

FLEMINGTON-RARITAN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT **2024-2025 Preliminary Budget Presentation**



March 13, 2024

Dr. Kari McGann, Superintendent

Mrs. Tanya Dawson, Business Administrator

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2024-2025 Budget Overview

District staff & faculty salaries and health benefits, academic offerings, instructional programming, transportation, school safety,

05

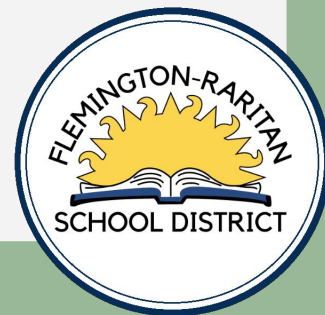
Requests not able to fit in the budget

Additional funding requests

FLEMINGTON-RARITAN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Philosophy on budgeting:

- A budget is an organizational plan stated in monetary terms. It reflects the district's educational priorities;
- The school budget is the financial expression of the District's educational needs and priorities;



FLEMINGTON-RARITAN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Philosophy on budgeting:

- Balance between competing priorities (all worthy) as they represent the interests of students and the taxpayers of the District;
- Provides guidance throughout the year and satisfies all state mandates.



OUR **DISTRICT** BY THE NUMBERS



STUDENTS
3,203

6

SCHOOL BUILDINGS
Almost 687,688 square feet



**STUDENT-TEACHER
RATIO**

FRSD is 9.5 : 1

Statewide Average: 10.3 : 1

References: [here](#) and [here](#)



1:1 COMPUTERS
K through Gr. 8.

1

**EDUCATION
FOUNDATION**
Flemington-Raritan
Education Foundation
(FREF)

OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT

3,203

Current Enrollment

Our District has 3,203* students with six schools. We are the largest school district in Hunterdon County.

The enrollment is current enrollment. Next year, we expect an additional increase.

682+

Faculty & Staff

The District employs over 682 employees including faculty and staff members.

+125%*

Student Population

The student population has changed over the past five years, becoming more diverse with a 125% increase in *multilingual learners from 2018 to 2024.

Enrollment Trend

October 2020	2,968
October 2021	3,027
October 2022	3,137
October 2023	3,158
October 2024 (Projected)	3,223

Per NJDOE ASSA October 15th Count 2020-2023



DEMOGRAPHICS



October 15, 2023	Total Population Oct 2023	Economically Disadvantaged Oct 2023	Total Special Education Oct 2023	Special Ed. w/o Speech-only Oct 2023	English Learners Oct 2023
Barley Sheaf	362	13.00%	19.30%	12.20%	6.60%
Copper Hill	601	19.00%	31.10%	25.10%	4.80%
Francis. A. Desmares	420	41.40%	11.20%	6.40%	26.90%
Robert Hunter	394	18.80%	17.80%	11.90%	11.90%
Reading-Fleming	702	22.50%	20.80%	17.70%	4.70%
J.P. Case	679	17.50%	20.00%	15.90%	4.10%
Totals	3158	21.70%	20.80%	15.90%	8.70%

Data as of 3/12/2024 Total Enrollment = 3,199





\$76,955

Average Teacher's Salary in Flemington Raritan
during **2023-24**

State average: \$75,714





393

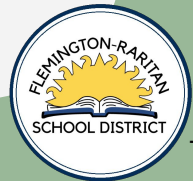
Number of Teachers in Flemington-Raritan in March,
2023 was 386.





