



SALEM
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Where belonging leads to opportunity.

A Conversation about next year's budget

February, 2026

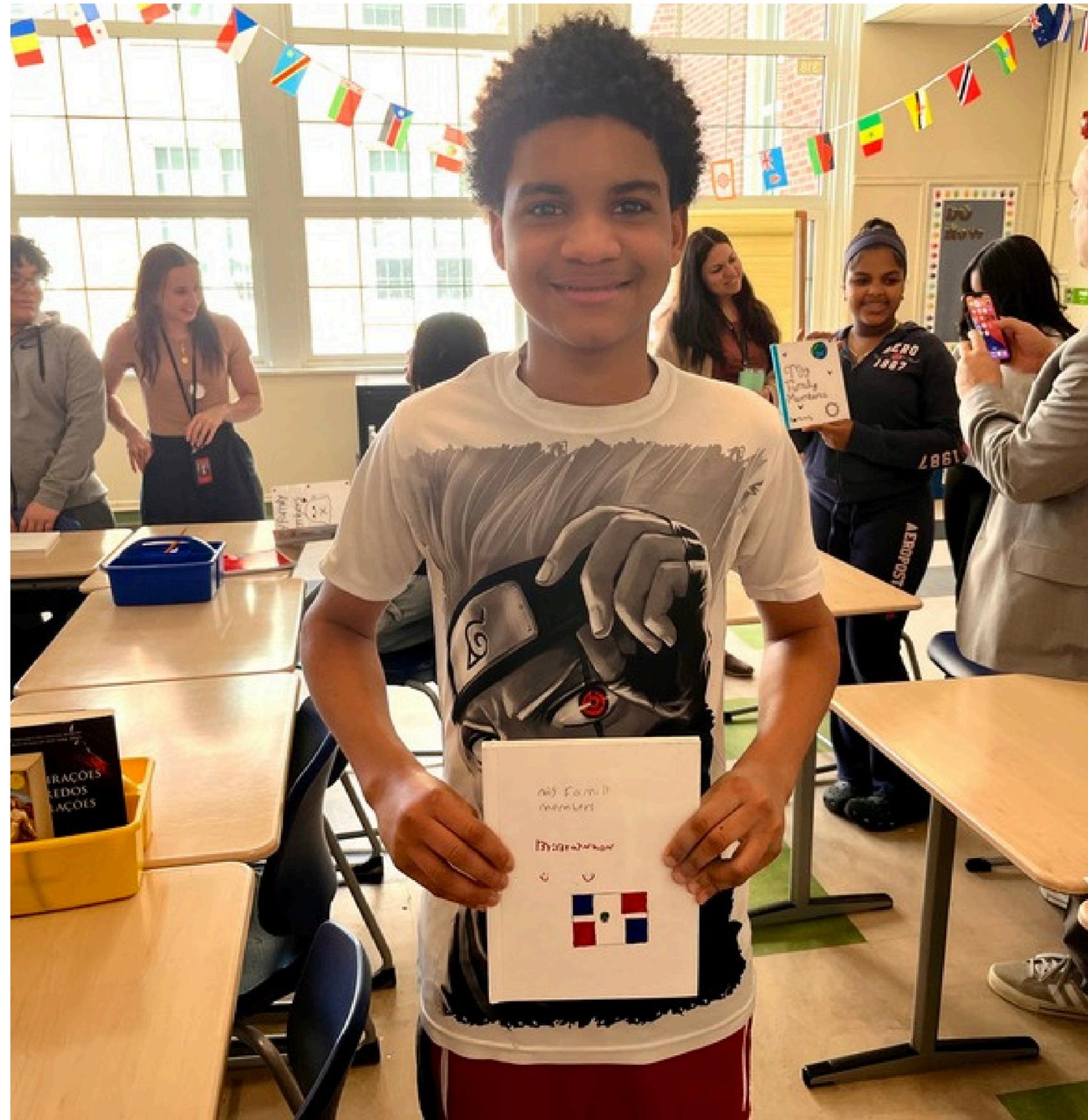


Our Values

Belonging: We believe all members of our community are valued and that our relationships are built on empathy and respect.

