

# Tredyffrin/Easttown School District Annual Update

## 2016-2017 BUDGET SUMMARY

In the 2016-2017 school year, the T/E School District will serve over 6,500 students with an authorized budget amount of \$131,270,392. The budget amount is comprised of \$129,270,392 in anticipated spending for operations and \$2,000,000 for contingencies. The 2016-2017 anticipated spending of \$129,270,392 reflects an increase of 5% over the 2015-2016 projected spending of \$123 million. The 2016-2017 budget includes a property tax increase of 3.6% or \$191 on the average assessed home in T/E. The total property tax millage for 2016-2017 is 21.7423 mills.

During the School Board's budget development, three approaches were considered to closing the over \$4.7 million gap between projected revenues and anticipated spending presented in December 2015. The methods considered were to reduce budgeted expenditures, produce additional revenue and spend existing reserves. Over the next six months, the administration and School Board worked on the three approaches with input from community members. To produce additional revenue, the Board approved filing for two referendum exceptions to the Act 1 Index of 2.4% for the state mandated increase in retirement contributions and escalating special education costs. The Pennsylvania Department of Education approved both of the exceptions allowing for an additional property tax increase of 1.9% over the Act 1 index. In January 2016, the Board approved the 2016-2017 preliminary budget with a property tax rate increase of 4.3%. The final budget approved by the Board in June 2016 set the property tax rate increase at 3.6%, which reduced the increase by \$37 per average assessed home compared to the preliminary budget. To reduce budgeted expenditures, the administration and Board took a more aggressive approach with several assumptions of enrollment, staffing and operations, resulting in a budget reduction of over \$400,000 in anticipated spending for 2016-2017. Lastly, the Board used existing reserves to fill the remaining anticipated operational gap of approximately \$766,651. For detailed information on the 2016-2017 budget, visit the T/E School District website at [www.tesd.net/budget](http://www.tesd.net/budget).

### BUDGET FAST FACTS

**Total Authorized Spending**

\$131,270,392

**Property Tax Increase**

3.6%

**Mills**

21.7423

**Property Tax Increase on the Average T/E Home**

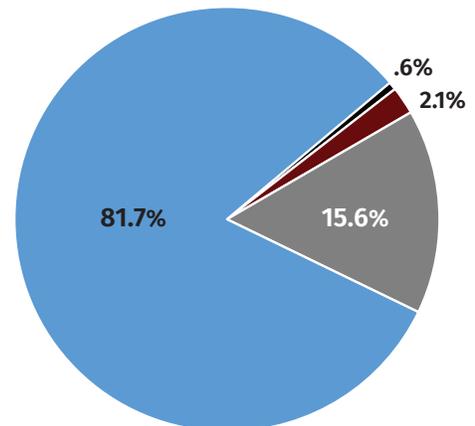
\$191

**Homestead Exemption**

\$ 182.61

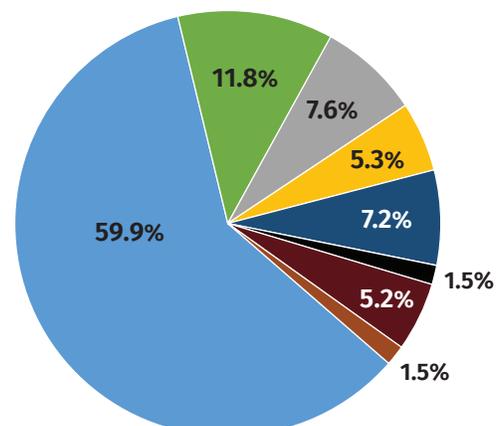
### REVENUES/SOURCES

● Local: 81.7%	\$107,243,388
● State: 15.6%	\$20,454,407
● Federal: .6%	\$805,946
● Fund Balance: 2.1%	\$2,766,651
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$131,270,392</b>



