill Hill	13	3	0	3	5	\$1.64	\$1.10	\$0.54
CLC-FWHS	18	2	0	3	9	\$2.27	\$1.29	\$0.97
CLC-FLHS	14	2	0	2	9	\$1.76	\$1.16	\$0.60
CLC-FWMS	8	1	0	2	3	\$1.01	\$0.58	\$0.43
CLC-Jennings	14	3	0	2	6	\$1.76	\$1.10	\$0.67
CLC-RLMS	9	1	0	1	3	\$1.13	\$0.51	\$0.62
CLC-Tomlinson	10	1	0	2	5	\$1.26	\$0.73	\$0.53
CLC-Osborn Hill	13	2	0	2	8	\$1.64	\$1.09	\$0.55
TLC-Riverfield	7	1	1	1	2	\$0.88	\$0.47	\$0.41
TRS-Tomlinson	6	2	1	0	1	\$0.76	\$0.44	\$0.31
IMPACT-FLHS	19	1	2	0	0	\$2.39	\$0.40	\$1.99
IMPACT-FWHS	23	1	2	0	0	\$2.89	\$0.41	\$2.49
IMPACT-WFC	11	1	1	1	0	\$1.38	\$0.35	\$1.04
CPP	27	2	1	0	13	\$3.40	\$1.37	\$2.03
Lit Academy- McK	18	3	0	0	4	\$1.01	\$0.71	\$0.29
Lit Academy-MS	12	1	0	0	0	\$0.67	\$0.18	\$0.49
	259	31	8	25	85	\$30.50	\$14.43	\$16.08

