



**Washington Township  
Public Schools**

**Public Hearing on the  
Budget for the  
2024-2025 School Year**

**District Leadership:**  
Dr. E. Hibbs  
Ms. J. Wechter

We Are TWP

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Ralph Ross, *President***

**Scott Laliberte, *Vice-President***

**Connie Baker**

**Patricia Blome**

**Carol Chila**

**Stacey DiMeo**

**Sean Lindsay**

**Steven Serrano**

**David Tomczak**

**Eddie Mulvihill (Student Representative)**



## Board Of Education Members

The Washington Township Board of Education is made up of 9 Volunteer members who set policy and ensure the district is well-run.

# 2024-25 School Year

## AGENDA

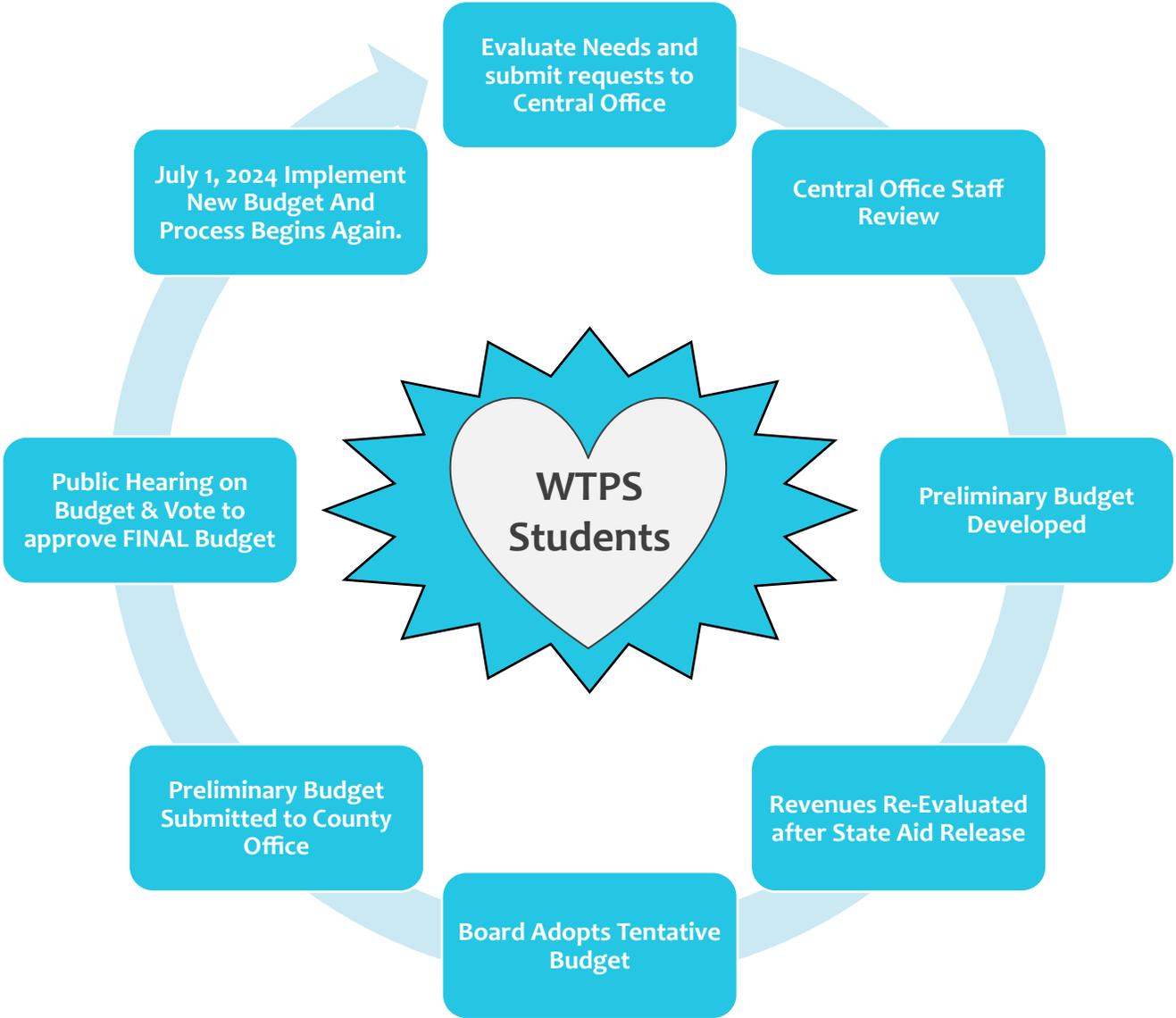


1. Description of Budget Process/Timeline
2. Enrollment
3. Challenges of the Budget
4. Description of 2024/2025 Budget
5. What the Challenges of the Budget Are Not
6. Tax Impact
7. Budget Inclusions & Exclusions
8. Changes from Tentative Budget
9. Vision
10. FAQ

# 2024-25 Annual Budget Timeline

Date	Description
February 27, 2024	Governor's Budget Address
February 29, 2024	Release of State Aid
March 19, 2024	Preliminary Budget Presentation and Approval 7:00 PM at Central Administration Building
March 20, 2024	2023-24 Preliminary Budget Submission Deadline
April 30, 2024	Public Hearing – Board Adopts the Final 2024-2025 Annual School Budget 7:00 PM at Washington Township High School

# Annual Budget Development Process



# Where Does the District Funding Come From? – (Revenues)

Since the late 1990's, the Washington Township School District has been overfunded with respect to State Aid revenues. Governor Murphy signed a bill into law in 2018 that made statutory adjustments over a multi-year period. This year marks the final Phase-In of State Aid eliminations. We are considered "**FULLY FUNDED**," in accordance with the current funding formula. Please note for 2024-2025 we were expecting a loss in state aid. We actually received \$1,595,948 additional. Even though this was extra money we did not think we were receiving, it only helped us not cut an additional \$1,595,948.



