



Metuchen Public Schools

Budget Hearing Presentation
2025-2026
School Year

Budget Preparation Timeline

- July/August 2024 - Budget Preparations begin.
- September/December 2024 - Principals prepared school based budget with input from all stakeholders.
- December 2024 - The Superintendent and Business Administrator reviewed the submitted budgets.

Budget Preparation Timeline

- December 2024 – April 2025
Presentations at Board of Education Meetings.
- February 26, 2025 – State Aid Information was received.
- March 11, 2025 – Preliminary Budget Hearing.
- April 29, 2025 – Final Budget Hearing.

24/25 Highlights

Metuchen High School

- Celebrated the Metuchen High School Hall of Fame Class of 2024
- 2024 AP School Honor Roll – Silver Award
- 2024 AP Access Award
- Class of 2024 – 97% of students pursued higher education.
- School-Wide Initiatives
 - Student, Staff, & Parent initiative focusing on the impact of social media on mental health of adolescents.
 - Implementation of the Lifelines Suicide Prevention Program
- Community Outreach
 - Soccer for a Cause Charity Festival supporting Go4theGoal and the Marisa Tufaro Foundation.
 - REPLENISH Food Drives to support local food banks in Middlesex County.
- Academic Highlights
 - 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program - 10 Commended Scholars, 5 Semi-Finalist, 5 National Merit Scholarship Finalists
 - Advanced Placement Program
 - 2024 AP School Honor Roll – Silver Award
 - 2024 AP Access Award
 - 506 AP Exams Taken in Spring 2024, 84% of students receiving a 3 or higher
- Athletics
 - Girls Soccer Division Champions
 - Girls Cross Country Division, NJSIAA Central Jersey, and State Group 1 Champions
 - Boys Cross Country NJSIAA Central Jersey and State Group 1 Champions
 - Boys Winter Track Division Relay Champions, NJSIAA Sectional Group 1 Champions
 - Girls Winter Track Division Champions, Division Relay Champions, NJSIAA Sectional Group 1 Champions
 - Girls Basketball Division Co-Champions
- Co- and Extra-Curricular Highlights
 - MHS Pride of Metuchen Marching Band – Tournament of Bands Chapter VII Group IV Open Champions
 - MHS Chamber Orchestra – CJMEA Gold Rating at the Orchestra Festival, National Orchestra Festival in Georgia (March 20, 2025)
 - MHS Footlighters Fall Production: Clue, Spring Production: Footloose

24/25 Highlights

Edgar Middle School

- **2023-2026 Sustainable School for New Jersey Bronze Level Award Recipient**
- **Sustainable Schools for NJ NJEA Grant Recipient**
- **School-Wide Initiatives**
 - Implementation Character Education Program with monthly themes
 - Spring Musical- Finding Nemo Jr.
 - Dr. Paul Wichansky Speaker Assembly
 - Implementation of the Lifelines Trilogy Curriculum in the 6th grade
 - Student Advisory Board- 8 members
 - Mental Health Ambassadors
 - Students have advocated for activities/announcements during Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Awareness Week and Eating Disorder Awareness Week
- **Community Outreach**
 - Welcome Parent Breakfast
 - Weekly newsletter...Bulldog Briefs
 - Adopt-a-Family
 - Participated in the Middlesex County Replenish Food Drive and the Sock drive
 - Old Dawgs vs Young Pups Basketball game with donations to an organization voted on by the students.
- **Academic Competitions**
 - First Lego League Competition
 - Students selected for Regions Honors Orchestra, Band, and Jazz Ensemble