Equity: We believe in promoting social justice to ensure an inclusive school community where all members are empowered and engaged.

Opportunity: We believe all students should receive a personalized experience to achieve academic success, find joy in their learning, and have multiple choices for their post-secondary plans.



Strategic Priorities



Priority One: Elevate Learning

Build and maintain a district-wide culture of universally high academic expectations for every learner.



Priority Three: Center Belonging

Build joyful, welcoming, and supportive school communities.



Priority Two: Empower Educators

Make the Salem Public Schools an inclusive district where student-centered, innovative, and highly-effective educators want to work, grow, and stay.



Priority Four: Strengthen Our Foundation

Develop consistent, reliable systems and structures to disrupt inequities and support the work of the district.



Read the full plan in English
Read the full plan in Spanish
Read the full plan in Portuguese

Fast Facts:

3889

Students
(+1.5%)

\$78M

Operating
Budget

850

Staff
members





FY27 Budget Process

FALL 2025: SET
PRIORITIES



Project next year's salaries

Estimate next year's costs based on actual spending

Present current year budget update

EARLY WINTER
2026: GATHER
INPUT



Engage with Parents & Principals about the Elementary Portfolio

Hold internal meetings with schools & depts. to discuss budget insights & gather feedback

WINTER 2026:
HOST PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT



Meet with Parent Advisory Groups

Host public forums & online events to discuss the budget and address community questions & concerns

EARLY SPRING
2026: REVIEW &
FINALIZE



Present draft budget recommendations to the School Committee

Hold a public hearing

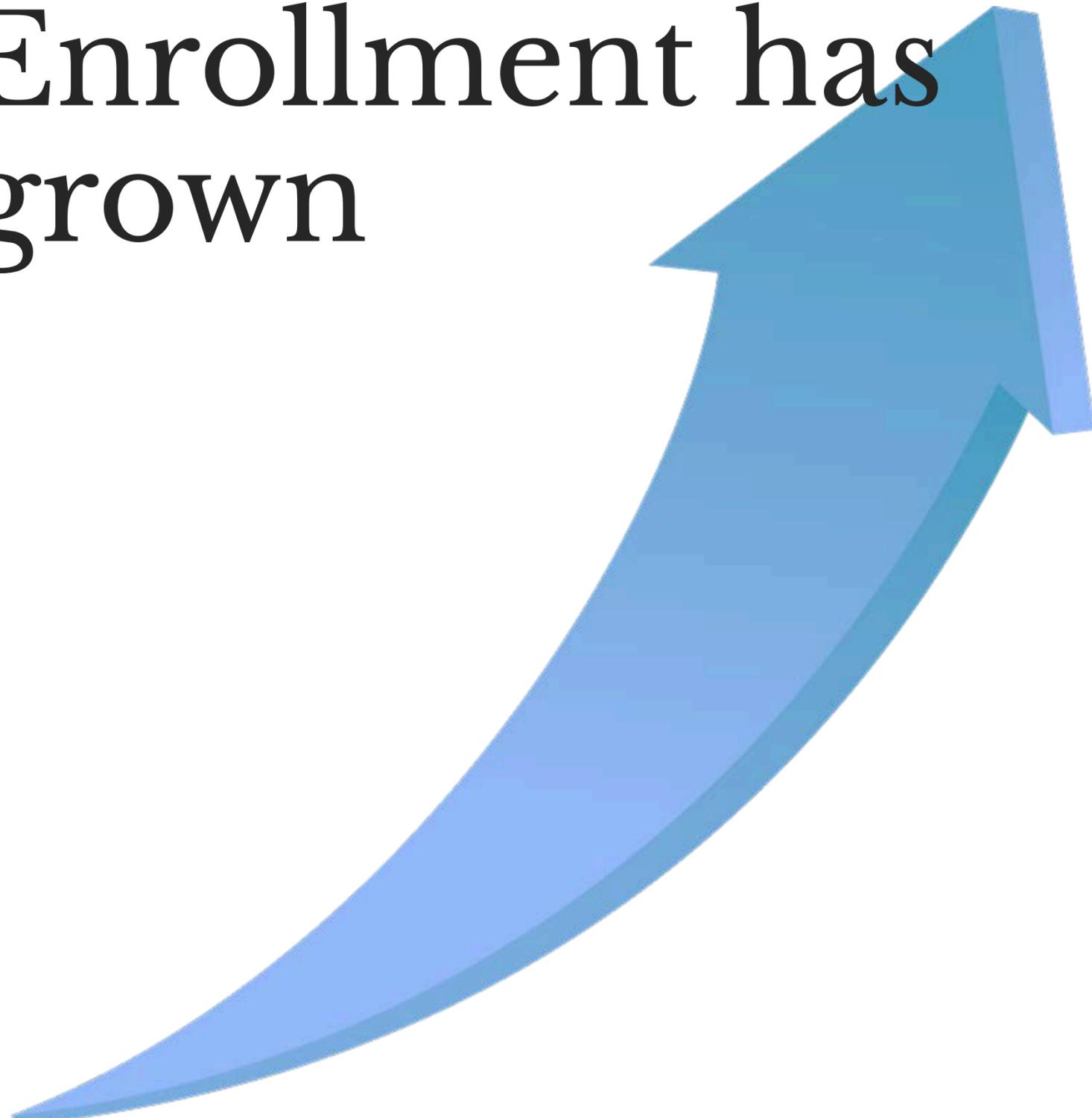
School Committee votes to approve the budget

