

BUDGET ADVISORY MEETING

FY 2026 BUDGET



February 27, 2025



**Kelso School Board
Budget Advisory Council
February 27, 2025
4 p.m. District Office**

Topics of Discussion

- I. Budget Development Calendar and Process (handout)
- II. Budget Development Parameters (handout)
- III. Budget Funding Priorities & Challenges (handout)
- IV. Outlook Kelso School District Finances (handout)
- V. Current Legislative Action – School Financing (TWIO link in Appendixes)
- VI. Final Thoughts/Next Steps
 - a. Next Meeting: Thursday, March 27, 2025, 4 p.m. Board Room
 - i. Budget Survey Results, Potential Reductions, Legislative Budget Update

Budget Survey (closes Friday, February 28th @ Midnight)

<https://www.kelso.wednet.edu/article/1958744>

<https://bit.ly/ksd-budget-0125>

Appendixes

Budget Advisory Council Membership
 Budget Advisory Council Roles and Responsibilities
 WASBO/WASA/WSSDA Legislative Priorities for 2025 Session
 TWIO (This Week in Olympia) - <https://www.wasa-oly.org/twio>



KELSO SCHOOL DISTRICT
Budget Development Calendar
For Fiscal Year Budget 2025/26

December 2024	Governor Releases Preliminary State Budget Proposal
January 13, 2025	2025 Washington State Legislative Session Begins
February 10, 2025	Budget Challenges Presentation <i>Location: School Board Meeting, KHS</i>
February 10 - 28, 2025	Staff/Parent/Community Budget Survey
February 12, 2025	Budget Information Available on District Website Budget email address opens up for questions: budget.input@kelsosd.org
February 12, 2025	Preliminary School Enrollment and Staffing Projections by HR/Fiscal
February – March, 2024	School, Program, and Department Staffing Reviews with HR
<i>February 27, 2025</i> <i>March 27, 2025</i> <i>April 24, 2025</i> <i>May 15, 2025 (if needed)</i>	Budget Advisory Council (BAC) Topics of Discussion: Review Budget Development Process, Budget Assumptions, Revenue Updates, Staffing, Enrollment, Budget Advisory Council Staff Budget Presentations, Provide Feedback on Budgetary Decisions, Review Superintendent/Cabinet Budget Proposal <i>Location: District Board Room 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.</i>
February – June, 2025	Board of Director Meetings – Budget Updates
March-April, 2025	Staff/Parent/Community Input (Forums, Listening Posts, Surveys, as needed)
April 27, 2025	2023 Washington State Legislative Session Ends
End of April, 2025	Personnel Budget (first-run) Submitted to Business Office
May 2, 2025	School/Director Budgets due to HR and Business Offices
May 15, 2025	Reduction in Force Date for Certificated Staff (if necessary)
July 10, 2025	Budget Available for Public Review
August 11, 2025	Budget Workshop; Public Budget Hearing & Board Adoption



Budget Development Parameters 2025/26 Kelso School District Budget

- The established Budget Calendar and Process will be utilized for the development of the 2025/26 budget;
- The Superintendent will recommend a budget to the Board that is aligned to the Mission, Vision, and District Goals outlined in the strategic plan, Road to Student Success;
- The Superintendent will recommend a budget to the Board that addresses the School Board's Priority Goals;
- The Superintendent will utilize input from staff, parents, community, and other stakeholders in the development of the recommended budget to the Board;
- The recommended budget will address efficiency and effectiveness of operations, and the responsive and productive management of school district resources;
- The Board desires a budget that supports sustainable ideas and solutions that invest in our students and staff;
- The Board desires to maintain a minimum total ending fund balance of **8%**;
- The Board recognizes the District must continue to prioritize and invest in the core instructional program closest to the classroom, and recognizes that a balanced approach to reductions, if needed, is necessary to ensure continuity of overall District operations.

Minimum Fund Balance
Policy 6022

The district recognizes the importance of maintaining a prudent fund balance in the general fund to ensure operational cash flow needs are met, to set aside resources for known obligations and to help protect unforeseen circumstances. Accordingly, the district adopts this policy in regard to those portions of fund balance that are in spendable form but are not legally restricted as to their use from outside sources.