24/25 Highlights

Campbell Elementary School

- Continued with the Campbell Motto with Children, Families and Teachers, which reads:
 - The *Campbell Kids* will help others know that they belong by doing their best to include others.
 - The *Campbell Community* will help others know that they belong by living the “Golden Rule.”
 - The *Campbell Teachers* will help others know that they belong by always being there to help the Campbell Kids.
 - *Campbell Elementary School is a GREAT place to learn and a GREAT place to BELONG.*
 - *Action based spirit days were implemented (e.g. school wide Kindness Challenge) to develop evidence of motto implementation.*
- Additional School-Wide Initiatives
 - Implemented Bulldog Buddies to support district-wide Social Emotional Learning Competencies & Sub-Competencies.
 - PTO Sponsored Book Swap occurred monthly.
 - Bi-monthly surveys distributed to the community with data presented to staff regularly with data to support increased staff satisfaction and engagement.
- Community Outreach
 - Tremendous community support for school-based drives (e.g., Replenish Drive, Clothing Drive & Pet Supplies Drive).
 - “Campbell Friday Three” highlighted weekly happens and upcoming events.
 - Bi-monthly Coffee or Tea with Dr. C. at Cai’s Café sponsored by Campbell/Moss PTO.

24/25 Highlights

Moss Elementary School

- 2023 National School of Character (certified by Character.org)
- 2023 Promising Practice Award (recognized by Character.org)
 - Kindergarten Student-Directed Service Learning
- 2023 Promising Practice Award (recognized by Character.org)
 - Embedding Coping Skills through Structured SELF-Questioning
- School-wide Initiatives/Programming
 - Reading Assessment Tools
 - DIBELS (foundational skills)
 - Fountas and Pinnell (comprehension)
 - Foundational Skills Instructional Materials
 - Data-driven Mini-lessons on foundational skills
 - OG
 - Heggerty
 - Math Tool C
 - Kathy Richardson Resources
 - iReady
- Community Outreach
 - PTO Book Swap
 - Assembly Programs (supported by the PTO)
 - Assembly Programs
 - Dental Health w/ a visiting dentist
 - First Responders Program (Police, Fire, EMT's)
 - Students Taking Action/Service Learning
 - Winter Coat Drive
 - Spring Food Drive
 - Kindness Coffee Sleeves
- Metuchen is America Birthday Celebration with "Dreams Quilt" Gift
- Spring 2025 Project – Moss School Upcycled Mural Project Sponsored by the PTO



Special Education Focus Areas

Specialized Programs & Related Services

- Specially designed instruction, related services, specialized evaluations, consultation & collaboration with specialists, work-based learning, community-based instruction, meaningful inclusion, augmentative and alternative communication, assistive technology, targeted professional development