City Council votes in June

KEY DATES: 2.11 & 2.25: PUBLIC FORUMS; 4.6: INITIAL PRESENTATION; (TENTATIVE) 4.13 BUDGET HEARING; 4.27: VOTE
SPSBUDGET@SALEMK12.ORG



Enrollment has grown



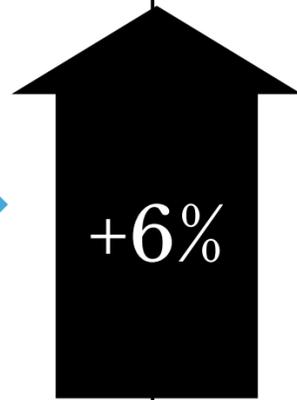
●	<u>2025-2026</u> 3889
●	<u>2024-2025</u> 3831
●	<u>2023-2024</u> 3811
●	<u>2022-2023</u> 3709

Demographics have changed



Multilingual
Learners

681



Student with
Disabilities

1023

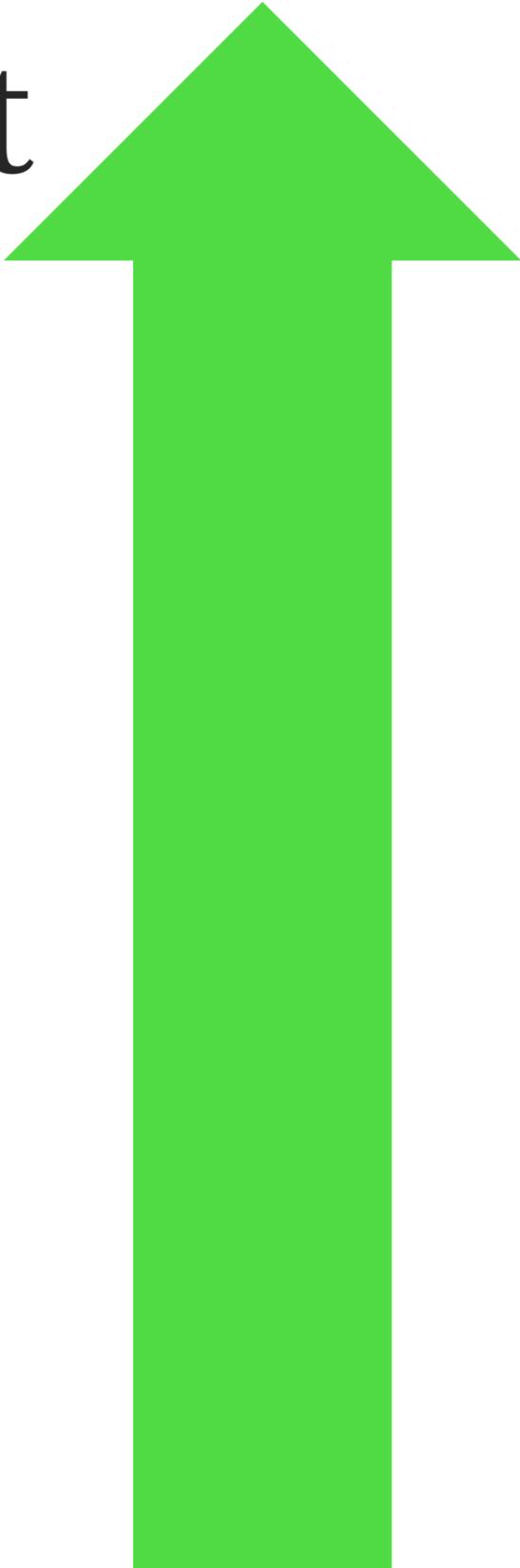


Low Income
students

2220



Our budget
increases
each year



2025-2026
\$78,173,061

2024-2025
\$74,592,616

2023-2024
\$71,154,142

2022-2023
\$68,747,963



Expenses
have
increased



2025-2026
\$78,173,061

2024-2025
\$74,592,616

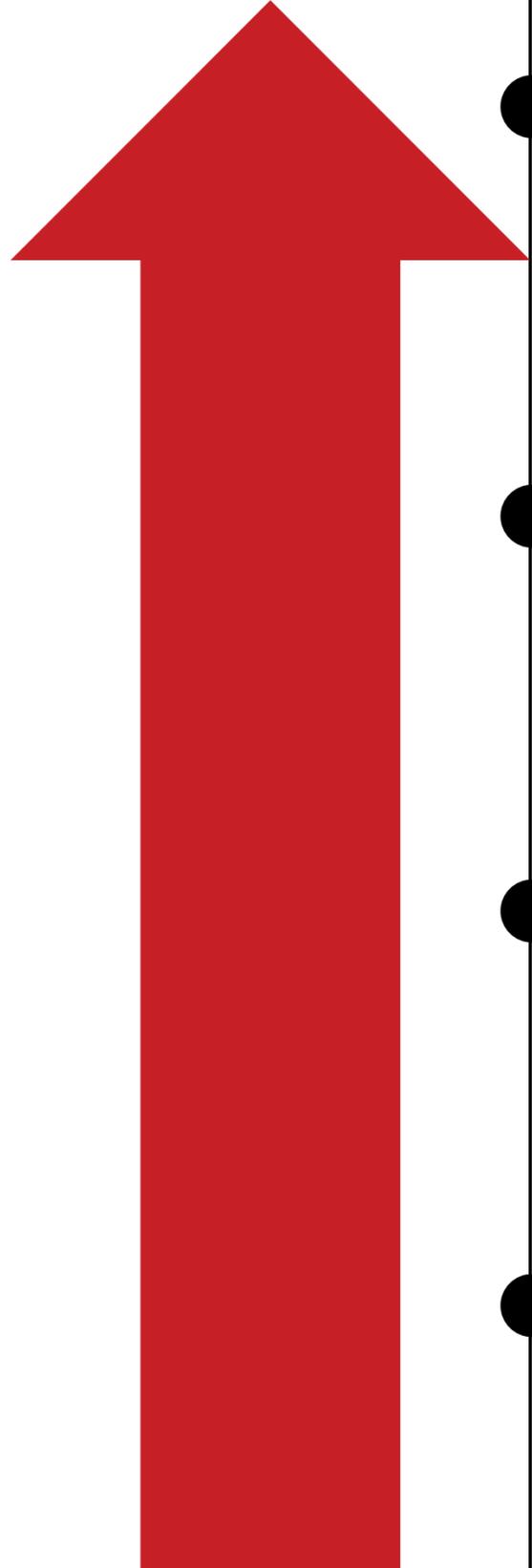
2023-2024
\$71,154,142

2022-2023
