Coweta County School System

Press Release
June 24, 2025

Coweta County School Board Approves Budget for 2026-27 School Year

Board gives first approval for the upcoming fiscal year's budget

The Coweta County Board of Education gave final approval to a Coweta County School System operational budget of $324,789,568 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year (FY 2027), at a called meeting on Tuesday, June 23.

Tuesday's vote was the second of two formal votes on the new year's budget, as required by state law. It follows **budget workshops** held by the school board in May and tentative adoption of the new year's budget on June 2. Following that final approval, the new budget will take effect for the school system's new fiscal year beginning July 1.

The **FY 2027 budget** does not project an increase in the local property tax rate of 15.00 mills. Millage rates for local property taxes are set in July, following the establishment of the local property tax digest by **the county tax assessors office**. The Board of Education can also adjust school system tax rates for school operations based on the annual property tax digest, once the actual digest is received.

The school system operates on a fiscal year that extends from July 1 until June 30 of the following year. The budget covers school system operations and other expenditures during the upcoming fiscal year. It is also based on revenue estimates including anticipated state educational funding during the upcoming year and current estimates of local property tax revenue.

The school system faces a number of challenges in preparing its **FY 2027 budget**, including absorbing a deficit of state funding when compared to state-required increases to local systems. The state of Georgia has passed on budgetary increases and other local costs to the Coweta School System this year, in the form of locally-required increases in State Health benefits (insurance) costs and state mandated local contributions to the Teachers Retirement System (retirement benefits), salary schedule adjustments and new elementary-grade literacy coaches.

The FY 2027 budget approved Tuesday anticipates an overall increase in the school system's operational budget of $8,649,075 million, which is a 2.78 percent increase over the FY 2026 fiscal year ending June 30. Of that $8.6 million, $5,863,649 is due to pass-throughs of state increases or other state-mandated costs to local school systems.

Considering those and other challenges, the FY 2027 budget approved Tuesday achieves several goals of the school board, including:

- Maintaining the current student calendar of 180 instructional days, and the current instructional program for students for the upcoming year.
- Absorbing all state-mandated increases in health insurance costs and Teacher Retirement System (TRS) costs for certified and classified employees.
- Passing on state-funded step increases for certified (classroom teacher) employees, , where due based on years of experience.
- Matching those step increases with local funds to provide step increases for all Coweta certified and classified personnel, where due based on years of experience.
- Matching state funding for 16 new elementary school literacy coach positions.
- Providing additional pay for bus drivers.
- Adding growth positions where needed.
- Overall reductions of 47 teaching positions due to enrollment changes in grade levels and due to completion of transitional staffing following the rebuilding of Newnan High and the redistricting of East Coweta and Northgate High. Reductions are through attrition only, and do not affect maximum average class sizes.

In addition to the General Fund, there were three other components tentatively approved by the board as a part of its total FY 2027 budget.

These include $33,987,587 in anticipated expenditures through the Special Revenue Fund, which accounts for special federal programs such as Title I, federal lunch programs, and IDEA.

Also included is $44,003,916 in anticipated expenditures through the Capital Projects Fund, which accounts for construction and other capital expenditures during the year. School construction is funded principally by revenues from the Educational Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (ESPLOST), through which the system follows a "pay as you go" strategy for school construction projects. The system also receives some earned state funding for construction. Funding under this line item can fluctuate from year-to-year, depending on the scale of construction projects undertaken by the school system during a given fiscal year, such as this year's renovation and expansion of the Central Educational Center.

Since the school system has no current debt, no expenditures are required in the system's Debt Service fund in FY 2027.

The FY 2027 General Fund budget of $324.8 million is the largest portion of funding in the school system's annual budget, including expenditures for instruction and pupil services, maintenance

and operation of schools, transportation, and other operational costs. The General Fund budget is funded principally by state revenues and local property tax revenues.

Those funds, combined with the maintenance and operation fund, total $402,781,071.

The Board of Education has decreased the school system's ad valorem millage rate in five of the past six years - to a current 15.00 mill property tax rate. These decreases have left the Coweta County School System with one of the lowest school system tax rates in the metro Atlanta and West Georgia region, and the lowest tax rate for Coweta Schools since the 1980's.

In addition to tax rate decreases, the school board also expanded **senior citizen tax exemptions** through local referendums in 2020 and 2025, including establishing a 100 percent homestead exemption for seniors 75 and older and raising exemptions for homeowners 65-74, beginning this year.

The budget approved Tuesday assumes maintenance of the current 15.00 mill local tax rate.

Information detailing revenues and expenditures in the school system's FY 2027 budget can be found on the school system's website at **www.cowetaschools.net** , under **Financial Information** (click on the tabs for "Budget Information - FY 2027"). The page provides links to current FY 2027 revenue and expenditure detail, and also includes several years of school system budget information, millage history, tax digest information, school system annual audit reports and annual ESPLOST reports.

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