



March 15, 2024

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

At the March 13 Board of Education meeting, the Board approved the preliminary budget for the 2024-2025 school year. The full presentation is [linked here](#) and the audio recording of the meeting is [linked here](#).

The 2024-2025 budget totals \$80.6 million, with the district receiving around \$6.1 million in state aid. This funding plan is not ideal; it may change the way we deliver instruction and provide programs to our 3,200 students in PreK-Grade 8. For instance, students may have access to fewer apps on their devices (small scale) and we will have fewer people in our buildings than there are right now (large scale). This budget does, however, curb discretionary spending (what we choose to fund) while meeting state and federal mandates (what we have to fund). It also lessens the potential tax burden.

Budget Goals:

The 2024-2025 budget achieves the following:

- Maintains small class sizes as recommended in [District Regulation 2312](#);
- Keeps our student-teacher ratio below the state average;
- Continues to expand preschool;
- Honors salary raises as designated in contracts;
- Covers the cost of bussing increases; and
- Addresses essential building upkeep.

Budget Reductions:

As costs rose steeply in many budget areas for the coming school year, deep cuts are needed to narrow the deficit and reduce the tax levy. The district must decrease the budget by \$3 million.

As I stated in my [March 12 letter](#), we all feel the gravity and severity of the need to reduce positions. Eliminating positions is one of the most difficult decisions I've faced while serving as Superintendent. Looking back, we have overcome, together in the last six years, what seemed like insurmountable hurdles. We remediated mold and addressed air quality in 2018, passed a facilities referendum in 2019, battled COVID in 2020 and 2021, redistricted students to address enrollment growth in 2022 and 2023, and expanded preschool mid-year in 2024. All of these achievements and challenges combined pale in comparison to having to abolish positions.

Below is a partial list of programs, services and positions that are being reduced or eliminated to equal nearly \$3 million:

- Between 25 and 33 teaching and support staff positions across the district - specific positions are being determined through ongoing talks with administration; final decisions will be made before the end of May;
- Safety and security costs; we may not be able to support a Class III officer in each school;
- Student field trips; we will not be able to support field trips at every grade level;
- Effective School Solutions; we are not able to renew a contract for mental and emotional health support;
- Non-essential facility upgrades;
- Technology equipment, including laptops, ipads, cases, chromebooks, and replacement monitors;
- Professional development opportunities and trainings; and
- Other soft costs such as subscriptions, apps, licenses, travel, memberships, supplies and other materials.

Strategic Goals:

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

Goal Area #2: Develop a continuation 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 enticing 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.



Budget Tax Impact:

For the K-8 school budget portion of property taxes in the 2024 calendar year, Raritan Township taxes will go up to \$1.34 per \$100 of assessed value; Flemington Borough taxes will go down to 98 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

To offer an example of how taxes change, we use average home assessments in both municipalities. For instance:

- Raritan Township: Average Assessed Home, \$400,000: Taxes rise to \$5,386, up from \$5,210 from prior year.
- Flemington Borough: Average Assessed Home, \$300,000: Taxes drop to \$2,964, down from \$3,212 from prior year.

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	

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	

More Information:

Additional opportunities to learn more about the budget are listed below:

- [April 10](#) - Dr. McGann's Talk-a-Latte Session focused on the 2024-2025 budget - 6 PM, Robert Hunter
- [May 2](#) - Budget Public Hearing/Board of Education Meeting - 7 PM, J.P. Case

Calendar Reminder:

Parents, please be mindful of the change in our school calendar for April 5. School will be open to make up for the closing on February 13. It will be an A Day/Day 5. Students and staff will have an early dismissal.

Thank you for your continued support of our students, staff and schools.

Sincerely,
 Kari McGann, Ed.D.
 Superintendent of Schools

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