\$68,747,963





**Our
Personnel
Costs
increase
each year:**
*77% of the annual
budget funds staff*



2025-2026
\$60,257,102.00

2024-2025
\$58,844,792.51

2023-2024
\$55,130,226.96

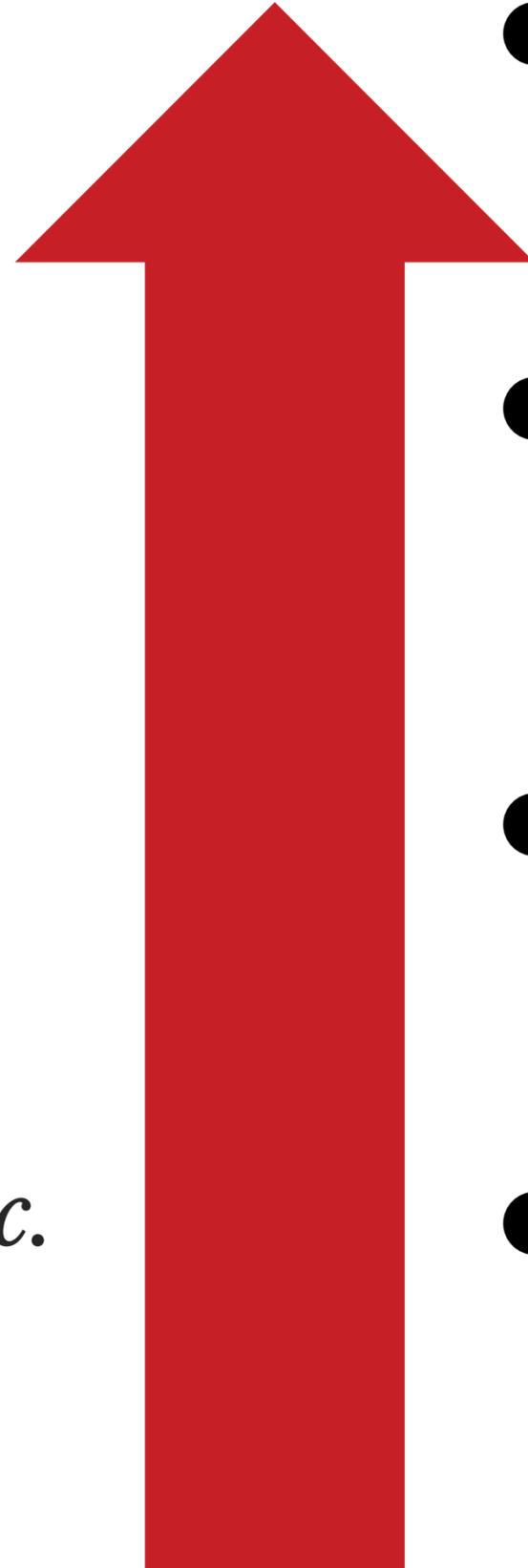
2022-2023
\$54,615,187.99



Our Non-Personnel Costs

increase each year:

~23% of the annual budget include costs like transportation, utilities, curriculum, etc.