Annually, it is in the best interest of Kelso School District that the board of directors targets a goal of 8% of the current year’s expenditures and transfers to address potential general fund needs and continue to maintain an acceptable and adequate minimum fund balance for district operations.

Cross References:	Policy 6020	System of Funds and Accounts
	Policy 6040	Expenditures in Excess of Budget
Legal References:	RCW 28A.320.070	School district as self-insurer – Authority
	RCW 28A.505	School District’s Budgets
	28A.505.130	Budget – Requirements for balancing estimated expenditures

Adopted: 06.03.24
Revised:



Budget Development Priorities/Challenges 2025/26 Kelso School District Budget



- Address funding shortfall & budget challenges for Fiscal Year 2026
- Address enrollment uncertainty due to lower birth rates
- Address labor agreements under negotiation in Spring 2025 – KEA/PSE2
- Address fund balance goal into FY2026



January 6, 2025

TO: Kelso School District Board of Directors
Mary Beth Tack, Superintendent
Kelso School District Staff

FROM: Scott Westlund, Chief Financial & Operations Officer

SUBJECT: BUDGET CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 (2025/26 SCHOOL YEAR)

Over the past few months, I have been discussing the systemic issues related to school finance at the statewide level for almost all school districts, including Kelso. Though the issue is complicated as finances vary from district to district, two things are clear. First, legislative solutions at the State level will be necessary for the common challenges we all face. Second, this issue will present numerous challenges for us as we develop the Kelso School District for the 2025/26 school year.

In early November, the State released a four-year budget outlook that shows a budget deficit between \$10 and \$12 Billion. It is clear that the challenges we face looking forward will be felt across many State programs, inclusive of school districts.

Early indications in the Kelso School District show a projected budget shortfall for 2025/26 in the **range of \$2 – \$2.5 million**. This shortfall amount is necessary to maintain current programming and staffing costs into next school year.

As legislative discussions progress and our school financing needs become clearer, this will be adjusted up or down accordingly. As you may recall, budget reductions of \$1.5 million were approved to balance the current 2024/25 budget.

The challenges we face in school finance and in Kelso School District are rooted largely in the struggles we have all faced in the last five years, often tied directly to the COVID pandemic and its aftermath. At the January 13, 2025, Board of Director meeting I will discuss each of these in detail and the direct impact that each one has had on our school district's budget.

These challenges are reflected in the following:

1. The percentage of the overall state budget allocated to K-12 education has decreased from 52.4% in 2019 to 43.1% in 2024, resulting in a significant reduction in available funding for schools across the state.



2. The cost of operating schools has increased due to inflation, while state funding adjustments have not kept pace with these rising expenses.
3. New student programs created during COVID to assist and address student needs, and a reliable funding source needed to be found for them to continue.
4. Staffing expenses, which make up 82% of the district's budget, continue to rise as we strive to maintain wages that align with cost-of-living increases and support a livable wage for employees.
5. Local school levies, originally intended to enhance state funding for enrichment programs and activities, are increasingly used to cover essential operational expenses.
6. Declining birth rates have led to reduced student enrollment, which, in turn, has decreased the level of state funding provided to districts.
7. Local Effort Assistance (LEA) funding, which supports "property-poor" school districts, has significantly declined over the past five years, resulting in an annual loss of at least \$1 million for Kelso School District.

Attached to this memorandum is a graphic that demonstrates the unique struggle that the Kelso School District has faced in four key areas of school financing: Special Education, Transportation, Other Operating Costs known as MSOCs, and Substitute Costs.

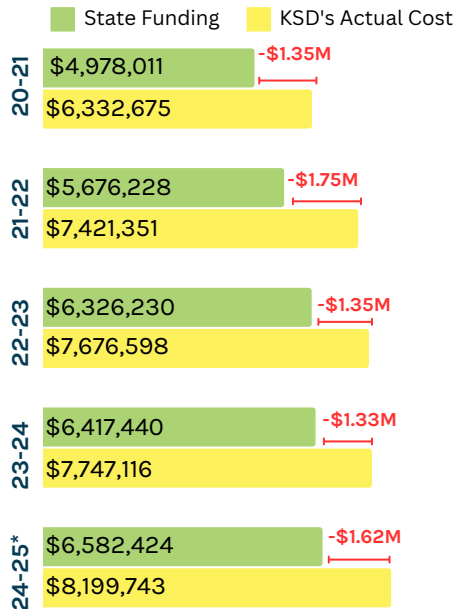
We will be convening our Budget Advisory Council (BAC) to begin discussing the challenges ahead and seeking solutions to ensure a sustainable balanced budget moving forward. Administrative, employee associations, school board, and community members represent the BAC. The purpose of the BAC is to provide input on proposed budget solutions and share information with the groups they represent.