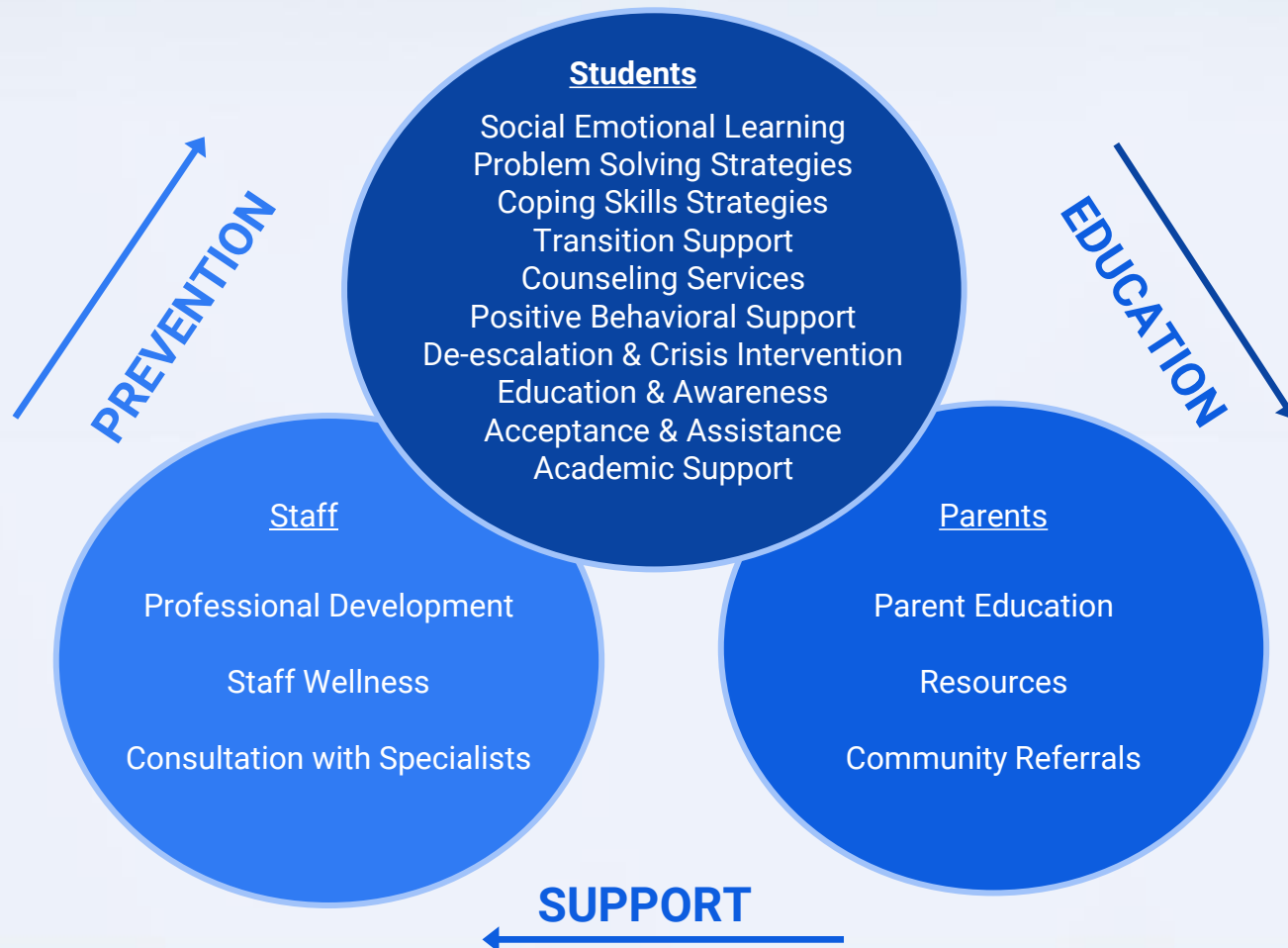
Counseling and Behavioral Supports

- Direct services in counseling, direct services in behavioral support, social skills groups, behavior support plans, consultation with specialists, professional development and staff training

Literacy Intervention

- Reading intervention services, targeted professional development, coaching, progress monitoring