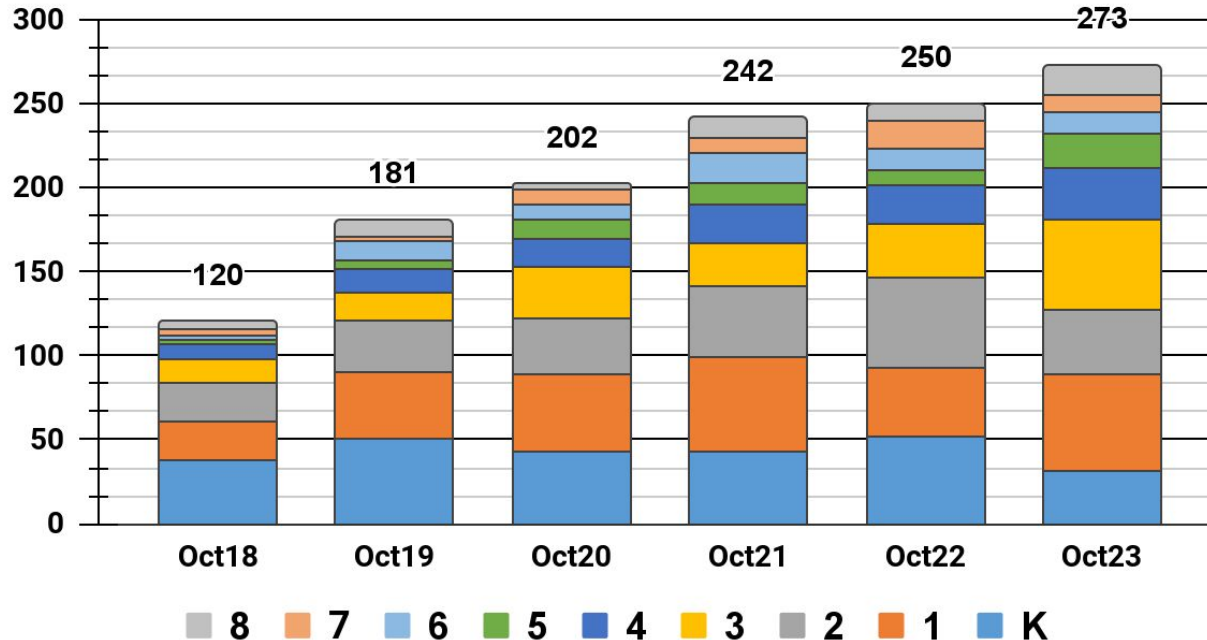
\$26,752

Average Cost of Health Care Benefits per Teacher in
Flemington-Raritan in March, 2023 was \$25,753



Multilingual Learners

October 2018-2023 Count of Multilingual Students



The percentage of multilingual learners has risen 125% from October 2018 to October 2023.



2024-2025 Budget Themes

1. **Academic Excellence for all, Student Learning**-providing a comprehensive and rigorous educational experience that connects and expands students' knowledge (Strategic Goal #1)
2. **Social Emotional Health including Mental Health Supports**-develop a continuation of a multi-tiered system of support within the District to target the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students (Strategic Goal #2)
3. **Unified Community Engagement and Outreach**- Create opportunities to foster unity between the community and the school district. (Strategic Goal #3)
4. **Staff Recruitment and Retention**-Create an enticing and competitive work environment to attract and retain high-quality candidates. (Strategic Goal #4)
5. **Finance and Facilities/Security**-Ensure the finance and facilities needs are budgeted to upkeep and meet the needs of the growing district. (Strategic Goal #5)

District Priorities

Goal #1 (Academic Excellence for All, Student Learning):

- Regulation 2310 directs the District.
The 2024-2025 budget allows the District to maintain optimal class size and student-to-teacher ratio is crucial for quality education. Research has shown that smaller class sizes are associated with improved academic performance, higher graduation rates, and better student engagement.

● Maintain low class size with a student to teacher ratio of 9.5 to 1, below the State average of 10.1 to 1.

Grade Level	Minimum	Recommended Maximum
Preschool	<15	15
Kindergarten	15	18
Grade 1	15	20
Grade 2	16	22
Grade 3	16	23
Grade 4	17	24

District Priorities

Goals #2 (Social-Emotional Health) Emotional and Mental Health Support

- The 2024-2025 budget **DOES NOT** provide for Effective Schools Solutions to be maintained at **ANY OF OUR** three schools; JP Case, Robert Hunter, nor RFIS.
- Expansion to RFIS occurred in 2020-21 budget and 2021-2022 expansion into JP Case. There was no expansion for the 2023-2024 school year, but only maintained. These supports were funded by ESSR funds, which have ended.
- The District applied for a NJDOE \$200,000 grant to support social-emotional health at RFIS and JPC.

