

CONSIDERATION:

Public Discussion of Projected Receipts and Expenses - Draft Budget for 2025-2026.

DISCUSSION:

State law (KRS 160.470 (6)(a) requires that every local board of education receive a Draft Budget before January 31, 2025 for the upcoming school year. The law's purpose is to assure that the board has sufficient information about projected receipts and expenditures for all funds in the entire budget as allocations for individual budget components are considered. Table A contains an overview of the chronology for 2025-26 budget decisions.

Table A
Kentucky Budget Development Chronology
Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2025

| Activity | Approximate Time |
|---|---|
| 2025-26 Enrollment/ADA Projection | Reported to Board – December 2024 |
| 2025-26 Local/State Revenue Projections | Included in this enclosure |
| Projected Equipment/Capital Needs | Included in this enclosure |
| Mandated Personnel Expense | Included in this enclosure |
| Local School Board Reviews School Allocations | Preliminary Information in this enclosure |
| Draft Budget Reviewed by Local Board – (KRS 160.470) | By January 31, 2025 |
| Local School Board Approves School Allocations | Complete by March 1, 2025 |
| 2024-25 School Budget Development – School Councils Advise Superintendent/Board of Staff Levels | Complete by March 31, 2025 |
| Notice of Re-employment of Certified Staff – Next School Year | No Later than April 30, 2025 |
| Needs Assessment | From Improvement Plans in May |
| Staff Positions and Salary Levels | May Tentative Budget or later |
| Board Adopts 2025-26 Tentative Budget with 2% Reserve of Total Budget | By May 31, 2025 |
| Formal Budget Action: 2025-26 Tax Levy | Within 30 days of receipt of certified assessment |
| Formal Budget Action: Adopts 2025-26 Working Budget | By September 30, 2025 |

REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance: The most important information to project local and state revenue is the number of pupils expected. Most state funds to local school districts are calculated from the full time equivalent (FTE) average daily attendance (ADA). Each kindergarten student is counted as one FTE for projection of SEEK revenue.

Even though state revenue through SEEK is based on ADA, staffing needs for schools are based on the number of students enrolled or average daily membership (ADM). The Elizabethtown Independent Schools expect to have a slight increase in the number of students in overall enrollment compared to 2025-26.

Per pupil seek is budgeted at \$4,326 per ADA with total Seek funding budgeted at \$11,466,896 which is the same as the 2024-25 seek projection due to projected same ADA.

Table B
Projected Enrollment - Elizabethtown Independent Schools
End of Second School Month

| School | Actual 2021-22 | Actual 2022-23 | Actual 2023-24 | Actual 2024-25 | Projected 2025-26 |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Panther Academy | 177 | 152 | 177 | 158 | 180 |
| Helmwood | 386 | 409 | 423 | 460 | 459 |
| Morningside | 460 | 453 | 452 | 457 | 430 |
| All Elementary | 1023 | 1014 | 1052 | 1075 | 1069 |
| TK Stone MS | 562 | 521 | 530 | 526 | 531 |
| Etown HS | 793 | 832 | 785 | 773 | 763 |
| Homebound/GDC/VV | 39 | 28 | 33 | 34 | 25 |
| All K-12 | 2417 | 2395 | 2400 | 2408 | 2388 |
| | | | | | |

Assessment of Taxable Property: Local/State revenue projections for 2025-26 are based on the projected number of pupils in ADA and a projection of assessed value of property subject to school taxation at the 2024-25 tax rate. The state SEEK funding program was designed to equalize funding based on the assessed value of taxable property per pupil.

PROJECTED REVENUE – GENERAL FUND

Beginning General Fund Balance: The unreserved General Fund beginning balance is expected to be at least \$5,870,000. This estimate of the 2025-26 beginning General Fund balance is based on the assumption that all of the funds budgeted in 24-25 for revenue would be received and expenses including accumulated sick leave at retirement would be spent.

If revenues for 2024-25 are higher than projected or if all allocated expenses are not spent, a higher carry forward beginning General Fund balance may be expected for 2025-26.

Overall General Fund Receipts:

All general fund revenues except beginning balance are budgeted at 24-25 levels.

PROJECTED REVENUE - OTHER FUNDS

Special Revenue Fund: The Draft Budget does not include any funding levels of any state or federal categorical programs. As notice of 2025-26 state and federal funding is provided, these amounts will be inserted into the budget as the board makes subsequent reviews. Hopefully, by the May Tentative Budget considerable more information will be available about special revenue funding.