As we move through winter and spring, we will continue to advocate with our State legislative leaders, seek staff and community input, work with our administrative teams to develop staffing and budget plans, and keep the Board apprised of our progress. We will be prepared to recommend a budget to the Board in late spring/early summer, with final adoption taking place at the August 11, 2025, Board of Director meeting.

KELSO SD GAPS IN STATE FUNDING



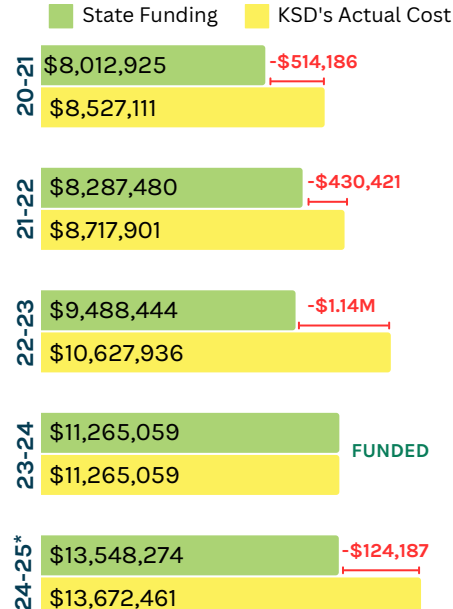
MATERIALS, SUPPLIES & OPERATING COSTS (MSOC)



Since 2020, KSD has been underfunded for MSOC by **\$7.4 million.**



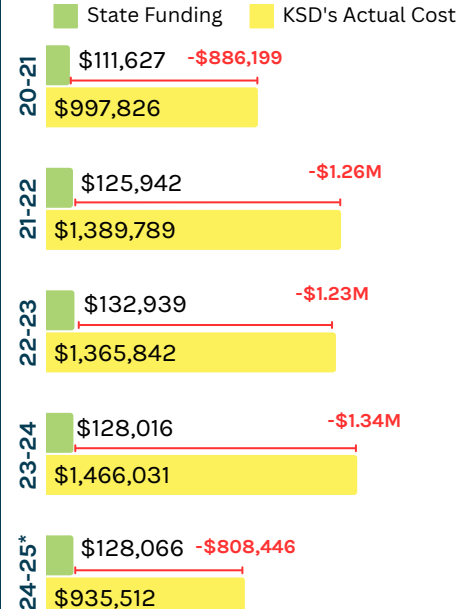
SPECIAL EDUCATION



Since 2020, KSD has been underfunded for Special Education by **\$2.2 million.**



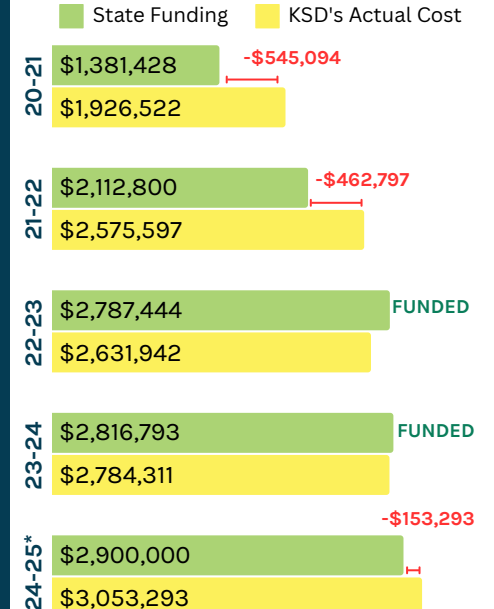
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS & STAFF



Since 2020, KSD has been underfunded for Substitutes by **\$5.5 million.**



TRANSPORTATION



Since 2020, KSD has been underfunded for Transportation by **\$973k.**

SINCE 2020, STATE FUNDING GAPS HAVE COST KSD \$16M.