District Priorities

**Goal #4 (Staff Recruitment and Retention):
Flemington-Raritan Educator Association 3.25% increase for the
2024-2025 school year and Flemington-Raritan Administrator
Association 3% increase.**

- The 2024-2025 budget maintains salaries for the five-year contract set in place for educators salaries to allow the district to compete competitively for high-quality teachers who play a critical role in shaping the next generation by providing education and guidance to young minds
- .
- Attract and retain high quality teachers
- Pay competitive salaries helps to retain high-quality teachers
- Teachers who are well-compensated are more likely to stay in the same profession, preventing high turnover rates and ensuring consistency in teaching quality.

District Priorities

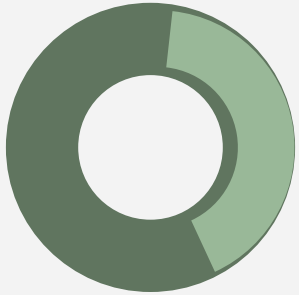
Goals #5 (Finance and Facilities/Security):

- The 2023-2024 budget maintained a Class III Officer at each school to provide security on the school premise during hours when the school is in session or when it is occupied by students or its teachers.

The 2024-2025 budget may not be able to include the salaries of all six Class III Officers into the 2024-2025 budget. The District continues to analyze costs to maintain all six positions.

The 2024-2025 Budget Cannot Maintain Last Year's Social, Emotional Staffing Positions

POSITIONS FOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS



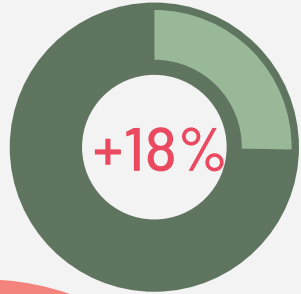
- All current support staff for social-emotional support cannot be sustained in the 2024-2025 budget.

OUR Budget Increases



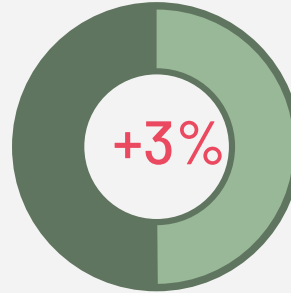
SPECIAL

EDUCATION
Increase of at least
\$400 thousand
Out-of-District
placement
Transportation
Related Services &
Evaluations



HEALTH BENEFITS

Last year, an increase in staff with bringing Teachers Assistants back into the District, raised the District's total obligations. This year, health benefit costs increased again.



SECURITY

In the 2023-2024 budget, a 50% increase in costs for the two Class III Officers hired the previous year was included. (An increase in costs was not in the 2022-2023 budget because Raritan Township covered the salary costs for one year.)

The 2024-2025 budget incorporates a 3% increase in salary for the partnership with Raritan Township and Flemington-Borough.

- \$283,250 + 56,560 costs

OTHER INCREASES TO THE BUDGET

Chapter 44 is the State's health care benefit program

0%

CHAPTER 44

The District received no savings adjustment as a result of Chapter 44.

+18.5%

PERS Pension Liability

Projected increase amount per DOE guidance has increased from 15.98% in 2022-23 and 17.61% in 2023-24.

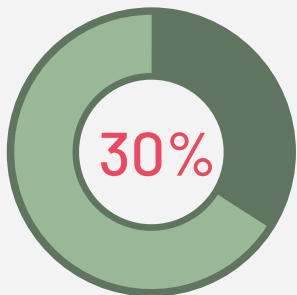
+15%

GENERAL LIABILITY & WORKMANS COMP

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Broker recommendation of an increase of 14%. For the 2024-2025 school year, an increase of 15% was recommended.

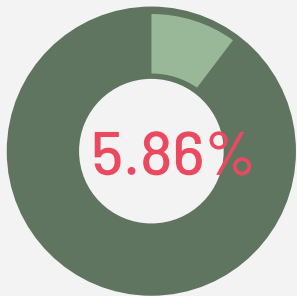


TRANSPORTATION INCREASE COSTS



ROUTES

Transportation bids are coming in with a 30% increase in costs.



JOINT RENEWAL

Minimum increase for joint transportation costs.

Increases in transportation costs

- 30%
- 5.86%
- At least a \$400,000 increase



2024-2025 FUTURE PROJECTS



Copper Hill

The preschool playground did not receive new fencing, rubber padding, and ADA accessibility during the 2023-2024 school year. It was delayed but will occur this year using Preschool Expansion Funding.

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



RFIS

No new projects for upgrades to the facility.

The District has planned projects that have been budgeted are expected to be completed the spring of 2024 and in the summer.