^Enrollment numbers as of 12/14/2024



Cost Avoidance of >\$16m

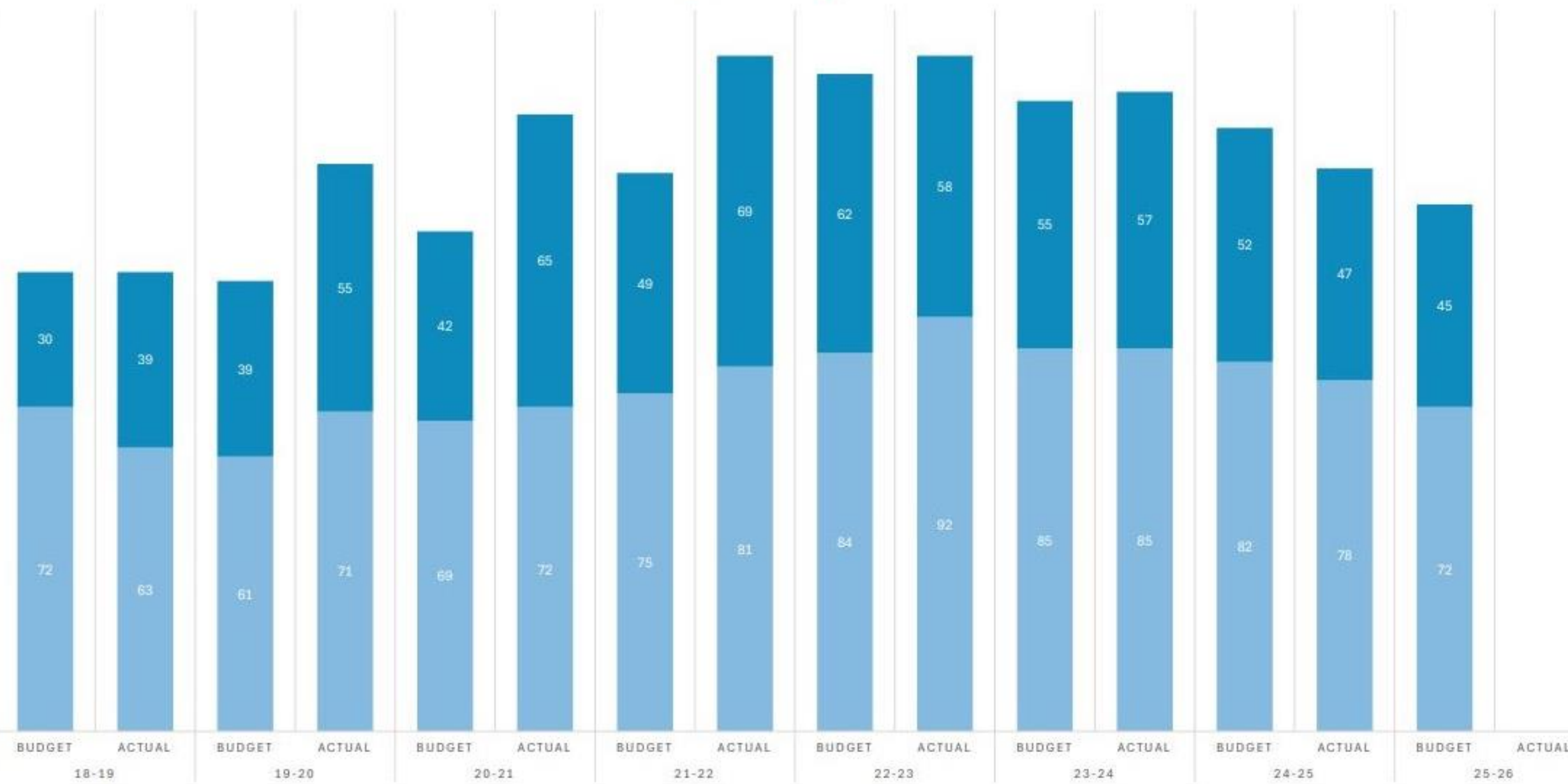




# QUALITY IN-HOUSE DECREASING OUTPLACEMENTS & SETTLEMENTS PROGRAM

STUDENT COUNTS (OUTPLACEMENTS & SETTLEMENTS)

■ OUTPLACEMENT ■ SETTLEMENT



- Coming out of Covid, the district had **69** unilateral placements in the **2021-22** school year
- For the **25-26** school year, we are projecting **45** settlement agreements (unilateral placements)
- We continue to develop in-district programming that is responsive to student needs within the least restrictive environment decreasing the need to outplace.
  - **2022-23** school year: 92 Outplacements
  - **2025-26** school year: 72 Outplacements projected





# IDENTIFYING DISABILITIES

## ENSURING SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENTS

Special Education Status (SWD)  
■ Students with Disabilities ■ Students without Disabilities