### EXPENDITURES/USES

● Instruction: 59.9%	\$78,561,627
● Operations: 11.8%	\$15,466,368
● Instructional Support: 7.6%	\$10,025,632
● Administrative Costs: 7.2%	\$9,469,528
● Debt Service: 5.2%	\$6,873,350
● Transportation: 5.3%	\$6,953,836
● Extracurriculars/Athletics: 1.5%	\$1,920,051
● Contingency: 1.5%	\$2,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$131,270,392</b>





## SCHOOL YEAR SUCCESS

### THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR WAS MARKED BY NUMEROUS DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#### GRADUATION AND COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

The Conestoga High School graduation rate consistently approaches 100%. Approximately 94% of graduates attend a four-year college and 5% attend a two-year college. In a typical year, more than 75% of Conestoga graduates attend colleges listed in *The Best 378 Colleges*, a publication of *The Princeton Review*.

#### STRONG STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

T/E students consistently perform among the top two percent of all public schools on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), which is administered to every 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade student in Pennsylvania public schools.

#### ADVANCED PLACEMENT TESTS & SCHOLARS

In 2015, 795 Conestoga High School students completed 1,597 Advanced Placement tests in 27 different subjects. The average score was 4.1 on a 5 point scale. Scores of 3 or higher indicate college readiness. 95% of the tests administered at Conestoga were in the 3 point or better range. Forty-three students were recognized as National AP Scholars.

#### NATIONALLY RANKED SCHOOLS

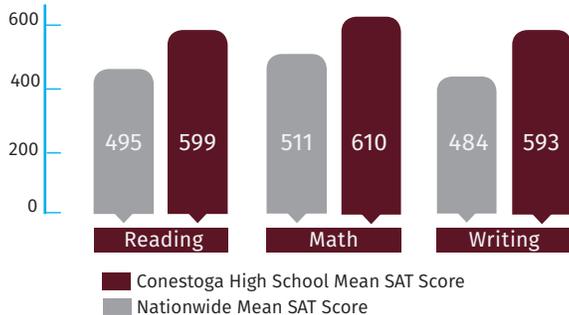
T/E School District and its individual schools consistently rank high among public schools nationally in commercial publications including *U.S. News & World Report*, *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post* and *Niche.com*.

#### NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

In 2016, for the second year in a row, Conestoga High School led Pennsylvania with thirty-three National Merit Semifinalists; twenty-four National Merit Commended Students; and three National Hispanic Scholars.

### SAT SCORES

In 2015, Conestoga High School students had the highest mean SAT score in the state for open enrollment schools. Students scored an average of 1802 on the test, which measures reading, math and writing skills. In Pennsylvania, the average is 1485 and the nationwide average is 1490.

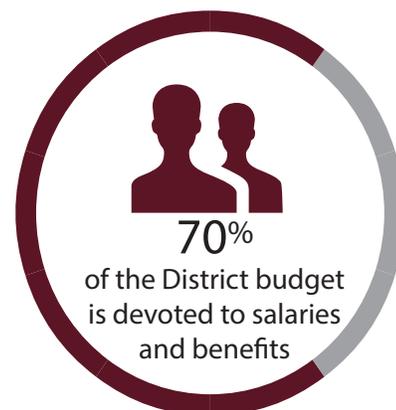


## INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS - *Strategic Plan in Action*

- In September 2016, Conestoga High School students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade will receive District laptops as part of the **1:1 LAPTOP INITIATIVE**.
- Comprehensive **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP LESSONS** are taught at all levels to provide a foundation for responsible digital decision-making.
- In light of growing enrollment, an **ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR** will be added at each District middle school in the 2016-2017 school year.
- In December 2015, all elementary school students participated in the **HOURLY OF CODE COMPUTER CODING INITIATIVE** and practiced writing their own code.
- The **MIDDLE SCHOOL RESILIENCY INITIATIVE** was rolled out to students in grades 5-8 this spring. Lessons were designed to cultivate skills to help students bounce back from adversity.
- An **ADVANCED PLACEMENT CAPSTONE PROGRAM** was created at Conestoga High School, with an Advanced Placement Seminar class requiring high-level discussion and analysis of cross-curricular themes.
- Over 300 teachers attended staff development workshops focusing on the **ARTISTRY OF TEACHING**. Teachers explored skills that enable them to provide a unique learning experience in T/E.