## STATE AID

Based upon a very involved funding formula, each student generates a base amount of aid, which funds some of our basic educational costs, such as teacher salaries, retirement costs, instructional materials, etc. Additional aid is generated based upon the makeup of our student population, Special Education, Transportation, Security, etc.



## LOCAL TAX LEVY

This portion of our funding comes from the local tax assessment. School districts prepare a calculation which generates a School Tax Rate. This rate is applied to all taxable properties in Washington Township resulting in a certain dollar amount in taxes to support the school district.



## MISCELLANEOUS AND GRANTS

A much smaller portion of our revenue comes in the form of miscellaneous revenue and Federal and State grants. The Miscellaneous revenues are things like tuition from other schools, interest, things like that. The grants are typically based upon some Federal or State criteria and are generally for specified purposes only, not day-to-day expenses.

# Where Does All the Funding Go? – (Expenditures)



**FACILITIES**  
11 buildings at  
1,068,442  
Sq. Feet

We are just shy of  
the size of the  
Cherry Hill Mall



**MEALS**  
Almost 750,000  
annually

Approximately  
3,000 daily meals

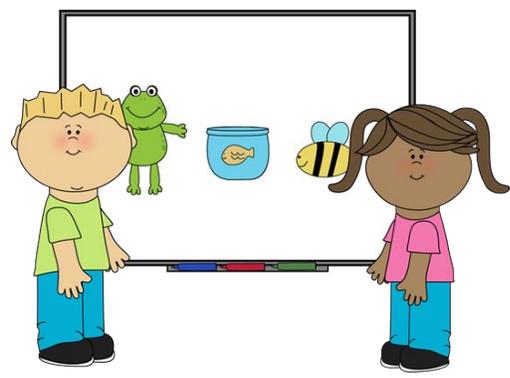


**OUR  
WORKFORCE**  
2023-24  
= 1,513 total staff

Approximately  
2 round trips  
to the Moon in  
Miles



**BUSES**  
Approximately  
1,000,000 miles  
annually



Supplies & Equipment  
to Facilitate Teaching &  
Learning

1 to 1 devices, etc.