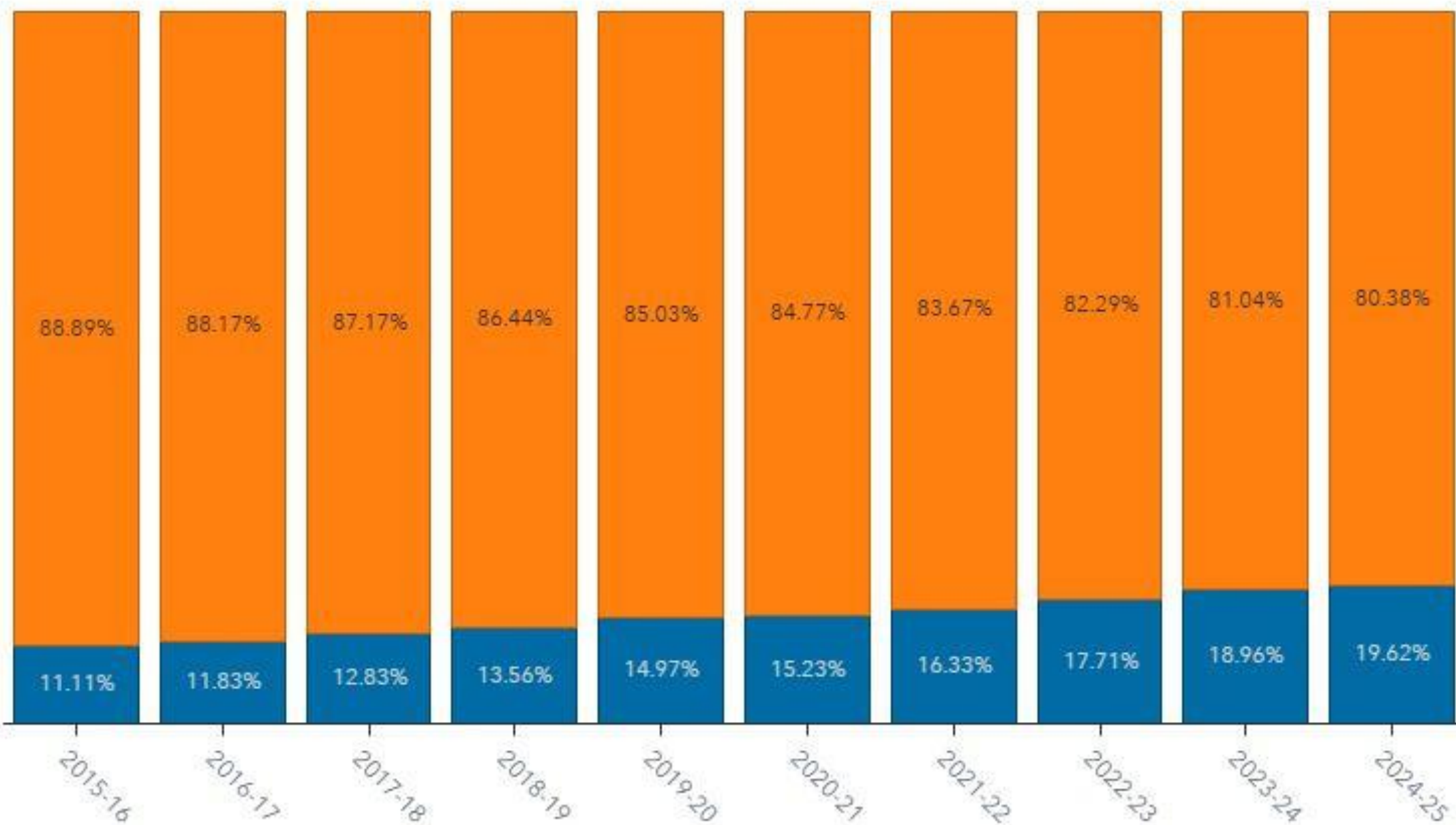
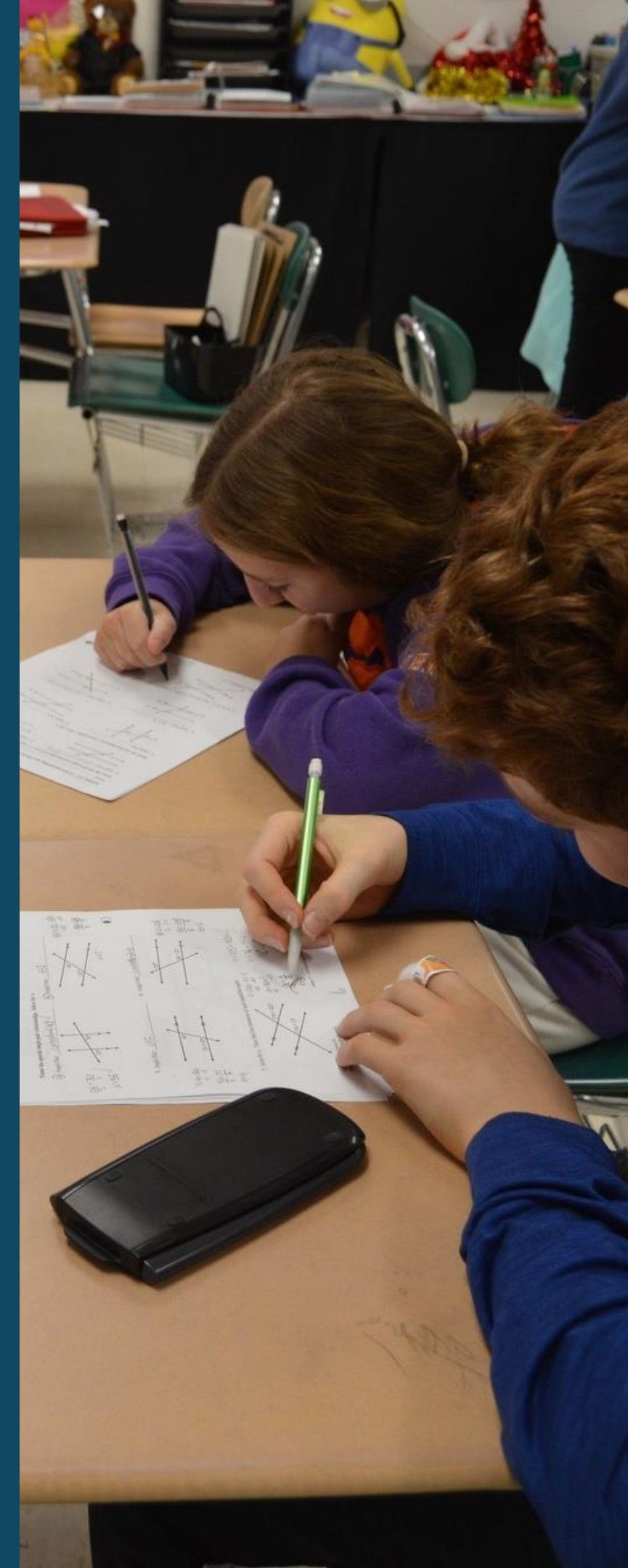