*Budgeted

Federal pandemic relief (ESSR) funds/expenditures are not included in this data.

GENERAL FUND

2025 BUDGET SUMMARY & 2026 PROJECTED BUDGET

As of February 1, 2025

	BUDGET 2025	REVISED BUDGET JANUARY 2025	\$ Δ	PROJECTED BUDGET 2026	\$ Δ
REVENUE					
Local Revenue	\$8,948,051	\$9,073,051	\$125,000	\$10,050,000	\$1,101,949
State Revenue	72,992,749	73,352,410	359,661	75,000,000	\$2,007,251
Federal Revenue	7,554,263	7,554,263	0	7,650,000	\$95,737
Other Sources	2,158,500	207,672	(1,950,828)	2,150,000	(\$8,500)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$91,653,563	\$90,187,396	(\$1,466,167)	\$94,850,000	\$3,196,437
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries	\$52,980,002	\$52,930,023	(\$49,979)	\$56,105,000	\$3,124,998
Benefits	20,476,083	20,442,764	(33,319)	21,775,000	\$1,298,917
All Other	17,443,795	15,928,492	(1,515,303)	17,800,000	\$356,205
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$90,899,880	\$89,301,279	(\$1,598,601)	\$95,680,000	\$4,780,120
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	\$753,683	\$886,117	\$132,434	\$1,420,000	PROPOSED REDUCTIONS
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES / USES					
Other Financing Sources	\$1,500	\$1,500		\$1,500	\$0
Other Financing Uses	(\$580,000)	(\$580,000)	\$0	(\$580,000)	\$0
NET CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	\$175,183	\$307,617	\$132,434	\$841,500	
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE	\$6,800,000	\$6,192,022		\$6,499,639	
ADJUSTMENTS TO FUND BALANCE					
YEAR END BALANCE	\$6,975,183	\$6,499,639		\$7,341,139	
FUND BALANCE AS A % OF EXPENDITURES	7.7%	7.3%		7.67%	



Appendixes



BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS 2024/25 School Year

Non-Voting Facilitators:

Superintendent	Mary Beth Tack
Chief Financial & Operations Officer	Scott Westlund

Voting Committee Members:

KEA Representative	Kelly Sims
PSE 1 Representative	Scott King
PSE 2 Representative	Darlene Dalglish
School Administrator	Tim Yore
Supervisor	David McDaniel
Cabinet Representative	Holly Budge
Community Member	Darr Kirk
Community Member	Patty Wood

Non-voting/At-Large Members:

Board Member (s)	Mike Haas & Rich Fletcher
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Roles & Responsibilities of Budget Development Staff

Entity	Role/Responsibility
Budget Advisory Council (BAC) *Sharing Association/Union impacts to budgetary decision is encouraged as part of the BAC process. However, the BACs role is not to negotiate salaries/benefits or other association related issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate ideas for developing the budget through discussion, consultation with constituents, and information gathered through the BAC process • Provide feedback to the Superintendent on District budget proposals • Seek understanding of issues related to budget process in order to communicate with those you represent
Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with principals, associations, department supervisors, staff, and other stakeholders as needed to generate budget proposals and seek feedback • Present budget proposals for discussion at weekly Cabinet budget workshops • Work cooperatively with other Cabinet members to present budget proposals and develop a draft budget to be shared with BAC
Director of Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant staffing information and data to Board of Directors, Superintendent, Cabinet and BAC • Work with building principals and HR staff to develop personnel plans and budgets
Chief Financial and Operations Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate the efforts of the BAC and budget development process • Provide relevant financial information and data to Board of Directors, Superintendent, Cabinet and BAC • Assist the Superintendent to ensure the budget development process and Board parameters are adhered to • Prepare and present overall District budget for Board consideration and approval
Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate Cabinet discussions and decision making process regarding budget development • Make final decisions on budget development options to be included in the budget presented to the school board
School Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Superintendent to establish budget parameters, budget calendar, and priorities • Approve final budget, and/or provide feedback to Superintendent for revisions



WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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The Washington Association of School Business Officials (WASBO) advocates for the following legislative actions to ensure sustainable funding for the K-12 public education finance system:

2025 KEY PRIORITIES

Increase **MSOC** Funding
Fully Fund **Special Education**
Enhance **Pupil Transportation** Funding
Fully Fund **Substitute Costs**

Updates to these priorities are essential to safeguarding district resources and ensuring local levies can **enhance** education rather than **filling** funding gaps for basic operational needs.