Salaries & Benefits  
Packages for all  
Staff Members



# 2024-2025 Budget Information



<b>Resident Enrollment</b>					
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
<b>Elementary</b>	3,151	3,124	3,113	3,085	3,285
<b>Middle</b>	1,766	1,759	1,737	1,707	1,724
<b>High</b>	2,147	2,104	2,200	2,236	2,249
	7,064	6,987	7,050	7,028	7,258
<b>October 15th counts</b>					
<b>2023 count is submitted for calculation of 24-25 funding</b>					



# State Aid History (What We Have Lost)



State Aid History							
	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>2019-2020</u>	<u>2018-2019</u>
Categorical Transp. Aid	\$2,909,313	\$2,909,313	\$2,909,313	\$2,909,313	\$2,909,313	\$2,909,313	\$2,909,313
Categorical Special Ed. Aid	\$7,152,534	\$5,556,586	\$5,556,586	\$5,556,586	\$5,556,586	\$5,556,586	\$5,556,586
Equalization Aid	\$32,710,025	\$32,710,025	\$34,219,738	\$34,596,635	\$36,399,809	\$37,764,814	\$38,162,410
Categorical Security Aid	\$944,104	\$944,104	\$944,104	\$944,104	\$944,104	\$944,104	\$944,104
Adjustment Aid		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,057,379
Other Aid		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$43,715,976	\$42,120,028	\$43,629,741	\$44,006,638	\$45,809,812	\$47,174,817	\$48,629,792
SDA Assessment	-\$182,956	-\$182,956	-\$182,956	-\$182,956	-\$182,956	-\$182,956	-\$182,956
Net State Aid	\$43,533,020	\$41,937,072	\$43,446,785	\$43,823,682	\$45,626,856	\$46,991,861	\$48,446,836
<b>Loss of State Aid</b>	<b>\$1,595,948</b>	<b>-\$1,509,713</b>	<b>-\$376,897</b>	<b>-\$1,803,174</b>	<b>-\$1,365,005</b>	<b>-\$1,454,975</b>	<b>-\$483,207</b>



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



- **S2 Reductions**
  - Since the 2015-2016 school year, we have had over a \$9,000,000 reduction in state aid.
- **Overfunded/Underfunded Concept**
  - In the end, WTPS has had to remove over \$9,000,000 from our budget. (Since 2015)
    - As an example, this represents 90 staff members @ a \$100,000.



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



<b>Revenue Comparison</b>	Limited additional Revenue (Tax Cap & Aid Cuts)
<b>Contractual Salary Increases</b>	Moving from 2023-2024 from 2024-2025, we had an approximate increase to our budget over \$3,000,000. Note: 2% levy raise equals approximately \$1,800,000.
<b>Staff Shortages/Substitute Costs</b>	Change in sick leave law expanded the use of sick time for staff.



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



## Benefit Increases

The overall percentage of increase in premium is 9.36%. The total increase related to benefits is approximately \$2,000,000.

11% health care increase
3.5% prescription increase
0% increase in dental
Effect of Chapter 44



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



## COVID Relief Funds

The 24-25 budget will see the end of the COVID Relief Funds. The issues that our district used these monies for still exist: Intervention; Behavior; Staff Shortages, etc.

CRF	\$387,227
CARES	\$495,981
ESSER II	\$2,027,918
ESSER III	\$4,935,016



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



## Transportation Increases

6% increase for out of district transportation routes

Overall increase in vehicles, gas, supplies, repairs, etc.

Conducted out-of-district transportation analysis.

Eliminated \$435,000 in bringing GCIT in-house

Eliminated over \$1,000,000 in other out-of-district routes

County Meeting to Encourage Shared Transportation May, 2024



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



## Tuition Increases

We are expecting an increase in out-of-district tuition in the amount of \$1,700,000.