Mental Health Initiative Focus Areas



Mental Health Referendum Components

School Psychologists

Services expanded at all schools with two additional positions

Behavioral Support

Increased support from Board Certified Behavior Analysts district wide



Therapeutic Programs

Clinicians at Campbell & Edgar and continued at MHS

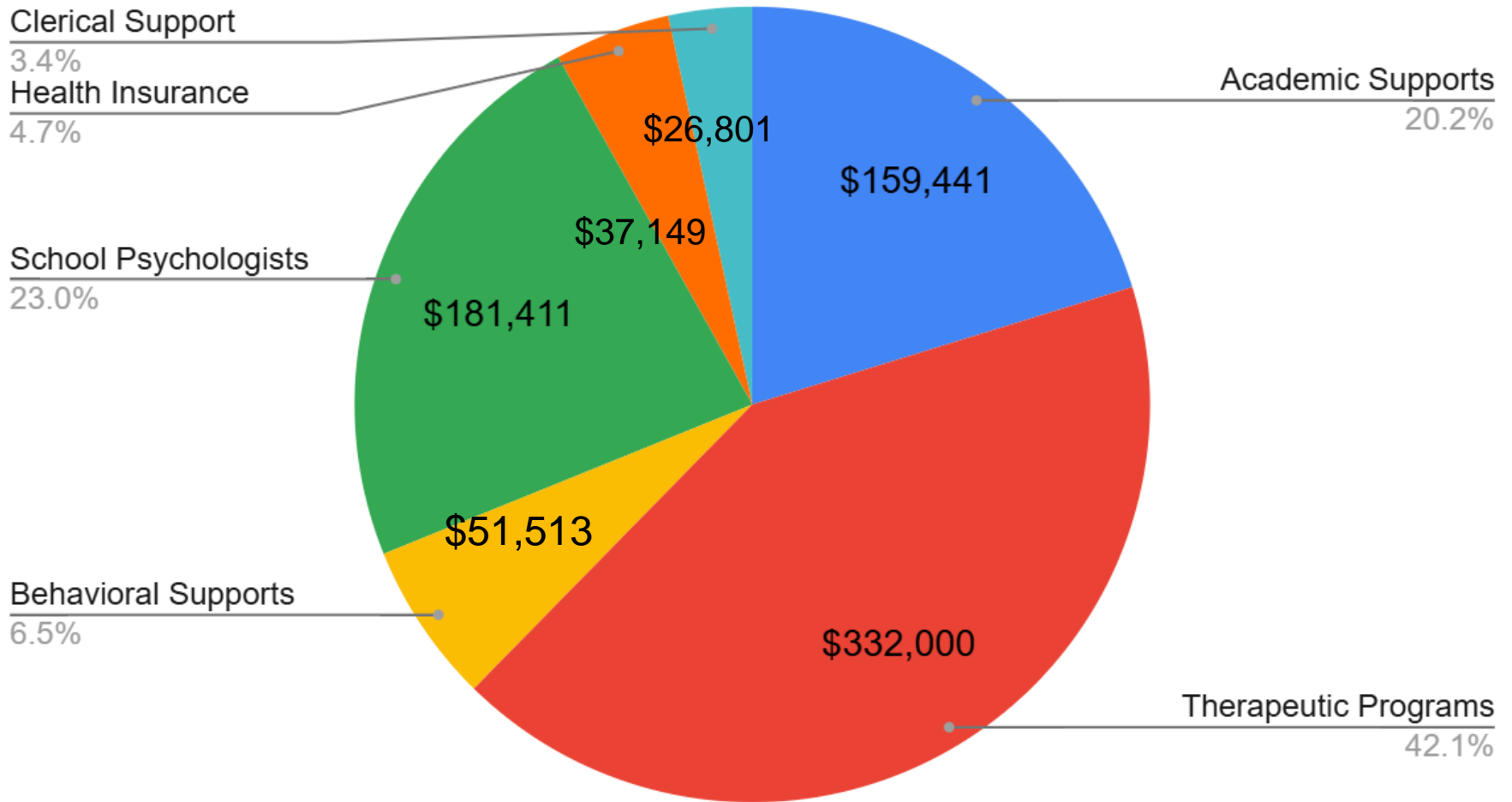
Academic Interventions

Reading Specialist
Math Intervention
Increased Response to Intervention services
Individualized intervention plans

Clerical Support

Part time secretary to increase efficiency and availability of support staff for direct services

Mental Health Referendum Budget



25-26 Proposed Budget/Curriculum

Curriculum Writing and Revisions:

- Engaging in cycles of continuous improvement

Professional Development with Consultants/Vendors

- Workshop Registration fees for content supervisors
- PD consultants in identified areas (i.e., NJ Tiered Systems of Support)
- Staff training for compliance with mandates (i.e., CPR/AED staff trainers)

Systems Management

- Frontline (teacher evaluation & staff professional growth)
- Linkit Grouping

Professional Development led by District Experts:

- Teacher leader sessions for In Services, Mentoring, and PD related to district goals, mandates, and areas of need

Curriculum Office Supplies

25-26 Proposed Budget/Technology

- 1:1 devices for rising 3rd and 9th grade students
- Savings through:
 - Multiplatform approach to workstations
 - Change in classroom management software
 - Reduction in subscriptions

Status of Network Infrastructure

- Network wiring – 10Gbps across all network
- Switches – All switches linked at 10Gbps throughput districtwide; new construction will maintain this standard.
- Servers – Server NICs upgraded to 10Gbps
- Firewall – Replaced in Fall of 2022
- Internet – service will be increased from 1Gbps to 5Gbps bandwidth
- Access points – rolling upgrades of older devices continue; new construction will be outfitted with new equipment
- Fiber backbone – All switch closets connected by fiber for 10+Gbps speeds throughout each building; new construction will maintain this standard.
- WAN – 10Gbps between buildings over WAN links.