2024-2025 FUTURE PROJECTS



Robert Hunter

New boiler is planned for installation paid for from referendum funding.

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



JP Case

No new projects for upgrades to the facility.

The District has planned projects that have been budgeted are expected to be completed the spring of 2024 and in the summer.



2024-2025 FUTURE PROJECTS



Barley Sheaf

No new projects are planned with the 2024-2025 budget.

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



Francis A. Desmares

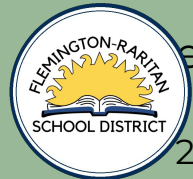
New boiler installation is planned and is funding through the referendum





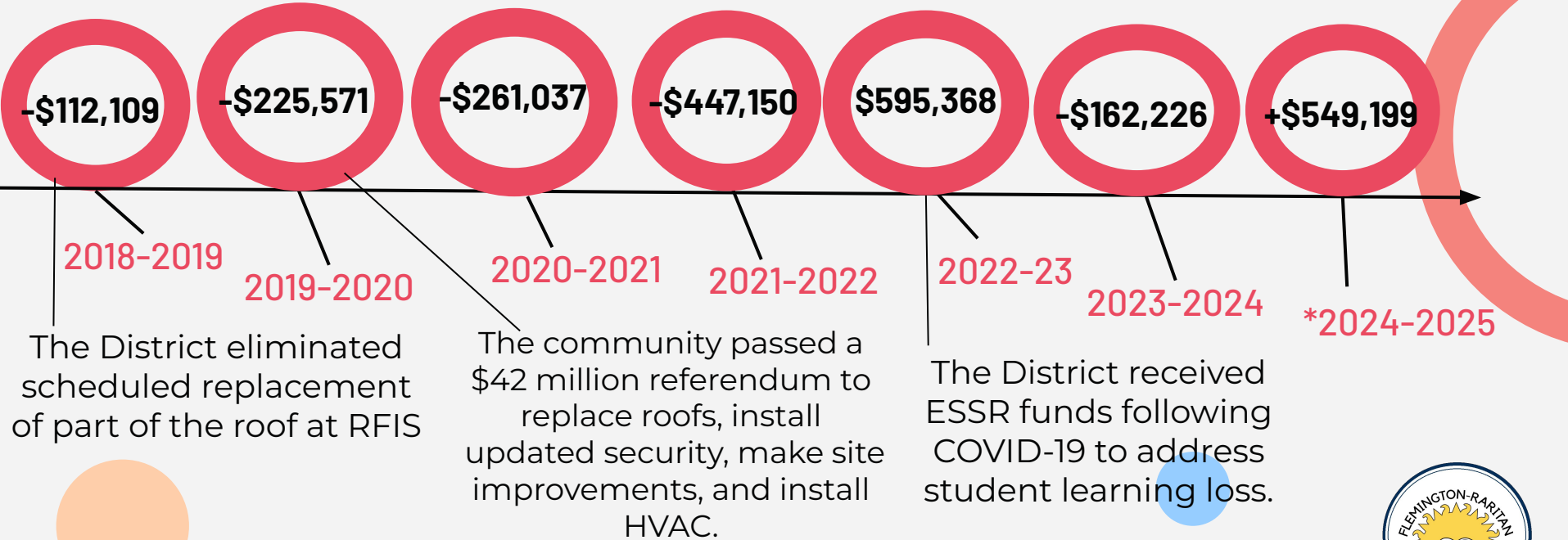
2024-2025 Budget Overview

04



STATE AID 7-YEAR HISTORY

2024-2025 State Aid is still less than State Aid received in the 2014-15 School year.



Preschool Expansion Award HISTORY

In 2023-24, the District applied and received its first preschool expansion award funding.

+\$1,228,968

+2,219,912

Year 1: 2023-2024

The District received a total amount of \$1,228,968 for preschool expansion funding. However, the District's requirement to fund preschool is \$943,482 for a total budgeted amount of \$2,172,450.

Year 2: 2024-2025

The District received a total amount of \$2,219,912 for preschool expansion funding. However, the District's requirement to fund preschool is \$1,080,658 for a total budgeted amount of \$3,300,570.



Where does all the money go?

