

PAULDING COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FY2026 BUDGET OVERVIEW

Engage. Inspire. Prepare.

PCSD's Strategic Plan provides a framework and sets the tone for creating a dynamic culture, where students are engaged, inspired and prepared for their future. Student success for ALL starts with a passion for effective stewardship of taxpayer dollars. The budget is the catalyst for creating safe schools and engaging environments, where students can thrive.

INTEGRITY. Results of the most recent financial audit were outstanding, and the District received Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts' *Excellence in Financial Reporting Award*.

STEWARDSHIP. PCSD recently received a 4-Star *Financial Efficiency Rating*, which measures a district's per-pupil spending in relation to the academic achievements of its students. Only 12 of 180 districts or 7% scored better than PCSD (FY19).



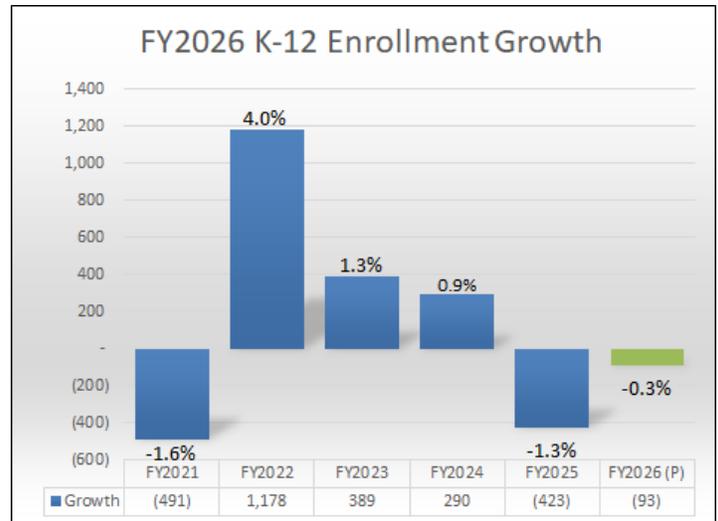
Every year the Paulding County School District (PCSD) develops and adopts a budget for the next fiscal year. This report is designed to inform parents, students, staff and stakeholders about the key metrics involved in developing our budget and highlights for the upcoming year.

FY2026 Budget Highlights

Enrollment Growth and Virtual Instruction. PCSD is projected to educate 31,075 students in FY2026 (school year 2025-2026), a decrease of 93 students or -0.3%.

For the 10 years ending FY2025, the district had an annual growth rate of 1.0%. In the prior decade, FY2015 - FY2025, enrollment increased 2,836 or 10.0%. FY2025 enrollment decreased 423 or -1.3% to 31,168.

The district anticipates educating approximately 0.7% or 220 students virtually. Approximately 99.3% or 30,855 are expected to attend face-to-face instruction.



Low Wealth. Despite favorable employment, income and free-and-reduced lunch statistics, PCSD is considered low wealth due to a limited commercial and industrial tax base and the large number of school-aged children per household. Below are rankings against the 37 large districts in Georgia (school districts over 10,000). Rankings against all 180 school districts in Georgia are in parentheses.

- 11th Largest District as of FY2024
- 22nd in Local Revenue per Student (79th out of 180)
 - ✓ Collect \$1,508 less than Statewide Average per Student, a total deficit of \$47 million
- 11th in State Revenue per Student (106th out of 180)
 - ✓ 5th Largest Recipient of Equalization (\$29.0 million in FY26)
- 27th in Total Revenue, including Federal sources, per Student (137th out of 180)
 - ✓ Collect \$1,553 less than Statewide Average per Student, a total deficit of \$47 million

Demographics and Statistics

Paulding County

- 1.7% State Population
- 1.4% Housing Units
- 2.1% More Persons per Household (Age 5-18)
- 4% Commercial / Industrial Land Use

PCSD

- 19 Elementary Schools
- 10 Middle Schools
- 5 High Schools
- Alternative Education
- College & Career Academy
- 4,063 Employees
- 2,575 Instructional (63%)

PCSD Rank out of 180 School Districts in GA

- 11th in Enrollment
- 79th in Local Revenue \$47 million deficit, compared to the statewide average

- 106th in State Revenue
 - 137th in Total Revenue
- *Per Pupil, GaDOE FY2024

PCSD Funding Sources

- 37% Local (44% Average)
 - 56% State (46% Average)
 - 7% Federal
- *GaDOE FY2024

\$588.1m FY2026 Budget

All Funds

- General Fund (74%)
- Special Revenue (4%)
- Capital Projects (14%)
- Debt Service (3%)
- School Nutrition (5%)



The vision of the Paulding County School District is to prepare ALL students for success today and tomorrow.

General Fund Revenue Highlights: Equalization Grant and Austerity Reductions

The General Fund accounts for approximately 75% of all District spending and is the main operating fund for the school district. Projected revenues for FY2026 total \$435.7 million, an increase of \$6.4 million or 1.5%.

As a low wealth school district, the product of a limited commercial / industrial tax base and more students per household than statewide averages, PCSD will receive \$29.0 million of Equalization Grant funding in FY2026 (the fifth highest recipient in the State).

	FY2025	FY2026	Change	%
QBE Funding, net	\$ 230.9	\$ 236.3	\$ 5.5	2.4%
Equalization Grant	34.0	29.0	(5.0)	-14.7%
Local Taxes	162.2	167.7	5.5	3.4%
Other Local Revenue	2.2	2.7	0.5	22.0%
Total GF Revenue	\$ 429.3	\$ 435.7	\$ 6.4	1.5%

*Excludes Grants and Transfers to Other Funds

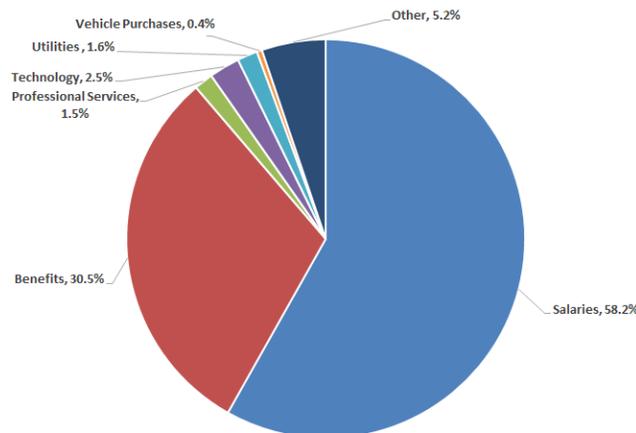
Funding under the state Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula will be increased by 2.4% or \$5.5 million. Local taxes are projected to increase \$5.5 million, with an improving tax digest and a millage rate of 17.675 (2025 rate).

General Fund Expenditure Highlights: Safety and Instruction

The District will continue to focus on safety and instruction in FY2026, including over \$5 million in safety-related initiatives. PCSD typically allocates more of its resources to instruction than statewide averages, while central office type expenditures are half the size of the average district.

Projected expenditures for FY2026 total \$435.7 million, an increase of \$6.4 million or 1.5%.

89% of the budget is spent on salaries and benefits. The remaining 11% of the General Fund budget covers all other operating expenditures, including critical areas such as technology and textbooks.



Compensation will also be addressed as the FY2026 budget includes a fully funded experience step for qualifying employees.

Technology continues to be a major investment, as \$10.8 million of the FY2026 budget will be spent in this area.

Please visit our website for more information and sources for the information presented in this report. Go to www.paulding.k12.ga.us.