New students to district

IEP compliance

Tuition increases for students placed out-of-district



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



## Prices in General

<b>Price</b>	The price of literally everything has increased in the past few years.
<b>Revenue</b>	The increase in cost outpaces our increase in revenue.
<b>“Shrinkflation”</b>	“Shrinkflation” - Example: Doritos from 9.75 - 9.25 oz.
<b>Relating Our District to a Family</b>	The typical American household must spend an additional \$11,434 annually to just maintain the same standard of living from 2021.



# Challenges of 2024-2025 Budget



## Current State

Historically cuts have been managed by primarily looking at vacant positions, attrition, supplies, and other resources.

**We can no longer survive by using this strategy.**

This year's budget required us to revisit virtually every facet of our budget looking at each line item (over the past approximate 5 years) to develop a strategic budget.

This budget forced us to make eliminations across the district.

Our goal was to focus on **students, student learning, student programs, educational outcomes, and safety/compliance.**



# Significant Budget Challenges



Contractual Salary Increases:	\$3,000,000
Benefit Increases: (Brown & Brown Plan)	\$2,000,000
Tuition Increases:	\$1,700,000

- We cut \$6,000,000 worth of additions from the proposed budget.
- WTPS received an extra \$1,595,948 in additional State Aid. It was used to offset the budgetary gap.
- There were other reasons we needed to close the budgetary gap.



# Comparison of Revenue



<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>\$ CHANGE</u>	<u>% CHANGE</u>
Fund Balance	\$10,500,000	\$11,496,411	-\$996,411	-8.67%
Local Tax Levy	\$97,152,949	\$94,430,756	\$2,722,193	2.88%
State Aid	\$43,715,976	\$42,120,028	\$1,595,948	3.79%
Extraordinary Aid	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$0	0.00%
SEMI	\$219,828	\$205,053	\$14,775	7.21%
Bus Advertising Revenue	\$13,486	\$12,390	\$1,096	8.85%
Capital Reserve Interest	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	0.00%
Capital Reserve Withdrawal		\$1,578,495	-\$1,578,495	-100.00%
Unrestricted Miscellaneous	\$975,000	\$975,000	\$0	0.00%
Restricted Miscellaneous	\$92,000	\$92,000	\$0	0.00%
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>\$155,174,239</b>	<b>\$153,415,133</b>	<b>\$1,759,106</b>	<b>1.15%</b>

# 2024-25 Total WTPS Budget By Department

Description	Appropriations	% of Total
Instructional	79,176,882	46.47%
Employee Benefits (Medical, Rx, Dental)	29,643,955	17.4%
Operations	13,820,959	8.11%
Transportation	8,828,235	5.18%
Support Services	17,609,828	10.34%
School Budgets	5,994,707	3.52%
Counseling/Health Services/Media Library/Attendance	5,807,689	3.41%
District-Wide (Ex. Insurance, Professional Services, etc.)	3,266,289	1.92%
Debt Service	1,306,900	.77%
Improvement of Instructional Services/Professional Development	1,227,619	.72%
Food Services	831,817	.49%
Capital Projects	583,464	.34%
Security	408,104	.24%
Technology	1,859,930	1.09%
<b>Total Budget Appropriations</b>	<b>\$170,366,378</b>	

# 2024-25 Total WTPS Budget Categories

Description	Appropriations	% of Total
Salaries	90,394,967	53.06%
Employee Benefits (Medical, Rx, Dental)	30,926,766	18.15%
Purchased Professional Services	15,330,418	9.00%
Repairs and Maintenance	980,450	0.58%
Leases	5,598,605	3.29%
Capital Projects and Equipment	400,508	0.24%
Transportation	4,415,090	2.59%
Insurance	963,419	0.57%
Communications/Telephone/Travel	398,271	0.23%
Tuition	8,937,510	5.25%
Supplies/Materials and Textbooks	5,110,732	3.00%
Utilities	3,180,010	1.87%
Transfer to Food Service	831,817	0.49%
Miscellaneous/Other	526,447	0.31%
Local Contribution to Preschool	1,064,468	0.62%
Debt Service	1,306,900	0.77%
<b>Total Budget Appropriations</b>	<b>\$170,366,378</b>	

71.21%



# What the Challenges Are Not



- **PreK**
  - \$5,522,815 - In-District PreK Student Aid from NJDOE.
  - This will support 365 in-district students.
  - We are receiving \$253,719 for HeadStart.
  - We are receiving \$2,857,008 for private providers.
    - This is a grand total of \$8,633,542 in state aid.



