

**FLEMINGTON-RARITAN
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**



2025-2026 BUDGET SUPERINTENDENT'S TOWN HALL MEETING

DECEMBER 12, 2024



BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOL FUNDING

- School Funding Reform Act (SFRA), drafted in 2006, passed and was implemented in 2008.
- Federal School Year 2010: Massive Reductions (2008 Financial Crisis, Banks collapse, NJ Governor slashes budget for schools)
- S-2 bill in 2018
- Health Benefit Legislation in 2020, which affected school districts putting a heavier burden on the school district.



“The cumulative effect of not increasing their levies over multiple school years and the consequences of a 2% tax levy cap prevented many districts from moving forward without making dire spending reductions.”

(New Jersey Association of School Business Officials. January 8, 2024.)

2025-2026 BUDGET PROCESS

Balancing the budget is a complex task and fiscal choices are often difficult. Every decision can impact the way we deliver instruction to our 3,300 students in PreK through Grade 8. As a school district is forced to manage a budget through deficits, there are often no solutions, only tradeoffs.

Budget Process: October through May:

- Planning in the Superintendent, Business Office, School Offices, and all departments.
- Board Committee meetings.
- Budget meetings with curriculum departments.
- Budget Meetings with Building Principals and District Administrators.
- Preliminary budget public meeting.
- Final budget public meeting.



FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BUDGET DECISIONS

Last year, the cost of contracted salary increases combined with increased health care costs, alone exceeded the 2% cap. Additionally, the cost of supplies, utilities, general services, facility maintenance, transportation, and special education tuition costs have skyrocketed. Federal funding through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funding from the pandemic that helped pay for many items has ended.