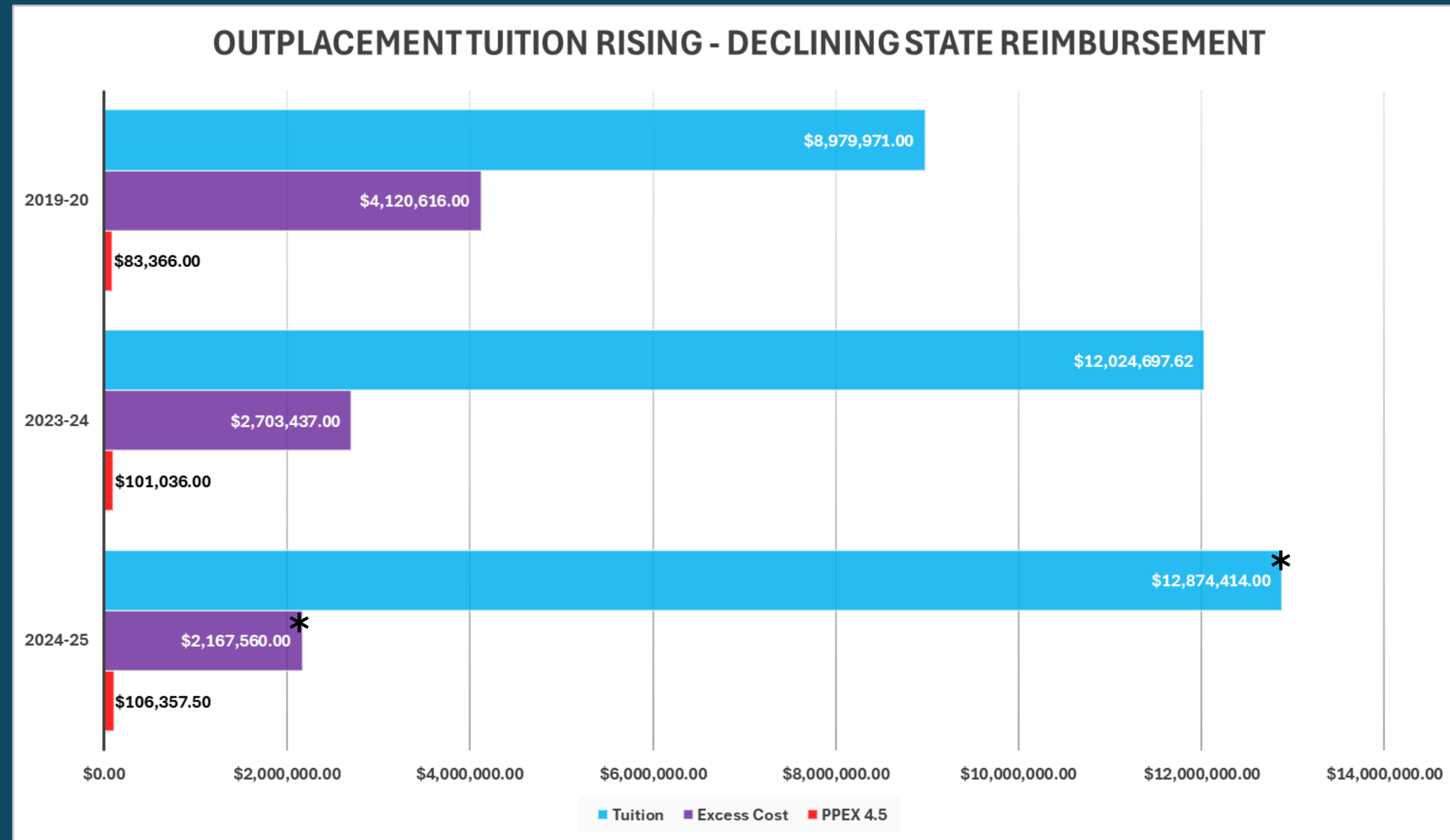
Chart: EdSight Enrollment Dashboard for Special Education Pre-K-12

- The number of students identified in need of Special Education support continues to increase annually
- In response to increased needs of students with disabilities, FPS continues to adjust Special Education programming to support students Pre-K through Grade 12