# What the Challenges Are Not

## PreK



2023-2024	Students	Classrooms
GT and WTHS	224 PEA Students	17 Classrooms
HeadStart	27 Students	2

2024-2025	Students	Classrooms
GT, WTHS, & Kindle	420 PEA Students	28 Classrooms
HeadStart & Providers	210 Students	14 Classrooms

251 students to 630 PEA students - Increase of 379 students - Increasing from 19 to 42 sections -

(10,000 per year x 379 - \$3,790,000 annual savings for Township taxpayers. Savings across all 630 students is \$6,300,000.) \*This does not include savings for inclusion students.



# Preschool Funding





# What the Challenges Are Not



- **PreK**

- We are responsible for specific costs related to PreK outside of PEA.
  - Please note that we have a local share of \$1,064,468.
  - A lot of these costs were previously in our local budget prior to the Preschool Education Aid; some examples are below:
    - Principal's Salary
    - Nurse's Salary
    - Social Worker's Salary
    - Custodian's Salary (etc.)
  - If PEA funding disappeared, these costs would still remain.



# What the Challenges Are Not



- **Visual Performing Arts Academy**
  - We are using existing staff to form and run our academy.
  - Only purchase: Keyboards (No New Staff)
  - There were no major impacts through developing this academy.
  - We simply analyzed our current offerings, developed an academy concept, packaged/marketed what we already had, and will launch for 2024-2025.



# What the Challenges Are Not



- **Concept of Ombudsman (Outside Educational Placement)**
  - Ombudsman currently serves students with specific needs.
  - We are developing a plan to service our students in-district next year.
    - The plan for next year resulted in a savings that was used to offset the budget deficit.
    - We are confident our plan will serve our students in our district well.
      - Projected savings of approximately \$150,000



# 2024-2025 Budget Information



Tax Levy Increase Including Healthcare Waiver		
Tax Levy	\$97,152,949	\$833,578
Prior Year Tax Levy	\$94,430,756	
Current Year Tax Increase	\$2,722,193	
Percent Increase	2.88%	

The budget as presented utilizes the 2.0% tax levy raise and the allowable health care waiver .88%. The health care waiver is assisting in our budgetary gap.



# 2024-2025 Budget Information



<b>Tax Impact - 2% Increase Plus Healthcare Waiver</b>				
<b>ASSESSED VALUE</b>	<b>CURRENT SCHOOL TAX</b>	<b>PROPOSED SCHOOL TAX</b>	<b>ANNUAL INCREASE</b>	<b>MONTHLY INCREASE</b>
\$150,000	\$3,006.56	\$3,079.10	\$72.54	\$6.05
\$200,000	\$4,008.74	\$4,105.46	\$96.72	\$8.06
\$232,786	\$4,665.89	\$4,778.47	\$112.58	\$9.38
\$250,000	\$5,010.93	\$5,131.83	\$120.90	\$10.08
\$300,000	\$6,013.11	\$6,158.19	\$145.08	\$12.09
\$500,000	\$10,021.85	\$10,263.65	\$241.80	\$20.15



# Included in 2024-2025 Budget



- Curriculum Adoption (Lease Purchase)
- Equipment (Lease Purchase)
- Vehicles (Lease Purchase)
  - Busses - Maintenance Van (not Foods)
- Devices/Technology - Chromebooks (Lease Purchase)
- Capital Projects (Roofs, Windows, Flooring, Field Maintenance)
- Additional Staff as Needed (Ombudsman, Special Education)
- Continuation of Class III Officers/Partnership with Township
- 3 Deans of Students



# Included in 2024-2025 Budget



## 3 Deans of Students (Not Administrators)

Bells - 304 hours	TJ - 253 hours
Birches - 294 hours	WW - 290 hours
Hurffville - 302 hours	Whitman - 270 hours

Tracked hours spent on elementary discipline from September through December.