# MAJOR COST DRIVERS OF THE BUDGET

While salaries and benefits consistently make up the bulk of the District's total expenditures, two of the largest cost drivers behind the need for increases in property taxes for the last ten budget years, including the 2016-2017 school year, are state mandated contributions to the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) and special education services.



## RISING RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

Pennsylvania school districts are mandated by the PA legislature to contribute a percentage of their payroll to the funding of PSERS. The 2016-2017 mandated Employer Contribution Rate (ECR) is 30.03%. The net impact on the 2016-2017 budget is \$8.4 million. The net incremental increase over the prior year's ECR is \$1.2 million. In the past ten years, the ECR has increased from 6.46% to 30.03%. The net impact of this increase on the budget has ballooned from \$1.6 million in 2006 to \$8.4 million. In four of those 10 years, the District has applied for and taken PSERS referendum exceptions to the Act 1 Index. The four referendum exceptions have increased the property tax rate by 4.48% and produced \$4.2 million in revenue to offset the mandated contributions.

## STUDENT NEEDS DRIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

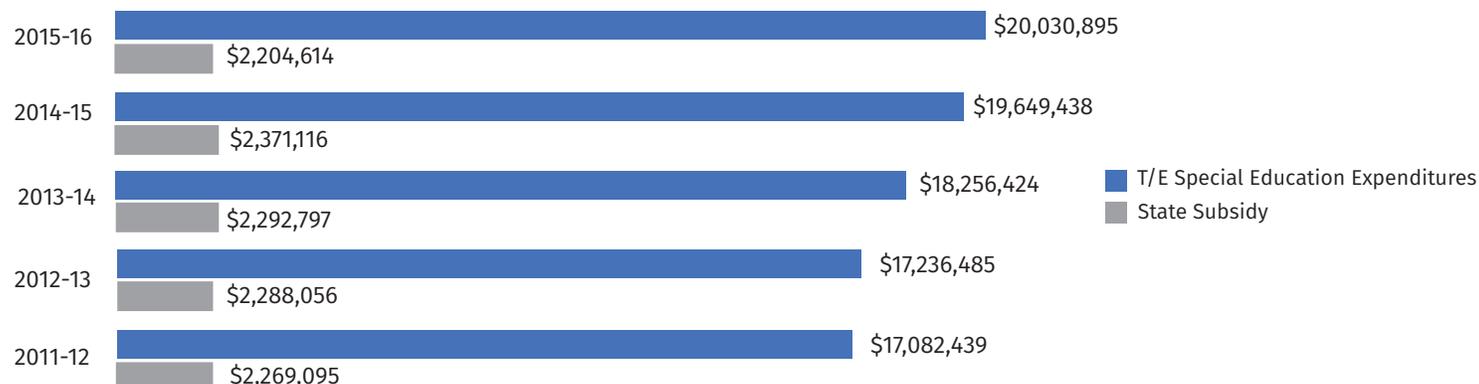
TESD is strongly committed to supporting the needs of all children in our District. As a public school district, we are guided by State and Federal rules to provide support services to ensure students with special needs can participate fully with their peers in accessing their education. The District appreciates the ongoing support of our parents, community and the School Board to assure that all of the needs of our special education students are appropriately addressed.

Over the last several years, there has been a nationwide increase in the number of children with significant needs, especially apparent in the number of children within the Autism spectrum and those with mental health needs. The District has increased its capacity to provide Autistic Support, Emotional Support and Life Skills Support through additional classes and teachers. We have increased the intensity and number of contracted services including paraeducator support, bus aide support, social skills classes, speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy. There has been an increased need for certified behavior consultants to support and develop behavior plans for students with emotional and social disabilities. Placements at mental health programs and hospitalizations have increased as have the number of psychiatric evaluations done for our students by consulting psychiatrists. Professional mental health and drug and alcohol professionals are utilized to assist in formal drug and alcohol and mental health assessments to determine risk behaviors and interventions for our students.