# PLACEMENT TUITION RISING DECLINING STATE REIMBURSE

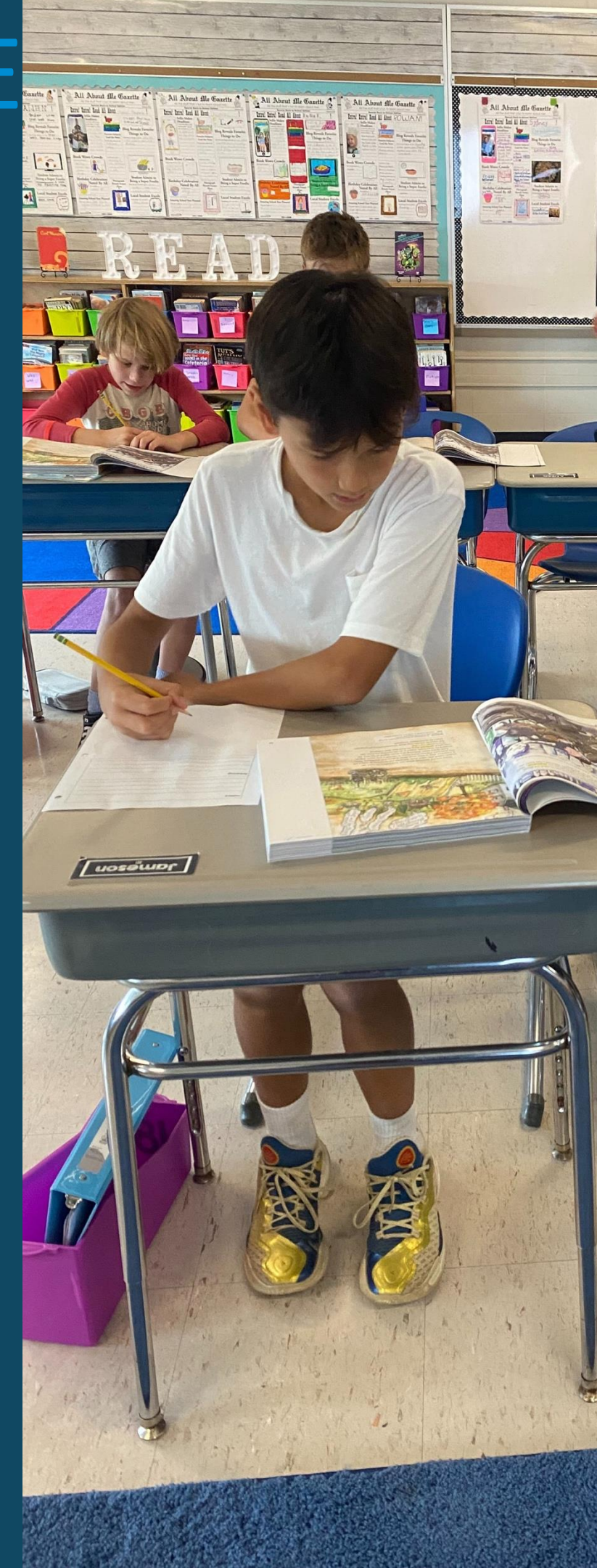


\* Projected numbers as of February 19, 2025. The 2024-25 tuition amount is projected out to June.

Per Pupil Expenditure and Tuition costs continue to rise

Excess cost reimbursement continues to decline

As a result, budget adjustments need to be made to address the shortfall in state reimbursements to meet student need





# CRITICAL INVESTMENTS



- **Retention and Recruitment of Teachers:** Competitive compensation to attract and retain high-quality teachers, supported by teacher contracts and a robust residency program.
- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** Elevator maintenance (FLHS), fire safety updates (RLMS), and HVAC expansion (at the elementary schools).
- **Curriculum Enhancements:**
  - Textbooks for World Languages (Spanish, French, Italian, Mandarin, Latin).
  - Expansion of Gifted/Talented programs at the elementary level.
- **Technology Capital:** Protective charging stations at the elementary level and refresh cycles for equipment to maintain quality technology support.



# Health Benefits, Pensions & Transportation

## Addressing an Unexpected \$2.79M Budget Shortfall:



**\$888K health insurance premium spike (CT Partnership 2.0 + 1% Fairfield County surcharge)**



**\$209K pension contribution increase based on town estimates**



**Unanticipated costs: \$1.69M more than expected for transportation**

## Taking Action:



**Made additional deep cuts to maintain fiscal responsibility**



**Protected essential services while ensuring long-term budget stability**



**Set a disciplined foundation for next year's budget planning**





# EFFICIENCIES: Maximizing Resources



## Technology Efficiencies

Cost savings from optimized equipment and maintenance contracts

Reduced paper use and improved copier/print management pricing



## Grounds Maintenance

Streamlined care cycles, including reductions in tree preventive maintenance, to lower costs without compromising quality.



## Utility Savings

Energy efficiency improvements and reduced utility expenses through the Cenergistic contract.



## In-District SpEd Programming

Enhanced programming reduces reliance on out-of-district placements, achieving significant cost avoidance.



# PARTNERSHIPS THAT LAST

Energy Savings = More Student Programs: Cutting energy costs frees funds for academic and extracurricular enhancements.