Capital Funds: SEEK Capital Outlay revenue is projected the same as 24-25. Projected local revenue to the Building Fund shows increase in revenue. State revenue to the Building Fund is

expected to decrease, with local effort required to increase. The General Assembly is charged by state law to set the equalization at 150% of the state average assessment per pupil for each biennium. The state equalization level for the budget for 2025-26 is budgeted \$1,211,000.

EXPENSE PROJECTIONS

Obligations

The Draft Budget must provide for all obligations of the Board. The Elizabethtown Independent Schools have two (2) major obligations for priority consideration in the 2025-26 budget.

Debt Service: First, debt service on bond issues must be funded. The Elizabethtown School District's scheduled debt service for 2025-26 is \$1,644,409.04. This obligation is budgeted for payment from the Debt Service Fund, however, the source of payment will be transferred from the General Fund at \$296,035.47 Building and Capital Outlay Funds at \$1,348,373.57. The Elizabethtown Independent Schools will have sufficient capability from the General, Building and Capital Outlay Funds to pay scheduled 2025-26 debt service. Projected 2025-26 revenue in the Building and Capital Outlay funds is projected to be \$2,983,334 not counting any beginning balances in these funds.

Personnel Expense: Second, the cost for salaries and benefits will increase due to experience increments in current salary schedules. The Draft Budget includes the cost of each staff member advancing one year in experience on current salary schedules.

The estimated cost of these salary improvements is a decrease of \$276,142 or about 18 % decrease from the current expense for salaries. This due largely from open positions to be filled and changes in personnel from previous budget. This projection allocates personnel expense at 70.9% of the total General Fund Budget.

In addition, the Draft Budget provides a set aside of \$100,000 to pay accumulated benefits at the time of retirement for all eligible staff members. It is very unlikely that all eligible staff members will choose to retire at the same time, however, this amount will be reviewed upon receipt of staff intent forms for 2025-26 school year.

Staffing Allocation and School Equity

The Board is to approve allocations to school councils by March 1, 2025. The allocation is to provide sufficient funds to staff each school and provide for teaching materials, supplies, travel, and equipment. The projected 2025-26 staffing allocation provides for full-day kindergarten at Panther Academy. Elizabethtown's staffing is above the minimum number of staff members needed to meet the maximum class size standard. Local district revenue is the primary source of funding staffing above the minimum level.

Current staffing levels are based on a consistent standard that assures fair treatment for all schools. Fair treatment means that pupil-teacher ratios are similar for schools that serve similar grades or levels. Further, the level of staffing beyond the minimum required is dictated by available revenue. The Board will consider staffing levels for 2025-26 in the school allocations at a February Board meeting. Equitable staffing among the schools should be an important part of this consideration.

There are two other components of the school allocation process. First, the allocation for teaching supplies, materials, and instructional travel based on the state regulation requiring a per-pupil allocation of at least 3.5% of the base SEEK for each FTE pupil in ADA. This provision in the budget language has been waived in previous budget cycles. This Draft Budget provides the minimum allocation for this section at \$147.00 per ADA.

Second, the Board may allocate any additional funds to schools to address unmet needs. If there are differences in student learning needs from school to school the Board may allocate additional funds based on the differences. For example, if one school has a unique need, the Board may allocate additional funds to that school only. Any discretionary funds the Board may decide to allocate to schools should be placed in this component of the allocation.

Equipment and capital needs are normally found in the maintenance series of the General Fund budget and the Capital Outlay and Building funds. Unmet facility needs are found in the district facility plan. The Capital Funds budgets provide for the cost of scheduled debt service. Funds received above the amount needed for debt service are held in reserve for new facility construction or and/or renovation projects.

Summary of Projected Expense: An increase is projected for expense from the general fund during 2025-26. This does not include funds held in contingency as a reserve for unknown or future needs.

Table D presents a summary of projected General Fund expense by object (code). Appendix A contains brief descriptions of the object codes utilized.