Average number of hours spent on discipline by principals: 285.5.

$285.5 / 16$  weeks is 17.84 hours per week spent on discipline.

$17.84 / 40$  hour weeks is .446 (45%)

This means our one (1) building principal on average spends 45% of their week on discipline.



# 2024-2025 Lease Equipment/Information



## Lease

Data & Assessment Resources	Technology (Hyperflex, Switches, Access Points, Computer Replacements)
Operations Vehicle	Buses
Elementary Speech Equipment	Supplies/Equipment
Student Devices	Furniture (Replacements Needed)
Middle School ELA Items	Middle School Science
Language Supplies	MD/Autism Curriculum



# 2024-2025 Staff Elimination Categories



Administrative Positions	4 positions (8.7%)
Administrative Support Positions	5 positions
Certified Staff/Teaching Positions	36 positions (4.5%)
Support Staff Reduced to Part-Time	12 positions
Support Staff Positions	55 positions (9.7%)

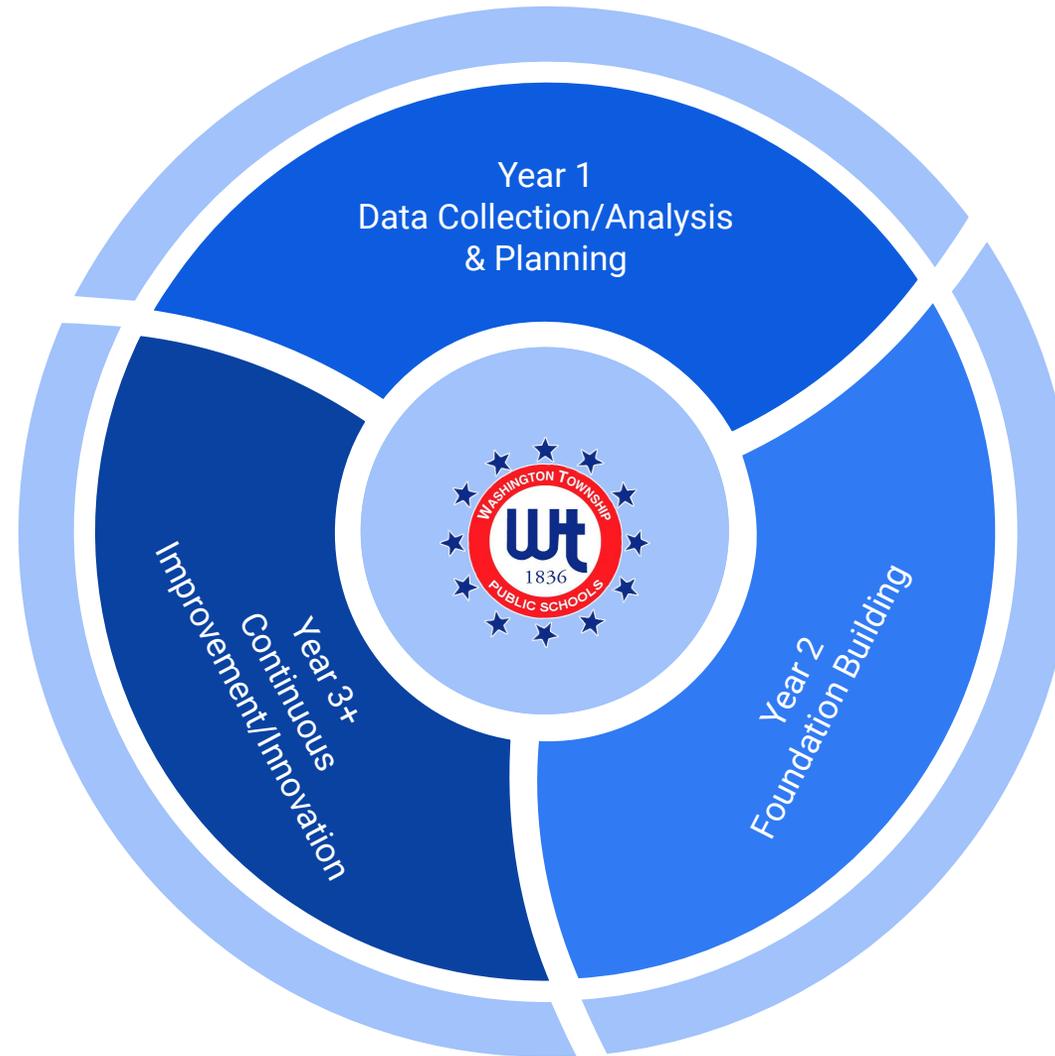


# Changes from Tentative Budget to Final Proposed



Support Staff Salaries	\$28,827
Support Staff Benefits	\$207,173
Regular Program Software	(\$188,000)
Educational Software for Ombudsman	(\$44,500)
BOE Budget for Food	(\$3,500)

# What Is The Vision? Where Is The District Moving?



# What Is The Vision? Where Is The District Moving?

## Now

Revised Grading System 3+	New Assessment Platform (LinkIt!) LCA - BOY - EOY	Intervention Manager Tool used for identifying student needs	District Data Teams	Inclusion Grant for PreK-K Perkins Grant
Dream Team	Units of Study and Pacing Guides Revamp of Program of Studies - HS	Care Solace	Revamp of Program of Studies and Pathways	Option 2 PE
Google (Move from Microsoft) (1st Google Day)	Digital Vetting Team Instructional Tools	Hiring the Best (Formal Demo Lessons)	Campus Facelift	Created additional Academy Pathways Culinary VPA



## Next

Genesis & Danielson	Systems Development	Energy Audit	Google Implementation	Expanded Preschool
Campus Facelift	Implementation and Support for New Digital Content/Instructional Tools	Core 4 (Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Citizenship) Character Traits	Development of District Emotional/Behavioral Program (Ombudsman)	Pathway for Trades - new Academy Construction Technology
Use of New Security Program	Professional Development to Address Behavior Issues	Update of All Job Descriptions	New Hires Security - Buildings & Grounds - Administration	New Website

## Future Possibilities

**Innovation**

**PD**

Medical Science  
Science & Engineering  
