

CONCERN:

Consider the 2025-26 Tentative Budget

DISCUSSION:

Each local board of education is required to approve a Tentative Budget on or before May 30 each year. The purpose of this law is to assure that the local board of education has an opportunity to review all proposed revenues and expenses before the upcoming school year begins. This is the 2nd formal step in developing the 2025-26 annual working budget.

The 1st step in January was simply a review of projected revenue and expenses with no formal action by the Board. This step involves a more specific presentation of the proposed 2025-26 budget and involves formal action by the Board to adopt the budget with such changes as deemed appropriate by the Board. The remaining formal steps will come after the close of the current fiscal year when the certification of the value of taxable property is received.

REVENUE

Some basic revenue considerations and how they are addressed in this Tentative Budget are:

STUDENTS

How many students are expected to enroll and what rate of attendance will occur? State funds through the SEEK program are based on full time equivalent average daily attendance (FTE-ADA); thus, the percent attendance is an important factor in state revenue. If the FTE-ADA at the end of the first two (2) school months is higher than the first two (2) months ADA the prior year, the local district's SEEK calculation is based on the prior year ADA plus growth percent. If the FTE-ADA at the end of the first two (2) school months is lower than the first two (2) months ADA the prior year, the local district's SEEK calculation is based on the prior year.

Projected enrollment for 2025-26 staffing levels was 2334 as discussed during the board's approval of the allocations to school councils in February. Seek is based on 2025-26 projected final ADA. This budget is based on 2290.6 projected final FTE-ADA and a per pupil Seek value of \$4586.00.

ASSESSED VALUE OF TAXABLE PROPERTY

What assessed value of taxable property will the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet certify? A substantial portion of local public-school revenue is generated by local property tax. The

assessed value of taxable property and the FTE-ADA both affect the level of funding the local school district will receive through the SEEK program. As noted during the January Draft Budget review the estimated assessed value for 2025-26 is \$1,137,686,085.

TAX LEVY

What tax rate will be levied? The Board may not consider a tax levy until the certified assessment and permissible tax rates are sent from the Kentucky Department of Education. The 2025-26 combined property tax rate was 84.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value for real estate and tangible property.

The 2025-26 Tentative Budget is based on a projected combined property tax rate of 84.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value for real estate and tangible property. The projected rates are the same as the rates levied the prior year but could be higher if growth in existing assessment is less than 4%. Under certain conditions Kentucky law allows a local school district to levy a rate that will generate 4% increase in local tax revenue. The projected motor vehicle rate per \$100 assessed value is 53.8 cents and the 3% utility tax levy were also projected for continuation.

BEGINNING BALANCE

How many dollars will be in the carry forward balance? The Tentative Budget's estimated unrestricted carry forward balance of \$5,870,000 is based on a careful review of expected revenues and planned expenses for the remainder of 2025-26.

SUMMARY OF PROJECTED REVENUES

Table A provides a summary of projected revenues, including beginning balances, in the 2025-26 Tentative Budget.

Table A
Summary of Projected Revenues – 2025-26 Tentative Budget

<i>Fund</i>	<i>Actual 2023-24</i>	<i>Budgeted 2024-25</i>	<i>Projected 2025-26</i>	<i>\$ Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
General Fund (*) (@)	26,673,018	26,962,874	27,232,114	269,239	1.0
Special Revenue Fund (#)	5,683,104	2,683,978	2,639,499	(44,479)	(1.7)
Capital Outlay Fund	315,451	231,090	232,060	970	.4
Building Fund	2,545,598	2,767,170	3,341,912	574,742	20.8
Food Service Fund	3,135,945	2,867,549	2,867,549	0	0
Total All Funds	33,238,326	35,512,661	36,313,134	800,473	2.3

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

"Projected" Special Revenue Fund will be adjusted as Grants are verified by KDE.

The Tentative Budget revenue projection is increased by \$800,473. The major differences are in the Special Revenue funds which are not budgeted during the Draft budget phase, as well a higher beginning balance. The SEEK base used in this projection is 4,586 per ADA. 2024-25 Seek base was 4,326 per ADA. More definitive funding amounts should be available by the time the Board considers the Working Budget in September.

Due to uncertainty about Special Revenue funding, the district was not required to account for Special Revenue funds in the Draft Budget presented to the Board in January. This Tentative Budget includes a low estimate of these federal, state and local funds due to continued uncertainty.

EXPENSES

Some basic considerations for Kentucky local boards of education in determining expenditure allocations and how these concerns are addressed in this Tentative Budget are:

DEBT SERVICE

Does the proposed budget provide sufficient funds for debt service? Table B shows the district's required debt service payments and projected capital (restricted) revenues. The total scheduled 2026 debt service from restricted funds is \$2,257,663. This obligation is budgeted for payment from the Capital Outlay, Building Funds. The General Fund debt service is an additional \$307,371. Projected 2026 recurring revenue from the Capital Outlay and Building Funds is \$2,996,310. The district has sufficient projected capital (restricted) funds to pay the scheduled debt service with an uncommitted balance of \$738,587.

Table B
Projected Bonded Debt Payment – 2025-26

	<i>Total Debt Service</i>	<i>Building Fund</i>	<i>Capital Outlay Fund</i>	<i>General Fund</i>
Principal	1,342,440	1,122,395	0	220,045
Interest	1,222,594	1,135,268	0	87,326
Total	2,565,034	2,257,663	0	307,371
Projected Recurring Revenue	3,303,620	2,767,170	229,080	307,371
Uncommitted	738,587	509,507	229,080	0

OTHER OBLIGATIONS

Does the proposed budget provide for all known obligations for the fiscal budget year, such as salary improvements for additional experience or fringe benefits costs such as accumulated sick leave at retirement? The cost of advancing all personnel in all funds for

an additional year of experience was included in the Draft Budget. The Tentative Budget includes all certified and classified positions allocated to school councils approved in February.