2025-2026

\$17,915,959.00

2024-2025

\$15,971,865.18

2023-2024

\$16,304,973.03

2022-2023

\$14,443,278.84

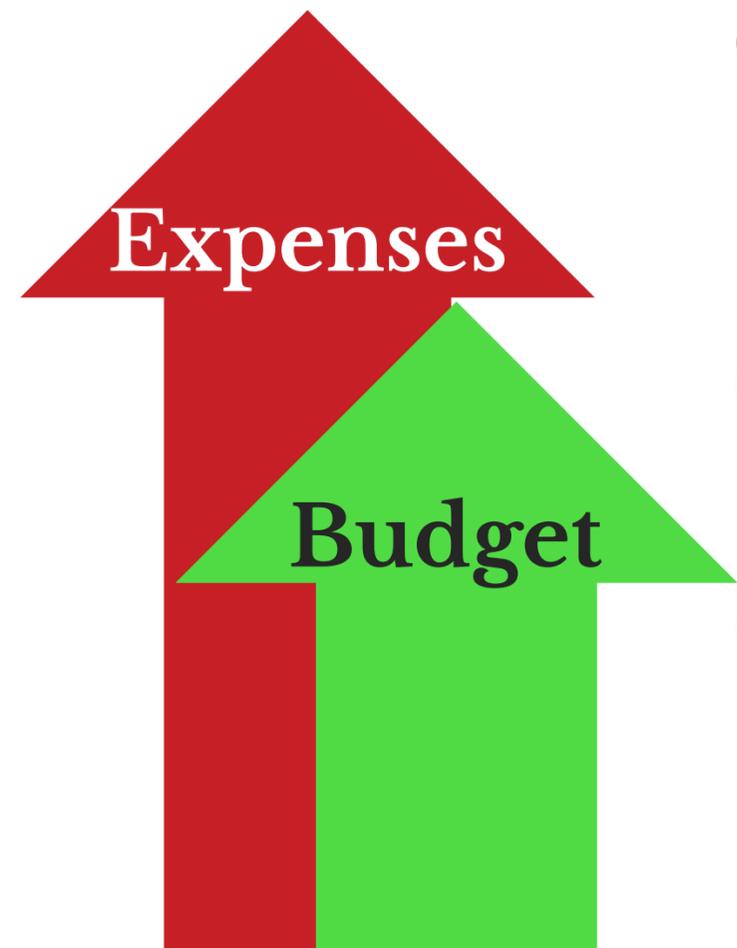


How is the budget allocated?

	Budgets	Schools	% of total
FY20	\$59,833,547.00	\$39,487,853.00	66%
FY21	\$63,449,649.05	\$41,791,233.89	66%
FY22	\$66,597,918.41	\$43,627,843.41	66%
FY23	\$68,747,963.00	\$46,936,810.00	68%
FY24	\$71,154,142.00	\$47,788,584.00	67%
FY25	\$74,592,616.00	\$49,262,248.93	66%
FY26	\$78,173,061.00	\$51,603,950.41	66%

- ~66-68% of funding is budgeted directly to schools.
- ~34% is a combination of centrally budgeted expenses (e.g. custodians, utilities, curriculum, etc.) & central office

Expenses
are
growing
faster
than our
budget:



● Grants

● Pre-Paying
Special Ed tuition

● Spending recurring
revenue

● Using Reserves

● Cutting personnel
& non personnel



What about next year?



- Projected budget increase for next year is \$3.7M (4.8%)
- Estimated cost increases: ~\$8.6M
- Personnel: +8.3%
Non Personnel: +19%
- Probable gap: ~\$4.7M

Choices
ahead for
balancing
our budget:

*Budget
priorities*





Budget Priorities

- Fund programs for high needs student groups that need different supports.
- Maintain current elementary class sizes.
- Invest in instructional resources & materials that center student ownership and ensure access to meaningful, grade-level content.
- Continue to provide high demand programs before school, afterschool, and in the summer. This includes PreK, Innovation Schools, dual language, middle school redesign, early college, CTE, and more.
- Invest in programs and building upgrades in the Saltonstall and Bentley buildings.

What Are We Exploring?



- Increase revenue from short & long-term rentals (reviewing leases, licenses, and MOAs)
- Reduce expenses:
 - move NLIS & Salem Prep out of the mall
 - exploring ways to reduce transportation costs (MBTA)
- Staff reductions:
 - merger will result in ~+\$1.5 million in savings
 - looking at the high school schedule for efficiencies
 - eliminate vacant positions



What Next?

- Work with the staff & city to **finalize our costs, potential savings & efficiencies, opportunities to increase revenue.**
- When making choices about reductions, we will:
 - be guided by our priorities;
 - look for positions or programs that are as far from the student experience as possible;
 - and reduce positions or programs where there is contractual capacity.
- Whenever possible, we will:
 - reduce from among already vacant positions.

Questions





Your Thoughts:

1. What feedback do you have about the budget priorities?
2. Where should we look to reduce spending?
3. What position reductions would severely compromise the student experience?

We want to hear from you:



Share your thoughts: spsbudget@salemk12.org

Important Dates:

Public Forum, 2/25 @ Salem High School (6:30)

Budget Presentation, 4/6 @ Collins (7:00)

Budget Hearing, 4/13 @ Collins (7:00)