March 12, 2024

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Parents, Staff and Community Members,

Budget season is in full swing and key conversations across the district are focused on school funding. I met with Board of Education committees, administration, teacher's union leadership, Central Office staff, and PTO leaders to discuss budget progress and planning. It is important to share this update with parents, residents and the entire community so that all stakeholders are informed of budget considerations, challenges and cost to taxpayers.

Our school budget is made up mostly by local taxes combined with state and federal aid, grants and other funds to cover salaries, classroom materials, facility upgrades, bussing, extracurricular activities and more. To develop our budget, we monitor current spending, analyze anticipated expenses and allocate funds carefully to support district goals and provide for every student, every day at every opportunity.

For 2024-2025, we're facing a steep deficit. Retaining current staff, maintaining all programs and services, as well as meeting all contract requirements raised our district budget by 5.1 percent, which was determined to be too high of an increase to taxpayers. To decrease the amount of funds to be raised by taxpayers, the budget needed to be reduced by close to \$3 million. Balancing the budget is a complex task and fiscal choices are often difficult. Every decision can impact the way we deliver instruction to our 3,200 students in PreK through Grade 8.

We have a tough task ahead of us as we aim to close the budget gap and reduce the tax levy. Here's a breakdown of the budget and how costs have risen in each category:

Salaries - 36% of the budget
First and foremost, we are a district made up of dedicated, skilled and nurturing faculty and staff members who care deeply about children. Our district employs nearly 675 teachers, administrators, teaching assistants, media specialists, maintenance crew, technicians, nurses, school counselors, secretaries, aides and contracted providers such as our custodians and food service workers. We also share costs for our bus drivers. District salary contracts for teachers and administrators increase each year, 3.25% and 3%, respectively, for the 2024-2025 school year. We planned for this increase with long-range budgeting.

Benefits - 16% of the budget
Our staff are offered health benefit programs by contract. Health insurance costs have skyrocketed, up 18 percent from last year. To reduce costs, the District has proposed changing healthcare providers. Benefits include medical, dental, prescription, workers compensation, pension, social security, tuition reimbursement, and additional benefits. Insurance costs are soaring.

Special Education - 23% of the budget
Special education costs are rising too. This includes support for in-district students and tuition for students who attend school out-of-district for more specialized care and services. Flemington-Raritan is committed to providing the least restrictive learning environment for students who receive special education services.

Instructional Support - 4% of the budget
The majority of our costs are fixed costs with about 4% in discretionary funds.

Where does all the money go?

■ Salaries ■ Benefits ■ Instructional Support
■ Special Education ■ Operations and Maintenance ■ Transportation

Strategic Goals:

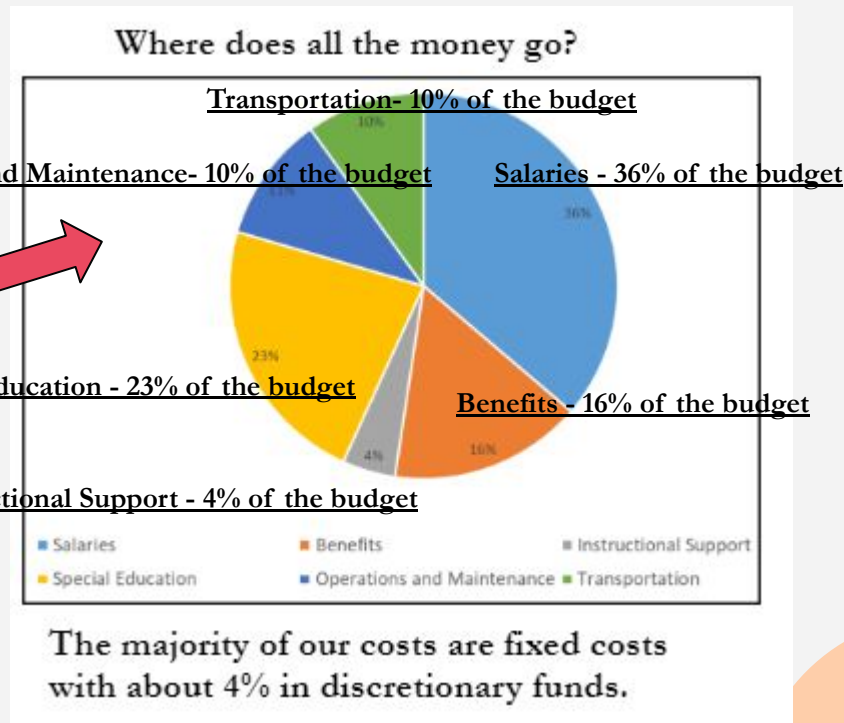
Goal Area #1: The District will provide a comprehensive and rigorous educational experience that connects and engages students' knowledge while engaging and empowering all learners to synthesize and apply their skills and understanding in meaningful ways.