► **MATERIALS, SUPPLIES & OPERATING COSTS (MSOC) ALLOCATIONS**

While staffing remains the largest school district expense, non-staff costs are significant. The Legislature provides funding for these through MSOC at a set rate per student, but this funding has not kept up with actual district expenses. For example:

- **Insurance costs have increased by over 100% in five years.**
- **Utility costs have risen by more than 40%.**

With these increasing costs, MSOC funding falls short, forcing districts to rely on local levy revenue meant to enhance education - not cover basic costs like insurance and utilities. These are not "enhancements" but essential expenses. Paying for basic costs often comes at the expense of building maintenance and other critical needs.

WASBO urges the Legislature to increase MSOC funding to reflect actual district expenses, ensuring that essential services are covered without straining local levies.



► **FULLY FUND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Despite the Legislature's investments over the last 5 years, Special Education remains underfunded, forcing districts to rely on local levies to meet state and federal mandates.

To ensure students are not negatively impacted, **WASBO urges the Legislature to fully fund Special Education** by:

- **Increasing tiered multipliers**
- **Eliminating the enrollment cap**
- **Removing the safety net threshold**

Both the enrollment cap and the safety net threshold are policy decisions made by the Legislature that are neither required nor consistent with providing a free, appropriate public education to our students.



The Washington Association of School Business Officials (WASBO) is a statewide organization representing 1,800 members involved in school finance and operations.



WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS¹⁵ 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

► PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

We appreciate the Legislature's continued provision of additional funding to address the excess costs of transporting special passengers, such as special education, foster, and McKinney-Vento students. However, over the past five years, most districts have received transportation allocations that fall short of covering their actual costs, creating significant funding gaps.

Much of this gap stems from the current formula, which does not fully account for the unique needs and higher costs associated with special passengers.

WASBO urges the Legislature to:

- **Increase dedicated funding for transporting special passengers**
- **Create a data-driven safety net process** that offers flexibility for districts with unique transportation needs not covered by the existing formula.

These changes are crucial to ensuring that districts can meet their transportation obligations without having to rely on local funds to fill the gaps.



► FULLY FUND SUBSTITUTE COSTS (FOR REQUIRED STAFF LEAVE)

Under **RCW 28A.400.300**, school districts are required to provide a **minimum of 10 days** of leave for both classified and certificated staff. However, the state currently only provides funding for certificated teacher substitutes for 4 days per basic education-funded teacher FTE at a rate of \$151.86 per day, which equates to approximately \$16 per hour.

At this time, there is no funding received for classified substitutes. This leaves a significant gap in covering the actual cost of substitutes, forcing districts to use local levy funds or other resources to meet this shortfall. In addition, school districts are also required to provide sick leave to substitutes under state law, further increasing the financial burden on districts without additional funding from the state.



WASBO urges the Legislature to fully fund the costs associated with required staff leave by:

- **Increasing the number of substitute days funded** to reflect the actual minimum leave required by law (10 days per FTE).
- **Provide funding for substitute costs for all staff FTE funded**
- **Adjusting the daily substitute rate to align with actual market rates and local cost-of-living factors**, ensuring districts can secure qualified substitute teachers.
- **Providing additional funding to cover the cost of sick leave for substitutes**, as mandated by state law, to alleviate the financial strain on districts.

By fully funding substitute costs, including sick leave for substitutes, districts can focus local levy funds on enhancing education, rather than covering essential staffing requirements.

The Washington Association of School Business Officials (WASBO) is a statewide organization representing 1,800 members involved in school finance and operations.

2025 Legislative Platform

“It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision the education of all children residing within its borders...”

—Article IX, Section 1, Washington State Constitution

School administrators acknowledge the Legislature’s efforts to fully fund basic education, including the provision of significant additional funding in the last ten years. Nevertheless, funding for at least three major components of basic education—Special Education, Pupil Transportation, and Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC)—continue to be dramatically underfunded.