Table D
Projected General Fund Expense by Object Code

| GENERAL FUND PROJECTED EXPENSES | | Actual 2022-23 | Budget 2024-25 | Projected 2025-26 | \$ Change | % Change |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 0100 | SALARIES PERSONNEL SERVICES | 13,410,695 61.8 | 15,560,713 71.7 | 15,284,571 70.9 | (276,142) | (1.8) |
| 0200 | EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (*) | 1,287,484 5.9 | 1,413,129 6.5 | 1,434,388 6.7 | 21,259 | 1.5 |
| 0300 | PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES | 528,209 2.4 | 660,836 3.0 | 709,736 3.3 | 48,700 | 7.4 |
| 0400 | PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES | 1,846,812 8.5 | 1,218,875 5.6 | 1,218,875 5.7 | 0 | 0 |
| 0500 | OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES | 481,687 2.2 | 536,117 2.5 | 598,177 2.8 | 62,060 | 11.6 |
| 0600 | SUPPLIES & MATERIALS | 1,320,388 6.1 | 1,714,230 7.9 | 1,714,230 8.0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0700 | PROPERTY | 299,865 1.4 | 136,900 .6 | 136,900 .6 | 0 | 0 |
| 0800 | MISCELLANEOUS | 52,550 .2 | 97,600 .4 | 97,600 .5 | 0 | 0 |
| 0900 | OTHER USES OF FUNDS | 727,033 3.4 | 351,035 1.6 | 362,370 1.7 | 11,335 | 3.2 |
| | Subtotal for General Fund (*) | 19,954,723 | 21,689,436 | 21,556,648 | (132,788) | (.6) |
| 0840 | CONTINGENCY | 0 | 5,273,438 | 4,806,999 | (466,439) | |
| | <i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i> | | 24.3 | 22.3 | | |
| | Total for General Fund (*) | 19,954,723 | 26,962,874 | 26,363,647 | (599,227) | (2.2) |
| | | | | | | |

* "Actual" excludes state payments on-behalf of the school district, which are unbudgeted as per state instructions.

Budget Reserve: KDE defines "total budget" as the budgeted expenditures in the General, Special Revenue, Capital Outlay, Building and Food Service Funds excluding the Contingency. The budgeted reserve (Contingency) in the Draft Budget has been determined accordingly.

A local school district budget must include a reserve of at least 2.0% of the total budget. The attached summary of General Fund expenditures includes a projected unrestricted reserve of \$4,806,999 of the total budget.

The projected reserve exceeds the minimum 2.0% requirement of \$613,073. The projected unrestricted reserve is 15.7% of the amount projected for all funds. The desired level of reserve for the budget after approval of all expenses, including salary improvements, is approximately eight percent (8.0%) of the total budget.

It is important to remember that the purpose of an adequate reserve is to provide a “buffer” to minimize the disruption of instructional programs deemed critical by the Board during times of negative shifts in state revenue.

This Draft Budget includes higher projected expense than projected revenue. During the next two (2) fiscal years, it is important for the Board to maintain as much as possible a pattern of General Fund expenditures that are not more than General Fund receipts, excluding the budget reserve. However, given what little is known about SEEK funding for the next two (2) years, this may prove difficult to achieve.

Expenses in all other funds are projected to be equal to projected receipts. The major part of the higher expense projected for 2025-26 is increased utility and insurance costs. The other important factor is the cost of continuing Board initiated programs

If SEEK revenue is subsequently higher than projected in this narrative, the Board should not increase expense. The top priority should be to use the additional revenue to reduce any gap between recurring revenue and expense.

RECOMMENDATION:

Take this information under advisement and approve a motion that the Board has reviewed projected revenue and expense for 2025-26 pursuant to KRS 160.470. Action on the school allocations should be taken at a regular meeting in February 2025.

APPENDIX A**EXPENSE TYPES:**

Within each major function, specific types of expenses are grouped together. These groupings utilize the first two (2) digits of the object. For instance, salary-related object codes always begin with **01** (**0110**, **0120**, **0130**, etc.), so the “**01**” causes these expenses to be combined in the expense type grouping “**0100**.” The following summarizes the types of expenses grouped under the function:

- 0100 Salaries Personnel Services** – salary-related expenses, such as wages, stipends, etc.
- 0200 Employee Benefits** – fringe benefits, such as employee insurance, FICA match, Medicare match, CERS match, and KTRS match, when applicable
- 0300 Purchased Professional & Technical Services** – contractual services, such as legal, consultants, audit, architectural, engineering, etc.
- 0400 Purchased Property Services** – other services, such as repairs/maintenance, rent utilities, etc.
- 0500 Other Purchased Services** – expenses such as travel, telephone, postage, advertising, insurance, printing, etc.
- 0600 Supplies & Materials** – expenses such as general supplies, textbooks, reference materials, software, food, testing materials, etc.
- 0700 Property** – furniture, fixtures, equipment, computers, buses, etc.
- 0800 Miscellaneous** – fieldtrip expenses (other than the driver’s salary), registration, fees, permits, uniforms, etc.
- 0840 Contingency** – used for budgeting purposes only as determined by the Board
- 0900 Other Uses of Funds** – fund transfers and principal and interest payments on bonds