Apr 2024 to Sep 2024

## Energy Program Update

Fairfield Public  
Schools  
(FPS)



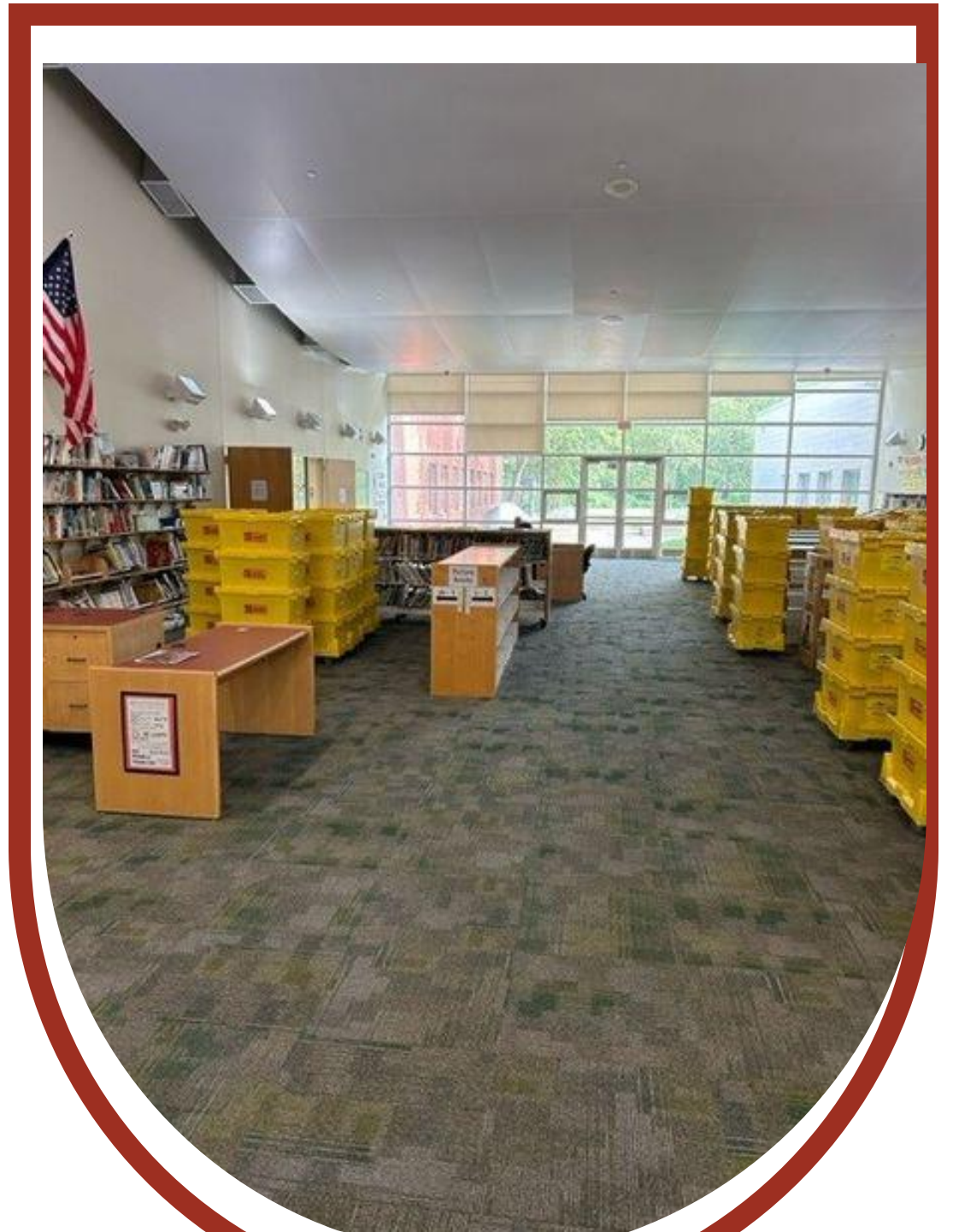
### Total Program Savings

**\$130,491**

Program savings measures the impact of the energy program on utility consumption and cost when independent variables such as occupancy, unit cost, etc. are factored in.