School administrators are committed to ensuring each and every student is provided with equitable learning environments where they can learn and achieve their educational goals and aspirations. In pursuit of this commitment, WASA urges the 2025 Legislature to fulfill their obligation to fully fund the following Basic Education programs:

Special Education

The 2025 Legislature must fully fund the cost of special education services. School districts have a legal obligation to serve all students with disabilities in Washington, regardless of cost of services, yet they do not have the necessary resources to provide those services. Even with recent funding enhancements, the gap between school district expenditures for special education and related services substantially exceeds funding—and continues to grow. This gap requires districts to continue to use local funding sources, including local levies, to cover necessary costs. To ensure school districts are provided with funding that reflects the actual costs of service delivery, the Legislature must increase special education tiered multipliers and remove the arbitrary enrollment funding cap.

Pupil Transportation

The 2025 Legislature must promptly fulfill its obligation to comprehensively fix the pupil transportation formula to ensure it is more transparent, predictable, and adequately funded. The intent of the current Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System (STARS) is to allow the Legislature to allocate funding to districts that aligns with actual costs of providing school transportation services. Regardless of the intent, the STARS formula has consistently underfunded districts’ actual pupil transportation expenditures. The STARS formula cannot forecast allocations with credible accuracy, calculates a final allocation in February which complicates budget decisions for school districts and the Legislature, and uses an efficiency rating that is detrimental to efficient districts because they are at risk of less funding in the model.

Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC)

The 2025 Legislature must immediately address the significant underfunding of allocations for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC). While staffing represents the largest expense for school districts, there are many costs to running a school district which are non-staff related. The Legislature provides an allocation to cover these costs by providing for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC) at a specific rate per student; however, state funding for MSOC has not kept pace with actual school district costs. Liability insurance alone has increased over 100 percent in the last five years, while utility costs have increased more than 40 percent. Other costs, such as food and fuel, have also increased dramatically. Current per pupil rates for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs simply do not come close to matching costs of running a school district. These costs are increasing through no fault of School Districts, superintendents or school boards and their decisions. When required costs of running a school district exceed state funding, local revenues, mostly levies, must be used to fill the gap, reducing local resources for school district and community expectations.

Legislative Priorities

School administrators will focus their advocacy efforts in the 2025 Legislative Session on the full funding of basic education—specifically Special Education, Pupil Transportation, and Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC). As school districts face increasing financial difficulties, however, school administrators have ongoing concerns about the state’s K–12 funding structure that must be addressed. These issues must continue to remain on legislators’ radar:

Update Staff Allocations

WASA urges the Legislature to continue to provide for more realistic staffing ratios in the Prototypical School Funding Model (PSFM). The Prototypical School Funding Model is a core, fundamental part of the education funding structure. The funding ratios for most staff positions, however, have remained the same since the Model was first implemented in 2010, resulting in outdated and unrealistic state-funded staffing levels. The first priority must be the completion of implementation of Phase I of the recommendations from the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup (2019): improving staffing allocations for critically needed school principals; providing additional professional development to close achievement gaps; and adding continuous improvement coaches as an enhancement to the PSFM.

Modify Regionalization/Experience Factor

WASA urges the Legislature to immediately revamp the methodology of regionalization and experience factors to ensure school districts receive more consistent and equitable resources. The current regionalization methodology of using housing costs is flawed and the implementation of experience factors is unsound. The current calculation of these factors has exacerbated inequities between districts and must be updated swiftly.

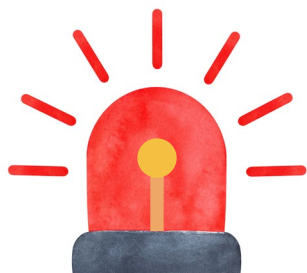
Reform Levy/Local Effort Assistance

Inequities between districts were exacerbated by capping levy authority of property rich districts at a higher level than neighboring property poor districts—while diminishing levy capacity for all districts at the same time. Spiking housing values are negatively impacting many districts’ efforts to adopt levies and are causing many districts eligible for Local Effort Assistance (LEA) to lose funding—or lose eligibility all together. Legislators have consistently stated their intent to “reform” levy/LEA policies; however, action has yet to be taken.