The District is responsible for the education of students with special needs until age twenty-one. Recent enhancements to State and Federal regulations require the District to allocate resources to help prepare students for post-high school transition. Planning for this transition begins with each student and family when the student reaches age fourteen to assure timely and appropriate preparation. Individual job counseling and job coaching, college life counseling and experiences, independent living experiences, and technical and vocational programming are just a few examples of services available to prepare students for success beyond high school.

The financial implications of providing this wide range of support services for students has increased significantly over the past years, but the expense is necessary to provide appropriate programming for all students. Unfortunately, as the below chart indicates, the State's level of support for students with special needs has remained relatively flat, while the total expenses have been rising.

## STATE SUBSIDY COMPARED TO MANDATED SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENSES





# Points of Pride

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR



## STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Conestoga High School's Boys Rugby and Girls Lacrosse Teams took home state championship titles during the spring 2016 season. The rugby team defeated St. Joseph's Preparatory School in the finals and the lacrosse team emerged victorious against Radnor High School in the championship game.

## GOVERNOR'S STEM COMPETITION

**Reese Caldwell, Jordan Liu, Eric Xue** and **Harrison Zhang** entered the Governor's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Competition with their presentation "Novel Use of Dialysis Bags and Sodium Polyacrylate in Algae Biofuel Extraction". The team researched, designed and constructed a prototype that would improve the environment in Pennsylvania.

## INTEL SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH

**Michael Zhang** won the Second Place Medal of Distinction for Global Good in the Intel Science Talent Search and was awarded \$75,000. He engineered tiny virus-like particles to deliver gene-modifying proteins to target cells for medical therapy. Michael completed his high school senior internship at Harvard Medical School.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH COMPETITIONS

The T/E Middle School 7/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathcounts team won in Chester County and then went on to win the PA State Mathcounts Competition. Two Valley Forge Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathcounts teams came in first place and fifth place in the County.

## PSPA STUDENT JOURNALISM AWARDS

*The Spoke*, Conestoga's school newspaper, won the All-State Award at the PA School Press Association Awards. Journalism student **Kyle Kennedy** won first place for Broadcast Script Writing. In addition, [www.Spoke.news](http://www.Spoke.news) was a National Scholastic Press Association Pacemaker finalist.

## ALL-STATE CHORUS, ORCHESTRA, BAND AND JAZZ BAND

**Jahnvi Rao** (soprano 2), **Betty Ben Dor** (flute), **Austina Lin** (violin) and **Matt Clarke** (baritone saxophone) were selected for the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association state musical groups.

## SIEMENS COMPETITION

**Kelly Jiang**, who with her team of two students from another area high school, was awarded 2nd place and a \$50,000 scholarship in the 2015 Siemens Final Competition in December. The team's project encompassed minimally invasive colon and liver cancer screenings to advance early detection of the disease.

## NATIONAL GERMAN EXAM

**Michael Li, Rose Kantarczyk, Elizabeth Sachse, Yang Tu, Rachel Winfield, Gregory Shook** and **Ivy Wang** scored at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the National German Exam and qualified for consideration for the Preistraeger summer study trip to Germany. Additionally, Yang Tu scored above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile each year he has taken the exam, and Gregory Shook scored a 98% as a non-native speaker on the level 3 test after only 1 1/2 years of German instruction.

A sampling of 2015-2016 student & staff accomplishments

## PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

**Derrick Wood** was one of 108 math and science teachers in the U.S. who were awarded the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. This award is given annually to outstanding K-12 science and math teachers from across the country. Winners received a \$10,000 award and were invited to Washington, D.C. for a ceremony.

## LEARN MORE

- Visit [www.tesd.net/budget](http://www.tesd.net/budget) for a complete list of 2016-2017 budget development documents.
- Sign up to receive the *t/e-news*, the T/E School District's e-newsletter at [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net).
- Tune into TETV, Comcast Channel 14 and Verizon Channel 20, for school district programming. Visit [www.tesd.net/tetv](http://www.tesd.net/tetv) for schedules.