Budget/Facility/Safety

- Continued proactive maintenance of all district buildings and athletic fields.
- Continued parking lot maintenance at all buildings.
- HVAC Upgrades
- Roofs – repairs

Adjustments Made to Preliminary Budget

- \$1,500,000 was transferred from Capital reserve to fund 30. The transfer was made to supplement referendum funds for potential unforeseen conditions.

THE SCHOOL BUDGET INCLUDES:

FUND 10 – The General Fund - or Operating Fund

Provides for:

- support of programs and services
- day-to-day operations

2025-2026 Budget Appropriations

Fund 10	\$54,371,455
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2024-2025 Budget Appropriations

Fund 10	\$54,644,528
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THE SCHOOL BUDGET INCLUDES:

FUND 20 – The Special Revenue Fund

- federal and restricted state aid
- legally restricted for special purposes such as Special Education
- No Child Left Behind monies

2025-2026 Budget Appropriations

Fund 20	\$1,351,514
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2024-2025 Budget Appropriation

Fund 20	\$1,351,514
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THE SCHOOL BUDGET INCLUDES:

FUND 40 – The Debt Service Fund

- accounts for money to be set aside to pay the interest and principal on long-term debt such as bond issues

2025-2026 Budget Appropriations

Fund 40	\$6,138,640
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State Aid Amount	\$836,338
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2024-2025 Budget Appropriations

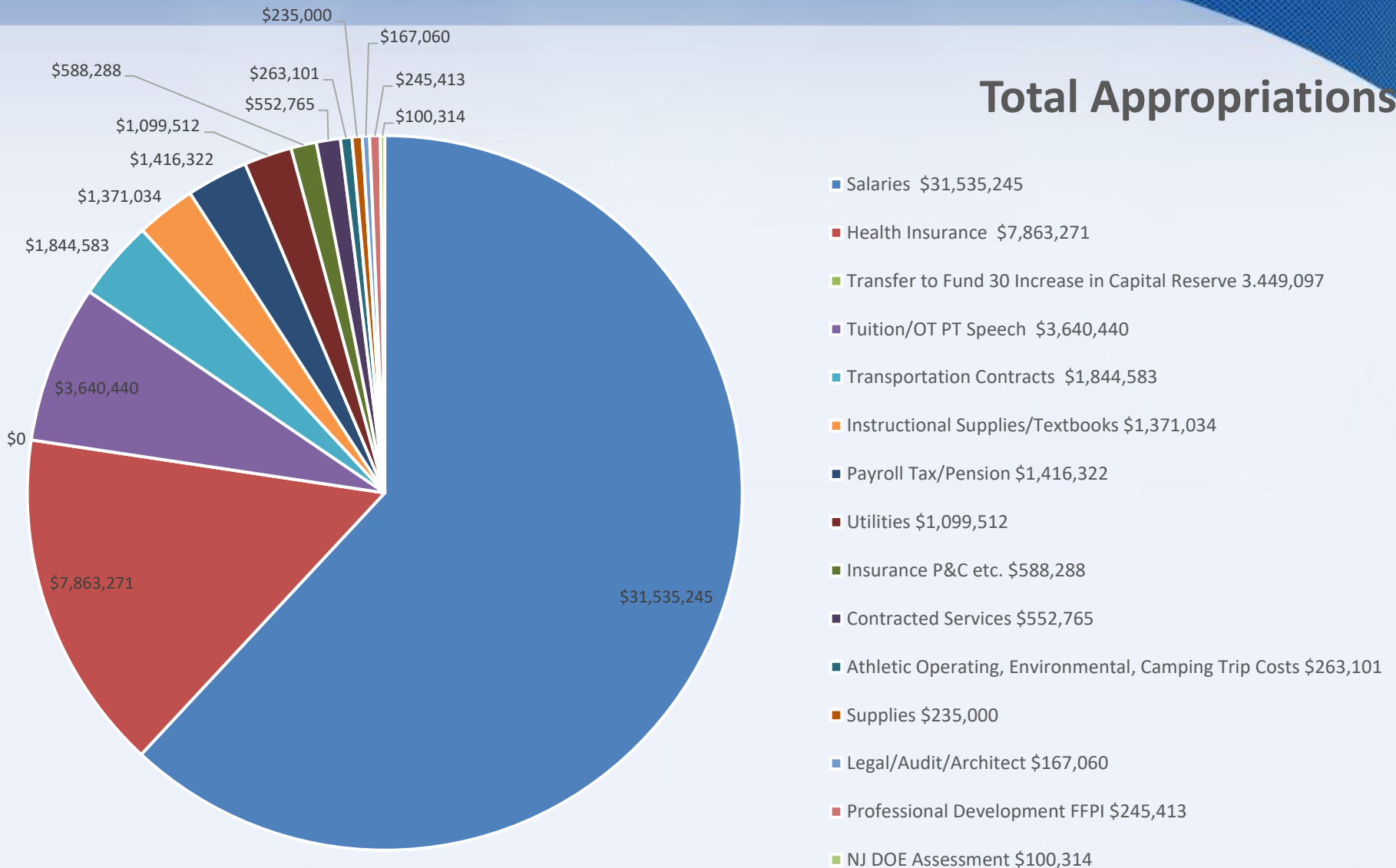
Fund 40	\$7,099,561
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State Aid Amount	\$812,782
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Summary of Appropriations