Support Capital Facilities

WASA urges the Legislature to provide robust and reliable funding for school facilities, including funding for school districts that have difficulty passing local bonds or have limited debt capacity to support necessary new construction or modernization. While WASA appreciates the recent update in the Construction Cost Allowance, the Legislature must continue to enhance the state’s investment in K–12 construction by updating the antiquated, pre-1980 funding formulas to ensure funding more closely reflects actual construction costs and educational space needs. Additionally, the Legislature must finally give Washington’s citizens the opportunity to decide whether school district bond issues should be approved with a simple majority vote.

WSSDA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2025



Outdated Funding Formulas Force Cuts and Strain Schools

Our public education system is operating without the staff or resources needed to serve students and many districts are being forced to cut staff further as the funding crisis gets more dire. With fewer staff to respond to students' changing needs and without the resources needed to implement the mounting list of state laws, more and more of our districts will join the list of those under enormous financial strain. Full, ample, sustainable, and equitable funding is paramount to fulfill all aspects of Washington's Program of Basic Education and close opportunity gaps. To support equitable learning and to implement the laws that have already been enacted, districts must receive funding that is full, ample, sustainable, and equitable in the following priority areas:

Underfunded and Underserved: SPED Shortfall Impacts All Students

Solution: Increase the tiered multipliers, advance inclusionary practices, and remove the enrollment funding cap.

Inflation Crunch: Materials Priced Out of Reach

Solution: Increase the Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC) allocations to reflect rising and uncontrollable costs to include a one-time stabilization to eliminate underfunding and adjust the future allocations by inflation; rebase the MSOC formula at least every four years to ensure allocations keep up with cost increases that are beyond a district's control.

Loss of Vital Staff: Outdated Prototypical Model Forces Deep Cuts

Solution: Update and fund the prototypical school funding model to ensure that districts have the staff needed to serve each and every student within their care.

Students Stranded: Transportation Formula is Out of Date

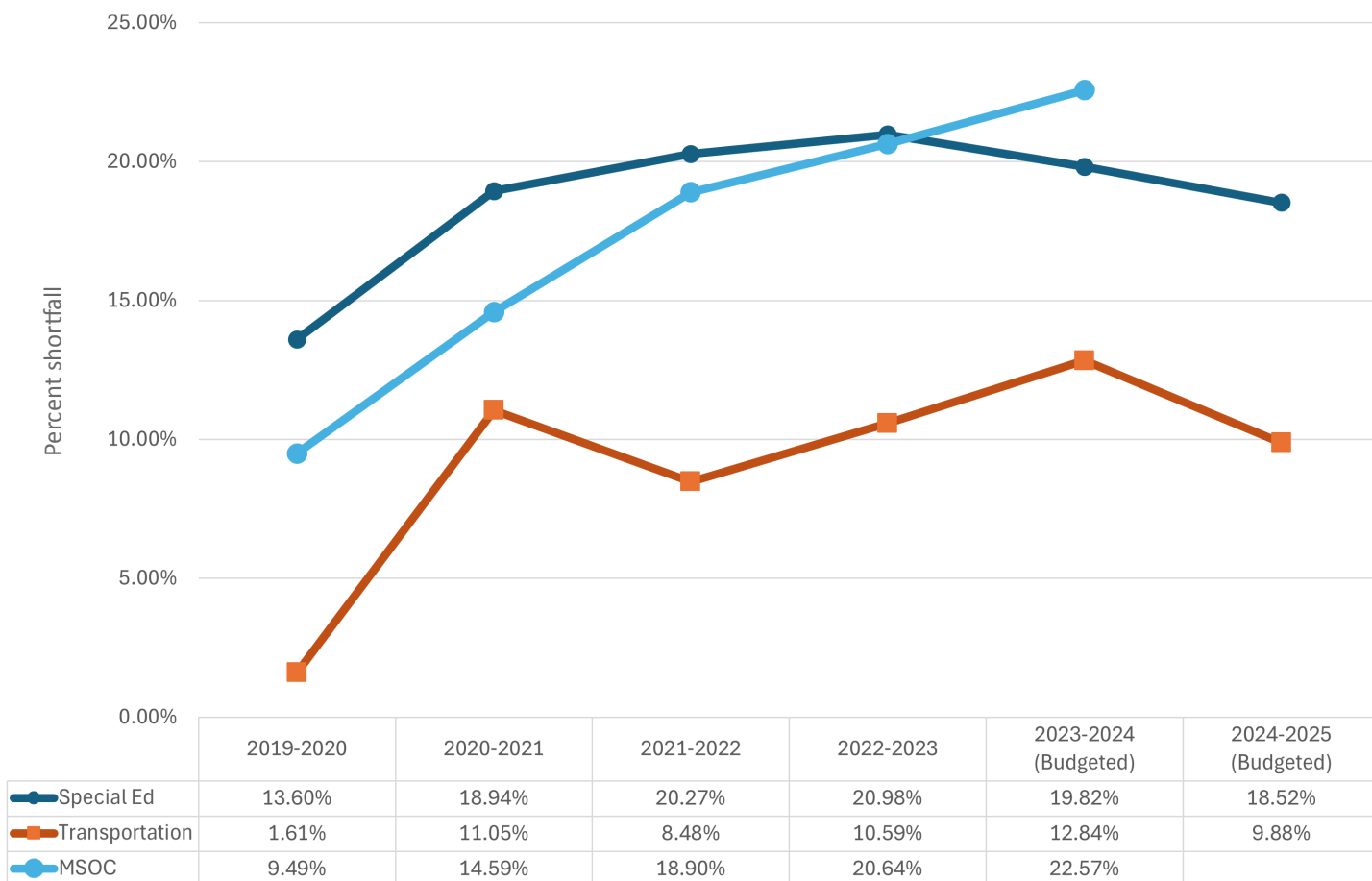
Solution: Update the Student Transportation Allocation formula to reflect and cover actual costs.