**MANDATED VS
NON-MANDATED
EXPENSES**



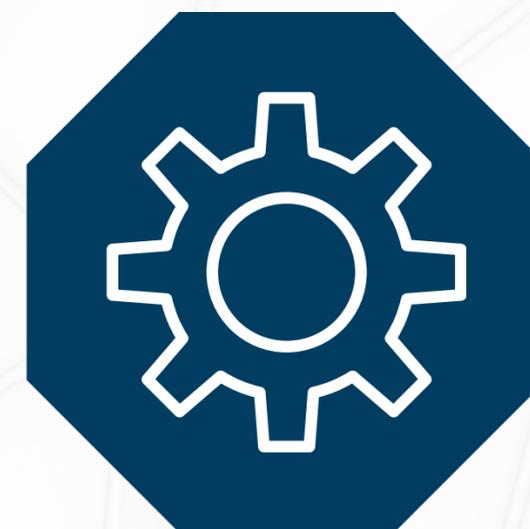
**FACILITY
MAINTENANCE
PRIORITIES**



**RESERVE ACCOUNT
BALANCES**



**EDUCATIONAL
PRIORITIES**



STAFFING NEEDS

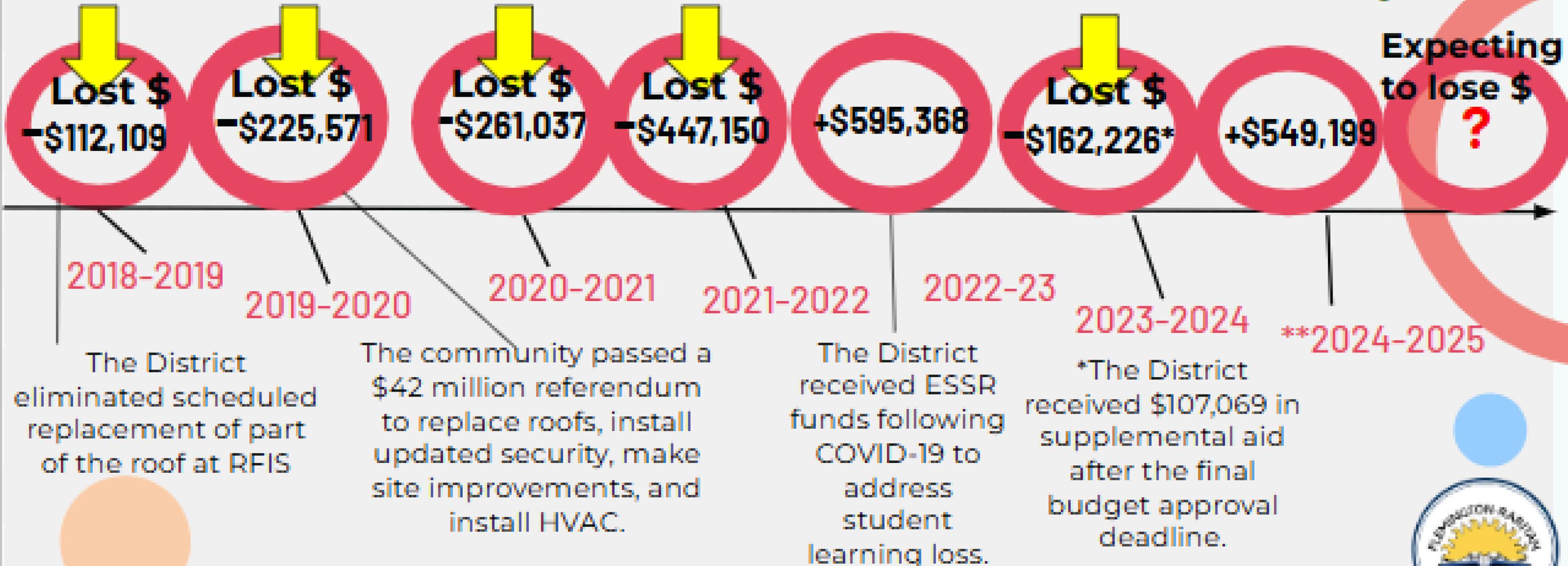
BUDGET: FINANCIAL STRAIN REASONS

- Federal funding ended;
- The S2 Funding Formula;
- A lack of surplus funds;
- An increase in self-insurance costs services. and claims;
- An increase in costs due to rising costs of school-based security officers & other school security items;
- The loss of cumulative state funding;
- Rising costs for out-of-district placements for student education;
- Deficit budgeting year over year;
- Rising costs such as energy and transportation; and
- State Mandated expenses



STATE AID 7-YEAR HISTORY

2024-2025 State Aid was **LESS** than State Aid received in the 2014-15 School year.



**State Aid received for the 2024-25 school year is still less than State Aid we received in 2014-15 school year



NEXT STEPS: SPECIAL ELECTION QUESTION (DRAFT FORM)

- The Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Board of Education is seeking approval from the district's legal voters to raise additional funds for the 2025/26 school year as permitted under Section 5 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-5) for the following purposes:
- Keep teachers and instructional assistants needed to maintain small class sizes.
- Prioritize current academic programs.
- Fund Class III Officers in our District.
- To provide funding for extracurricular athletics and co-curricular activities.

Approval of an increase will result in a permanent increase in the district's tax levy.



INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT (DRAFT FORM):

The Flemington-Raritan Regional School District has been significantly impacted by the state funding formula, which has resulted in a cumulative loss of over \$1 million in school aid over the past six years. Despite making substantial reductions in the 2024-2025 school year, the district is facing another significant budget shortfall for the 2025-2026 school year. If further cuts are necessary, they will directly impact our students.

To avoid these reductions, the district is seeking additional funding for the 2025-2026 budget. This funding is crucial for maintaining small class sizes of approximately 17 to 24 students in grades K-4. Without approval of the public question, class sizes in grades K-8 could rise to over 25 students per homeroom.

Approval of this question will also support essential student programs, including:

- Instructional materials for existing programs,
- Evidence-based reading instruction, such as reading recovery and other programs,
- Supplemental academic programs such as STEM,
- Safety and security personnel, including Class III Officers,
- Replacement of outdated student technology critical for student achievement.

Additionally, after-school programming, including all clubs and extracurricular sports, will be affected without this funding.

The approval of this public question will result in a permanent increase in the district's tax levy.



TAX IMPACT OF SPECIAL ELECTION

Flemington Borough

	4% Increase	6% Increase	8% Increase
Average Assessed Home	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000
Per \$100	\$3,977	\$4,013	\$4,049
Annual Tax Increase	\$29	\$65	\$101
Monthly Tax Increase	\$2	\$5	\$8

Raritan Township

	4% Increase	6% Increase	8% Increase
Average Assessed Home	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Per \$100	\$8,379	\$8,455	\$8,531
Annual Tax Increase	\$310	\$386	\$462
Monthly Tax Increase	\$26	\$32	\$39



Q&A

Our question-and-answer period offers time to address questions pertaining to the 2025-2026 budget.

- In-person questions, if any, will be taken first. We will focus on questions that pertain to the 2025-2026 budget.
- Virtual questions can be submitted and will be reviewed as they are received.

Please check the District's Budget web page for the latest updates.

For all other budget feedback, please take our Budget Poll.





THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

Upcoming Budget Town Hall Meetings

Monday, January 27, 2025 – 6–7:30 PM

J.P. Case or join Virtual with [Link](#) (Code: 066752)

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 – 6–7:30 PM

J.P. Case or join Virtual with [Link](#) (Code: 022634)

Send questions to: budget@frsd.us

**TAKE OUR
BUDGET
POLL**