Law Enforcement/Public Safety  
Animal and Botanical Science  
Global Studies  
Humanities

**Excellence Everywhere!**

We Are TWP

**We Are Township**



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### Question:

Can the district implement a temporary hiring freeze?

### Answer:

School districts do not typically enact hiring freezes for all positions. Teaching positions are needed to teach our children. Administrative positions are needed to successfully run our district. To not fill either type of position places our district in great risk of harm, non-compliance, and a catastrophic breakdown of teaching and learning. We look at every open position and analyze whether or not it is needed.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### Question:

If you didn't make any cuts this year, what would happen? What would happen if you simply refused to cut moving forward?

### Answer:

We are required by law to submit a balanced budget. This means we can't be in the negative (red). So, we must address and plan for the budgetary gap we are facing. When you have a budgetary gap of approximately \$7,000,000, you must address this gap with staff. You can't physically cut "things" from the budget to find this amount. We will plan to address the budgetary gap in each fiscal year moving forward.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

What is the Energy Audit all about and will it save our district money or jobs?

### **Answer:**

The energy audit will include cost saving energy solutions and the ability to replace/refresh existing systems based upon energy savings. We are at the very beginning stages of the audit. The audit can not be used to save jobs. The end result will be that the energy audit will pay for capital projects that otherwise would have to be placed into a budget.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

Can you become a “Choice School” in order to generate extra revenue for the district?

### **Answer:**

The Office of School Choice is not accepting any new applications at the moment. Existing school districts that were previously granted “seats” are still able to accept choice students. We are able to accept tuition students and we want to maintain and create the best programs to attract new families to Washington Township.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

Do you really need to refill the Director of Special Education and Special Education Supervisor that are/will be vacant?