Salaries	31,535,245
Health Insurance	7,863,271
Transfer to Fund 30 Increase in Capital Reserve	3,449,097
Tuition/OT PT, Speech, Mental Health / Charter School	3,640,440
Transportation Contracts	1,844,583
Instructional Supplies/Textbooks	1,371,034
Payroll Tax/Pension	1,416,322
Utilities	1,099,512
Insurance P&C etc.	588,288
Contracted Services	552,765
Athletic Operating, Environmental, Camping Trip Costs	263,101
Supplies	235,000
Legal/Audit/Architect	167,060
Professional Development FFPI	245,413
NJ DOE Assessment	100,314
Total	\$54,371,455

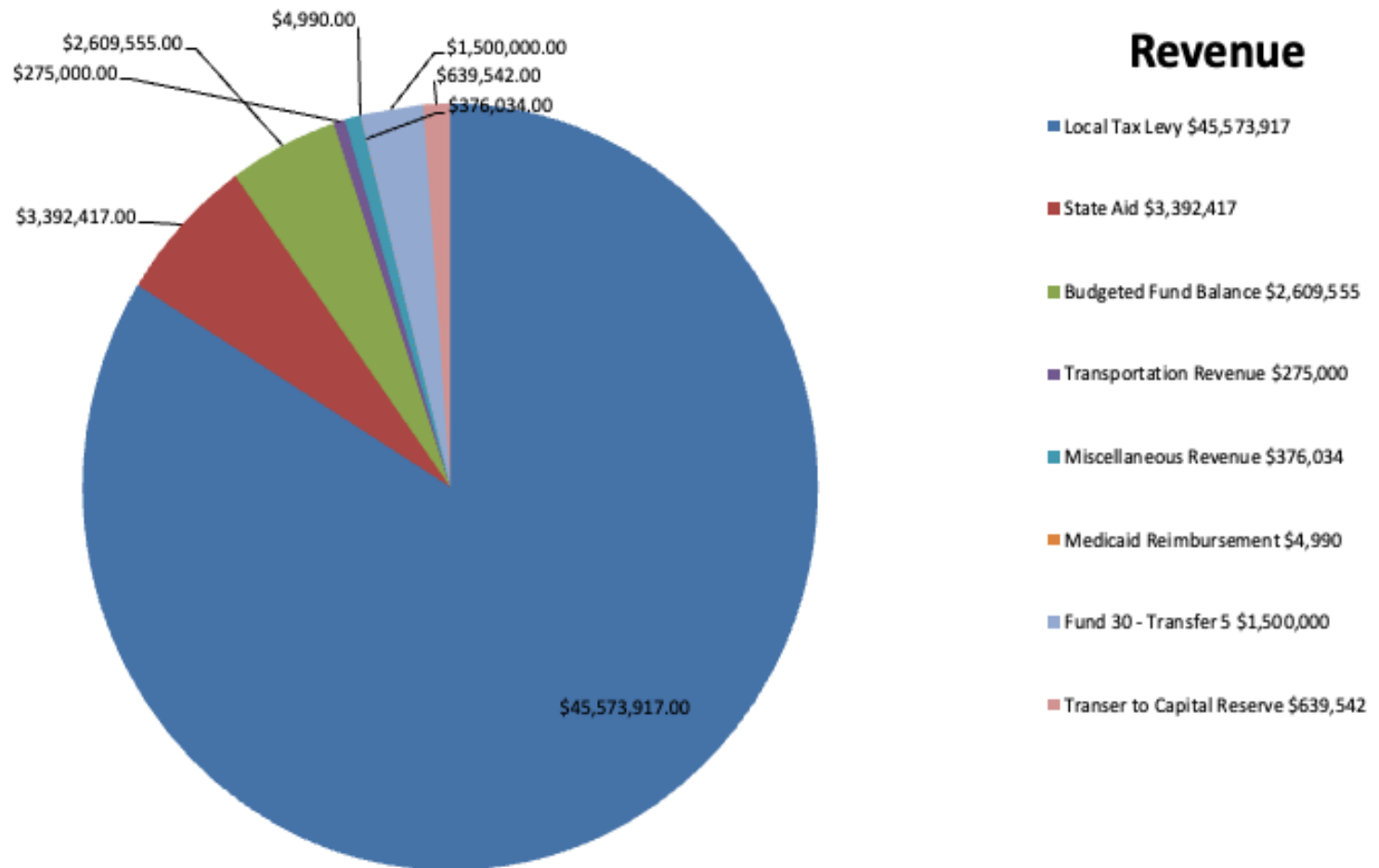
Total Appropriations



Revenue – Fund 10

Local Tax Levy	\$45,573,917
State Aid	\$3,392,417
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$2,609,555
Transportation Revenue	\$275,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$376,034
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$4,990
Fund 30 Transfer	\$1,500,000
Transfer from Capital reserve	\$639,542
Total	\$54,371,455

Revenue



State Aid

Special Education Aid	\$2,723,616
Categorical Transportation Aid	\$361,386
Categorical Security Aid	\$307,415
Total 2025/2026 Aid	\$3,392,417

TAX IMPACT – FUND 10 AND FUND 40

Metuchen Ratables	\$1,097,683,100
School Tax Leavy – Fund 10 and Fund 40	\$49,747,297
School Tax Rate per Hundred (=49,747,297 / 1,097,683,100 * 100)	4.53