Continued on reverse side

By the Numbers

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Funding Shortfalls by Major Categories, 2019-2020 to 2024-2025
Percentages are the percent of spending not covered by direct state allocations



Special Education

Providing the legally required and ethically necessary supports and services for students with disabilities requires resources. However, the cost to respond to students' needs exceeds current funding. As a result, some students are not receiving all the support they need to be successful. Additionally, the lack of needed resources forces compromises that impact overall district functions, such as staff and program cuts. This funding inequity has a ripple effect on students throughout the system. By supporting students with disabilities, each and every student benefits from an inclusive and adequately resourced learning environment.

MSOC

Districts must buy materials and equipment to support learning, as well as pay the bills, but don't receive sufficient resources to do either through the outdated MSOC allocations. Recent and significant inflation has impacted all operating costs including, but not limited to, utilities and insurance. The rising costs of all MSOC categories have forced districts to choose between providing vital programs for students and covering standard expenses.

Staffing

In both rural and urban and large and small districts, more staff with diverse backgrounds and skills are needed to provide relevant instruction and timely instructional supports. Even before the pandemic, the state allocation to cover salaries, benefits, and pension programs for necessary staffing levels was out-of-date and insufficient; students' changing instructional demands over recent years has widened the already concerning gap between staff support and student need.

Transportation

School buses provide transportation for students so that they can access instruction. Yet, the allocation to fund school transportation is woefully out-of-step with actual costs. Student transportation includes both the familiar yellow school buses, as well as less traditional, cost-effective resources for students experiencing homelessness.

"Educational equity can only exist when a student's level of opportunity and achievement cannot be predicted based on race, characteristics, or circumstances. Therefore, we must identify and eliminate any discriminatory practices and prejudices within our state's public education system."

—WSSDA's member-adopted position on educational equity



For more info, go to
wssda.org/priorities.

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This Week In Olympia (**TWIO**) is WASA's weekly newsletter that communicates timely news and activity "on the Hill" to members during the legislative session.

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***TWIO* : 2025 Legislative Session**

Special Edition:

[January 13, 2025](#): Opening Day

Regular Edition:

February 21, 2025: [Week 6](#)

February 14, 2025: [Week 5](#)

February 7, 2025: [Week 4](#)

January 31, 2025: [Week 3](#)

January 24, 2025: [Week 2](#)

January 17, 2025: [Week 1](#)

***TWIO* : 2024 Legislative Session**

Special Edition:

[May 6, 2024](#): End of Session Legislative Report

[March 8, 2024](#): *Sine Die*

[March 7, 2024](#): Final Budgets Released

[February 20, 2024](#): Senate & House Release 2024 Supplemental Budget Proposals

[January 8, 2024](#): Opening Day

[December 15, 2023](#): Pre-Session Legislative Update