ALLOCATIONS TO COUNCILS

Has the board allocated sufficient funds to school councils to meet the staffing and other requirements of 702 KAR 3:245? The allocation approved by the board in February exceeded the minimum requirements of the state regulation on allocations to school councils. The salary schedule improvements enacted by the board are automatically incorporated into the allocation to school councils.

The Tentative Budget does not include any funding through Section 7 of the SBDM state regulation. The next adjustment to council allocations will be in September (if more or less students enroll) and in October, at the end of the second school month (material, travel and supplies allocations will be adjusted based on the first two (2) months actual FTE-ADA).

The Tentative Budget does not include line-item changes directed by school councils. All funds allocated for teaching supplies and materials are located in one (1) line item of the budget at each school. As funds are actually expended the expense is posted to the appropriate object code.

SALARY SCHEDULE IMPROVEMENTS

Salary schedule improvements for 2025-26 are included in the Tentative Budget. This budget reflects experience steps for certified and classified staff. It is important to note that approximately 77.01% of the General Fund spending is dedicated to personnel expense.

A summary of personnel and benefits as a portion of the General Fund, excluding accumulated sick leave, for the last three (3) years is in Table C.

Table C
Summary of Projected Personnel Expense – 2025-26 Tentative Budget

	<i>Actual 2023-24</i>	<i>Budgeted 2024-25</i>	<i>Projected 2025-26</i>	<i>\$ Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Salaries GF Personnel	\$12,410,695	\$15,560,713	\$15,421,065	(\$139,649)	(.9)
Percent General Fund	64.49	71.74	70.71		
Benefits <i>excl. accum. sk. Lv. (*)</i>	\$1,287,484	\$1,413,129	\$1,374,700	(\$38,429)	(2.72)
Percent General Fund	6.69	6.52	6.30		
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$13,698,179	\$16,973,842	\$16,795,765	(\$178,077)	(1.05)
Percent General Fund	71.18	78.26	77.01		

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

SUMMARY OF GF PROJECTED EXPENSES

Proposed expenses as approved by the Board earlier this spring are detailed in the attached 2025-26 Tentative Budget. The totals for each fund are equal to the projected revenues plus the fund balance for each fund. Table D provides an overview of all proposed general fund expenses and changes made since the January review of projected expenses.

Appendix A (see page 7) contains brief descriptions of the object codes utilized in Table D.

Table D
Summary of Projected GF Expense – 2025-26 Tentative Budget

<i>Object</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>budget 2024-25</i>	<i>Draft 2025-26</i>	<i>Projected 2025-26</i>	<i>\$ Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>
0100	SALARIES PERSONNEL SERVICES	\$15,560,713	\$15,284,571	\$15,421,065	\$136,493	0.9%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	71.7%	70.9%	70.7%	(\$0)	
0200	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (*)	\$1,413,129	\$1,434,388	\$1,374,700	(\$59,688)	-4.2%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	6.5%	6.7%	6.3%	(\$0)	
0300	PURCHASED PROF & TECH SER.	\$660,836	\$709,536	\$559,536	(\$150,000)	-21.1%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	3.0%	3.3%	2.6%	(\$0)	
0400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES	\$1,218,875	\$1,218,875	\$1,539,875	\$321,000	26.3%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	5.6%	5.7%	7.1%	\$0	
0500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES	\$536,117	\$598,177	\$598,177	\$0	0.0%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	2.5%	2.8%	2.7%	(\$0)	
0600	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$1,714,230	\$1,714,230	\$1,719,847	\$5,617	0.3%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	7.9%	8.0%	7.9%	(\$0)	
0700	PROPERTY	\$136,900	\$136,900	\$136,900	\$0	0.0%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	(\$0)	
0800	MISCELLANEOUS	\$97,600	\$97,600	\$97,600	\$0	0.0%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	(\$0)	
0900	OTHER USES OF FUNDS	\$351,035	\$362,370	\$362,370	\$0	0.0%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	(\$0)	
	Subtotal for General Fund	\$21,689,436	\$21,556,648	\$21,810,071	\$253,423	1.2%
0840	CONTINGENCY	\$5,273,438	\$4,806,999	\$5,422,043	\$615,044	12.8%
	<i>Percent of General Fund Expense</i>	24.3%	22.3%	24.9%	\$0	
	Total for General Fund	\$26,962,874	\$26,363,647	\$27,232,114	\$868,467	3.3%
					\$0	

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

BUDGET RESERVE

Does the proposed budget include a sufficient reserve? A fundamental basis of budgeting is not to spend more than you receive. There are some years when the carry forward balance is above 5% that a local school board may decide to spend more than they receive, excluding the carry forward balance. 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 Tentative Budget has been determined accordingly.

The board must include a minimum reserve (Contingency) of at least 2% of the total budget (\$726,263). This budget includes an unrestricted General Fund reserve (Contingency) of \$5,422,043 (14.9% of the total budget). The 2025-26 Tentative Budget includes an estimated General Fund carry forward balance of \$5,870,000. The actual carry forward will not be confirmed until the Annual Financial Report in late July; however, it is very possible that 2024-25 balance could be higher than projected.

The district is projected to spend \$599,227 more than revenue in 2024-25. The projection for 2025-26 is for expense to be \$447,957 higher than revenue. This budget contains a sufficient reserve to deal with expenses higher than revenue. Further, it is possible that EOY ADA for 2024-25 could be higher than projected and there could be growth during the first 2 months of 2025-26.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the 2025-26 Tentative Budget as described in this enclosure.

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