**7.4% overall savings**

**Program Savings \$ (Cumulative)**



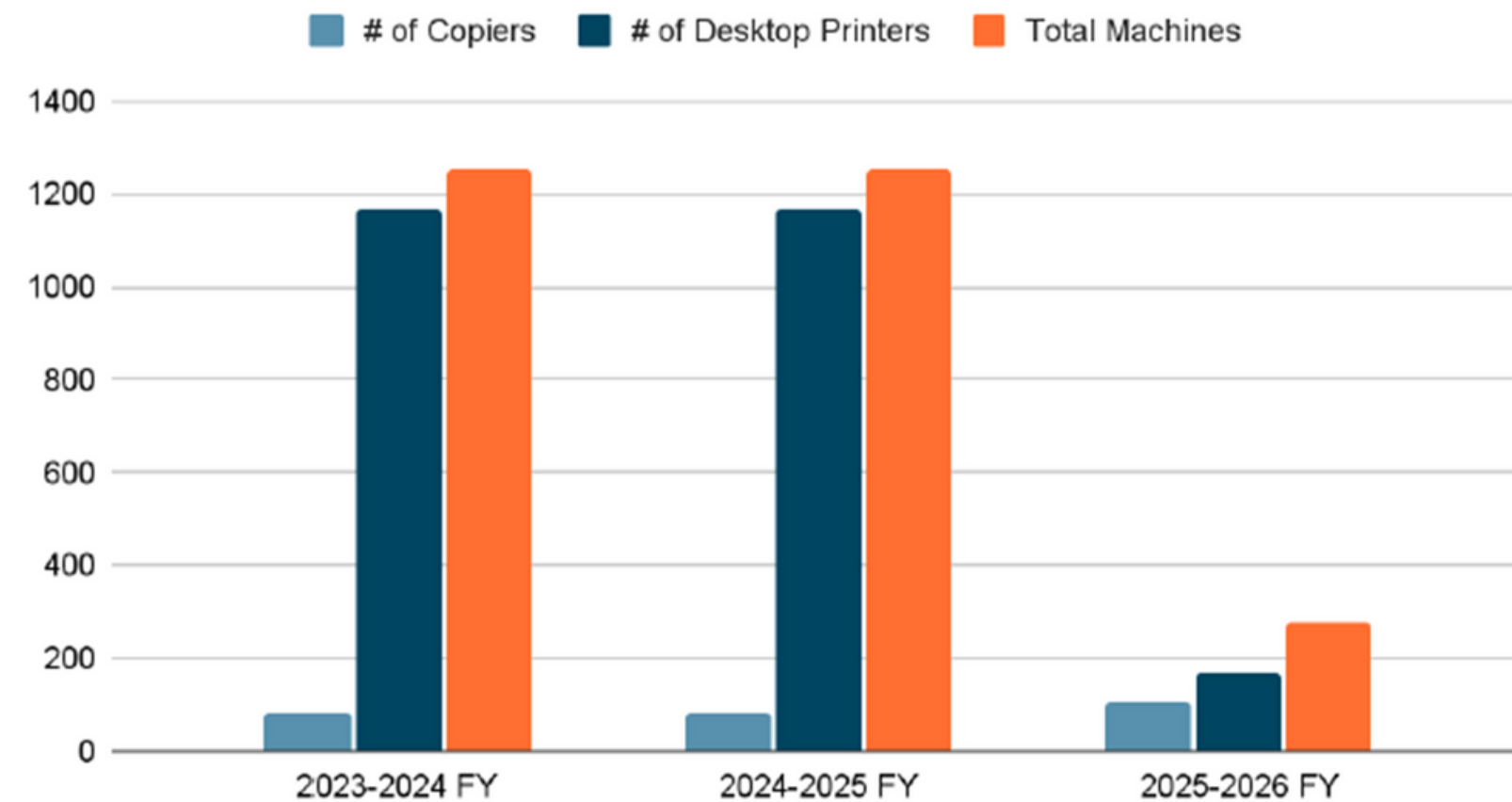


# MAKING BETTER USE OF OUR RESOURCES



**STREAMLINING PRINTING = IMMEDIATE SAVINGS:  
CUTTING PRINT DEVICES SAVES IN YEAR ONE, WITH ONGOING REDUCTIONS AS PRINT RELIANCE  
DECREASES.**

Copiers vs. Desktop Printers



**Year One Savings of >\$50,000**



# FACILITIES

## MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

### Fire Alarm System: RLMS

Replace outdated, proprietary fire alarm system to improve reliability and safety. Allows for competitive pricing on maintenance and repairs.