School taxes on a house assessed at \$211,143 (=21.11 * 4.453 * 100)	\$9,567
School tax increase on a house assessed at \$211,143 (9567 – 9308)	\$259
Percent increase over 2024/2025	2.7%

Tax Levy Analysis – Fund 10 and Fund 40

<u>Year</u>	<u>% Increase to Taxpayer</u>
2012/2013	1.7%
2013/2014	2.3%
2014/2015	2.9%
2015/2016	1.4%
2016/2017	2.4%
2017/2018	1.5%
2018/2019	0.3%
2019/2020	2.0% Includes \$700k mental health separate proposal
2020/2021	0.4%
2021/2022	1.0%
2022/2023	3.2% Includes \$800k separate proposal
2023/2024	3.9%
2024/2025	6.8% First year paying debt service new bonds
2025/2026	2.7%
Average over 14 years	2.33%

Budget Efficiencies

- Grant from NJ Clean Energy Ventilation and Energy Efficiency Verification and Repair Program.
- Integrated Preschool Program.
- Refinanced bonds whenever cost effective.
- Participation with the ESCNJ for mandated services to non-public schools, transportation jointures, and out-of-district special education placements.
- Participation in Federal E-Rate program.
- Natural gas and electricity consortia with other high volume users.
- Gasoline purchases through the Borough.
- Cooperative purchasing with other school districts.
- Implementation of least restrictive self-contained programs at all schools.
- Participated in the New Jersey Clean Energy Program.
- Completion of Energy Audit.