

2025-26 General Fund Budget Update

January 21, 2025

The Pillars of Our Work:

Our Mission: The Dobbs Ferry School District strives to develop independent, curious, and open-minded learners who think critically, work collaboratively, act ethically, and are knowledgeable about the world around them.

Our Vision: Independent Thinkers Prepared to Change the World.

Critical, interdependent elements of our vision include our *Strategic Points of Focus*.

Our Strategic Points of Focus: We will continuously work to create the best possible conditions for effective teaching and learning by focusing on the following areas:

- **Curriculum Development and Implementation**: By creating, adapting, and/or adopting rigorous Tier 1 curriculum that aligns with the International Baccalaureate standards; contains diverse perspectives and experiences; reflects the and develops/enhances students' on grade-level abilities in reading, writing, listening and speaking, mathematical understandings; and, as a result, students' thinking abilities as applied to a variety of complex problems, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- **Instruction**: By developing/enhancing our instructional staff's teaching abilities through an understanding of how students learn, research-informed instructional techniques and frameworks including the Response to Intervention (RtI)/Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model, and effective feedback models from peers and supervisors, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.

Our Strategic Points of Focus:

- **Assessments**: By developing and enhancing clear understandings of the design and purpose(s) of effective assessments and how they can be utilized to improve instruction, by carefully selecting those assessments that we will use to measure student learning, and by supporting the data literacy of faculty and administration, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- **Positive School Climate and Culture**: By developing a welcoming school environment that is reflective of the diversity present in the larger community where all students feel included in what they encounter at school, including in their classroom resources, in differing historical perspectives that they learn about, in equitable opportunities for engagement, advancement and achievement, and the adults they interact with each day; by providing explicit instruction and structured interventions in social-emotional learning and executive functions that have a sound basis in educational research; by aligning our work with the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile; and by developing/enhancing our staff's abilities to identify, understand, and improve positive student behavior, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.

Our Strategic Points of Focus:

- **Recruitment, Retention, and Development of Personnel**: By investing in promising culturally relevant practices for employee recruitment; by intentionally recruiting well-qualified staff that reflect our students' and by ongoing, targeted professional learning opportunities, and proven methods of evaluation and feedback, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- **Family and Community Communications and Engagement**: By engaging in consistent and meaningful two-way communication with parents and families, and by inviting parents, families, and the community to participate in important initiatives, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.
- **Long-Range Planning for District Facilities, Finances, and programing**: By developing long-range financial and facilities plans that allow us to continue to provide excellent programs and opportunities for students in safe, secure, and welcoming environments, we will continuously work to improve student outcomes.

Key Areas to Be Discussed:

Aligned to District Policies 6000 and 6100

- Major cost drivers of the budget
- Current projections in the ***Administrative*** and ***Capital*** budgets
- Overview of ***Revenue*** budget as we currently know it
- Next Steps

Major Cost Drivers of the District Budget:

- Curriculum-based instructional materials to support new reading and mathematics curricula
- Services to students with disabilities
- Staffing based on student needs and current labor contracts
- Health care costs for active and retired employees
- Employee retirement contribution rates
- Debt service on capital projects
- Transportation costs
- District security

The Administrative Budget

Includes*:

- Office and central administrative expenses including travel expenses
- All compensation, salaries, and benefits of all school administrators and supervisors
- All expenditures associated with the operation of the Board of Education, the office of the Superintendent of Schools, general administration, and the school business office;
- Any consulting costs not directly related to direct student services and programs, planning, and all other administrative activities

****From Policy 6100***

The Preliminary 2025-26 Administrative Budget

Current Year	2025-26	Change
\$6,100,004	\$6,995,907	14.69% +\$895,903

Projected cost increases due to:

1. Salary and benefits of District Office administrators and staff
2. BOCES central data processing
3. General liability insurance premiums
4. Legal settlement

The Capital Budget Includes*:

- All transportation capital costs including debt service and lease expenditures
- Facilities lease expenditures, annual debt service, and total debt for all facilities financed by bonds and notes of the district
- Costs of construction, acquisition, reconstruction, rehabilitation or improvement of school buildings
- All expenditures associated with custodial salaries and benefits, service contracts, supplies, utilities, and maintenance and repair of school facilities

****From Policy 6100***

The Preliminary 2025-26

Capital Budget

Current Year	2025-26	Change
\$7,107,622	\$7,658,246	7.75% +\$550,624

Projected cost increases due to:

1. Salary and benefits
2. Maintenance initiatives including the capital outlay project
3. Contractual Cost increases (cleaning, landscaping, security)
4. Debt service payments

**UNDER
CONSTRUCTION**

Key Elements of the Revenue Budget:

- State aid including expense-based aids
- County sales tax
- Anticipated interest earnings
- Current fund balance and use of District reserves
- Tax base growth factor
- Tax cap projections

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CONSTRUCTION**

Next Steps:

Following the Board-approved Budget Development Calendar, we will:

- Prepare the *Program* budget presentation and review with Board of Education Finance Committee
- Refine the *Capital* and *Administrative* budgets
- Refine the Revenue budget
- Prioritize budget requests based on alignment with district goals and available revenue
- Provide communications to faculty, staff, and community
- Continue the development of long-range plans