Cost: \$425,408

### Elevator Replacement

Replace outdated elevator at FLHS to ensure reliability and accessibility. Reduces downtime and maintenance costs, improving access for all

Cost: \$389,950







# FROM INVESTMENTS TO OUTCOMES

**By strategically leveraging cost-saving measures, we create room for impactful investments in our schools.**

**These investments, whether in exceptional teachers, updated facilities, or enriched programs, directly translate into the outcomes that define Fairfield Public Schools:**

- high academic achievement
- thriving arts and sports programs
- students who are well-prepared for their futures





# FPS ATHLETICS

## OFFICIAL STATS

ROSTER	2550
ATHLETES	
COLLEGE SIGNING DAY	37
PARTICIPANTS	
FCIAC	13
CHAMPIONS	
DIVISION	8
CHAMPIONS	
ALL FCIAC	91
RECIPIENTS	
STATE CHAMPS	10
	35
ALL STATE	

RECIPIENTS





# Connecting Community Through Art

10

Connecticut  
Regional Scholastic  
Art Award Winners

## Top Congressional Art Competition Winners

District 4 for the second  
year in a row

## Student Artwork Selected for Competitions

Including University of  
Massachusetts, Dartmouth,  
School of Visual Arts, Drexel  
University, Emerging Young  
Artist Juried Competition

## Advanced Photography

Accredited as a Sacred  
Heart University ECE  
Course CM2223 earning  
credit in the School of  
Communication

## Fulfilled Paley Grant & Mosaic Project

Tomlinson Middle  
School

## CT. State Department of Education Grants

Secured for four art  
teachers

## Art Teacher Professional Development

Museum of  
Modern Art, NYC

## Community Outreach

- The Memory Project
- The Art Honor Society raised funds for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission creating pottery for the “Empty Bowls Project”
- Annual FPS Art Celebration serving thousands of community members at the Pequot Library
- Elementary School year-end art shows



## Middle and High School Art Student Experiences

Yale Art Museum, The Gallery at  
HCCC, Bronx Zoo/Arthur Ave,  
Botanical Gardens, Hogpen Hill  
Sculpture Park, Weir Farm





# INSPIRING A LOVE FOR MUSIC

## Annual Veterans Day concerts

recognizing local service members

## Fairfield's Annual Memorial Day Parade

participation by all middle and high school band students

## Theater Productions

Students showcase talent in musical and drama performances throughout the year

## Town-wide Music Festival

uniting musicians from every school in the district to perform in a combined concert

## High School Choral Students

combined performance with world renown vocal ensemble Chanticleer

## Grade 4-7 Choral Clinic & Performance

with Deke Sharon, music director for Pitch Perfect, the Sing Off, Pentatonix, and various Disney projects.

## “Named Best Communities for Music Education”

recipient of - top 5% of music education programs in the country

## 85 High School Students

selected for Western Regional Festival

## 29 Middle School Students

selected for Western Regional Festival

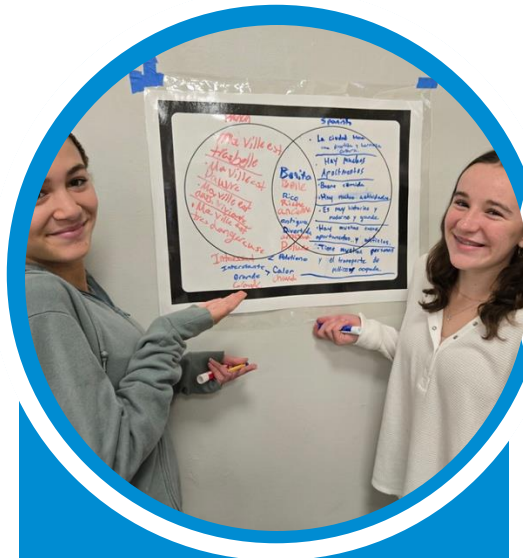
## 25 French student musicians

engaged in an immersive homestay program with FPS music students culminating in a collaborative international performance





# FPS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS & HONORS



288

Students  
Earned the  
Seal of  
Biliteracy  
Last Year



5

Schools of  
Distinction  
Holland Hill  
Osborn Hill  
Roger  
Sherman  
Stratfield  
Dwight



3

National  
Merit  
Semifinalist  
s and/or  
finalists



A

Overall  
Niche  
Grade



137

AP Scholars

147 AP  
scholars of  
distinction  
83 AP scholars  
with honors  
82% of  
students  
earned 3 or



# VISION OF A GRADUATE

**Rigorous College Preparatory Courses**

**Over 91% of Students Participate in Post Secondary Education**

**Early College Experiences: University of Connecticut, Sacred Heart, Norwalk Community College, University of Bridgeport & Quinnipiac University**

**2024 Graduates Accepted to Over 220 Universities/Colleges**

**High School Students Engage in a Variety of Art, Drama and Music Programs**

**Warde and Ludlowe Students Participate in Varsity Athletic Teams and Sub Varsity Athletic Teams**







**THANK YOU!**