

Prepared by Dr. Jeffrey Alstadt

For the September 24, 2025, Board of Education Meeting and Budget Hearing

The following report outlines the tentative Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) Plan for Streater Elementary School District #44. It is presented to the Board of Education for the public budget hearing and for subsequent approval.

This budget reflects the district's commitment to fiscal responsibility and academic excellence. It presents a balanced operating budget with a significant projected surplus and details strategic investments of state funding to support student achievement. The summary includes a review of our operating funds, the overall financial position, the FY26 EBF Spending Plan, and a transparent explanation of our non-operating funds, including a planned spend-down of the Tort Fund balance.

Summary of Operating Funds

Our core operating budget is balanced and projects a significant surplus.

- **Total Projected Revenue:** We anticipate \$23,729,099 in revenue for the operating funds. This revenue comes from three main sources:
 - State Sources: \$13,597,093
 - Local Sources: \$5,774,966
 - Federal Sources: \$4,357,040
- **Total Projected Expenditures:** We have budgeted \$22,560,244 for all operational and educational expenses.
- **Projected Surplus:** This budget projects an operating surplus of \$1,168,855. This means our planned revenues exceed our planned expenditures.

Overall Financial Position

The projected surplus will further strengthen the district's financial health.

- **Beginning Balance:** We started the fiscal year with a projected balance of \$18,924,306 in our operating funds.
- **Projected Ending Balance:** With the anticipated surplus, we project an ending operating fund balance of \$20,093,161.

Evidence-Based Funding Plan

The FY26 EBF plan focuses on improving student achievement in core subjects and social-emotional learning. Key strategies involve enhancing curriculum, increasing high-quality educators for special student groups, and boosting family engagement. Designated funds will also provide targeted support, including interventions for low-income students, specialized instruction for English Learners, and additional staff for Special Education students.

To support this, **\$454,541 in new Tier Funding** will be invested in:

- **School Site Staff:** \$304,541
- **Special Education Instructional Assistants:** \$100,000
- **Instructional Materials:** \$50,000

Note on Non-Operating Funds

For transparency, we also report on our non-operating funds.

- These funds, which are legally separate from our main budget, are projected to have a combined deficit of (\$216,317). This is mainly due to planned expenditures for bond payments and specific tort and safety projects.

Explanation of the Tort Fund Deficit

- The projected deficit in the Tort Fund is a planned spend-down of its cash reserves, not an operational shortfall.
- We're strategically using a portion of the fund's \$1.58 million starting balance to cover costs, resulting in a planned excess of expenditures over revenues of (\$327,895).
- This is a fiscally responsible action that reduces an accumulated reserve while ensuring the fund remains financially healthy with a projected \$1.25 million ending balance, which helps stabilize future tax levies.

In conclusion, the fiscal year 2025-2026 budget is financially sound, with a balanced operating budget that allows us to meet our educational goals and build upon our financial stability.

The administration is confident that this budget is financially sound and recommends its approval.