### **Answer:**

Yes. Both of these positions are mission critical to our district. In addition, we must ensure we deliver quality programming and follow legal guidelines. Mrs. Miller has worked tirelessly this year to ensure our success and compliance. However, having one person fulfilling both roles is not a long-term solution.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### Question:

Will we see savings from Genesis and Google?

### Answer:

Genesis: Savings after Year 1. Approximately \$60,000 vs. \$200,000

Google: Yes. The savings in Years 1-2 is roughly \$355,578 per year. The savings in Years 3-4 is roughly \$636,804 per year. The reasons Years 1-2 are lower is because we are replacing an extra grade level. The total device savings over 4 years will be just shy of \$2,000,000. We will also see a reduction in how much we need to budget for Microsoft (keeping where necessary). We have already represented these savings in our budget.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

What is your goal with class size and the instructional programs?

### **Answer:**

Our goal with this budget was to not systemically raise class sizes. In addition, we made all decisions attempting to preserve the instructional programs. We may look different in certain areas. I can't speak on specifics as it could relate to specific staff members.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

Do you really need three new administrators?

### **Answer:**

We are not hiring additional administrators. We will be creating positions called Deans of Students. These positions will have to be created in conjunction with the WTEA Collective Bargaining Agreement and Salary Guides. These will be teachers that will assist principals with discipline and related activities.

45% of Principal's Week

Supervisors will now be able to focus solely on the instructional program. (Discuss current plan.)

It is common for elementary schools of our size to have vice principals. (A neighboring district has two vice principals for four buildings.)



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

What about all of your vacant positions? Can't you cut these moving forward to save jobs?

### **Answer:**

We did an analysis of current vacant positions. We are only filling positions now based upon need. Vacant positions were eliminated based upon our analysis for this budget.



# FAQ - Important Points to Consider



## Question:

How did we get here?

## Answer:

For 2024-2025, contractual increases are an additional \$3,000,000. The benefit increase is approximately \$2,000,000. The tuition increase is approximately \$1,700,000. There were other increases as well (transportation for instance). Increases across the board due to the supply chain and price increases also contributed. Based upon our analysis of staffing this year, we recommended the staff eliminations to close the budgetary gap.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

What happens next year and the years moving forward? Can we sustain the same level of staff cuts next year?

### **Answer:**

We need to continue to find further budget eliminations over the next few years in order to ensure we can move forward as a successful school district. In no way can Township sustain the same level of staff cuts moving forward. We need to think differently in analyzing staffing, programs, etc.

Please know that we truly have no way of knowing our state aid allocation moving forward or how much benefits will cost additionally per year. Either way, we must be prepared.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

The Board of Education has a food allowance for board meetings. Can this be cut?

### **Answer:**

Yes, the board had a food allowance. It is eliminated for the 2024-2025 school year.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### Question:

How many capital projects does WTPS have budgeted for the 2024-2025 school year?

### Answer:

We have flooring at the high school, field maintenance at the high school, windows at both GT and OV, and partial roof replacements at both Birches and TJ. The windows and roof replacements will be funded 40% by the State of New Jersey through ROD Grants.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

You received an extra \$1,595,000 from the State of New Jersey in this budget. What happened to it?

### **Answer:**

This money closed part of our budgetary gap. Without it, we would have had to cut \$1,595,000 additional from our budget. (As an example, we would need to cut approximately an additional 15-20 staff members.)



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### **Question:**

We see painting and small projects occurring in the district. Are these projects necessary?

### **Answer:**

Yes. Our grounds and buildings must be maintained, painted, etc. It is quite normal for school districts to conduct preventive maintenance, paint, mulch, etc.



## FAQ - Important Points to Consider



### Question:

Last year we received almost a million dollars in stabilization aid. Can you use this money to save jobs?

### Answer:

We can't. This was a one-time allocation to our district. We should never use one-time allocations for staff as the money simply doesn't exist moving forward. For example, we put this one-time allocation into budgeted capital projects as these are not recurring expenses.



# Thank You