Goal Area #2: Develop a contribution of a multi-tiered system of support within the district to target the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students.

Goal Area #3: The District will create opportunities to foster unity between the community and the school district in order to strengthen partnerships and develop a shared responsibility for student success.

Goal Area #4: Create an existing and competitive work environment to attract and retain high-quality candidates representative of students' diverse backgrounds in the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District community.

Goal Area #5: Ensure the finance and facilities needs are budgeted to upkeep and meet the needs of the growing district.





Requests Not Able to be Funded



05

REQUESTS **NOT** ABLE TO BE FUNDED

STAFFING AND PROGRAMMING

- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs at J.P. Case
- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs at Reading-Fleming
- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs at Copper Hill
- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs at Francis A. Desmares
- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs at Robert Hunter
- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs at Barley Sheaf

REQUESTS **NOT** ABLE TO BE FUNDED

STAFFING AND PROGRAMMING

- Reduction of costs of personnel and support in Administration/Central Office
- Reduction of costs of personnel and possibly programs from Special Services
- Reduction of costs of personnel and programs from Technology
- Reduction of positions and support from the Business Office/Maintenance

Reductions of at least 25 positions, district-wide, possibly up to as many as 33, to balance the budget at 3.5%.





\$125,381+

Reductions to Technology Budget



REQUESTS NOT ABLE TO BE FUNDED



ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

- For this budget, field trips are not able to be budgeted.
- However, the District has applied for a STEM grant through NJ Sustainability grant and continues to apply for other grants.
- Students will be affected by the budget constraints. However, we remain committed to the delivery of the core curriculum, maintain the integrity of the arts, maintain class sizes that meet the District regulation, and deliver a budget at 3.5%. However, all staffing and programming are not able to be funded.

2024-2025 Tentative District Budget

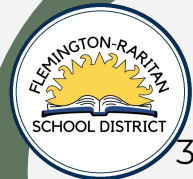
	General Fund	Capital Reserve	Special Revenues	Debt Service	Total
2024-2025 Total Expenditures	\$70,34,234	\$0	\$4,276,182	\$5,912,012	\$80,622,428
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$10,715,501	\$0	\$4,276,182	\$ 895,306	\$15,886,989
Taxes to be Raised	\$59,718,733	\$0		\$5,016,706	\$64,735,439

Costs are predominantly salaries for instruction, providing services for students with specific needs, and transporting students in grades kindergarten through grade eight.

FY 2024-2025 Anticipated Tax Levy

Flemington Borough

2024/2025 Tax Rate Calculations			
	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
General	5,163,886	5,338,353	5,228,091
Debt	424,807	442,846	439,189
School Year	5,588,693	5,781,199	5,667,280
Calendar Year	2023	2024	
Total Taxes	5,684,946	5,724,240	
Ratables	531,029,400	579,395,700	
Per Dollar	\$0.0107	0.0099	
Per \$100	\$1.0706	\$0.9880	
Average Assessed	300,000	300,000	
Per \$100	\$3,212	\$2,964	



FY 2024-2025 Anticipated Tax Levy

Raritan Township

2024/2025 Tax Rate Calculations			
	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
General	50,854,812	52,360,906	54,490,642
Debt	4,183,572	4,343,623	4,577,517
School Year	55,038,384	56,704,529	59,068,159
	Calendar Year	2023	2024
	Total Taxes	55,871,457	57,886,344
	Ratables	4,289,215,100	4,299,388,200
	Per Dollar	\$0.0130	\$0.0135
	Per \$100	\$1.3026	\$1.3464
	Average Assessed	400,000	400,000
	Per \$100	\$5,210	\$5,386

THANKS!

Do you have any questions?

kari.mcgann@frsd.us

908-284-7575

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District



The District thanks our community members for their support and involvement in our schools.

