



THE NEXT CHAPTER IS **OURS**

#TeamSISD

ALL IN

2026

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)

Final Report to the Board of Trustees

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Left to right: Manny Rodriguez - Trustee, Charles W. Smith - Trustee, Michael A. Najera - Board President, James P. Vasquez - Superintendent of Schools, Paul Guerra - Board Vice President, Marivel N. Macias - Board Secretary, Ryan Woodcraft - Trustee, Alice Gardea - Trustee

The Socorro ISD Board of Trustees consists of seven elected citizens who work with community leaders, families, and educators to develop sound educational policies that support student achievement and ensure the solvency of the District. The Board operates with a commitment to SISD students and community, a continued focus on student achievement and improvement, and high ethical standards to govern the school district. Together, they are a strong and cohesive team that helps the district continuously set and achieve new levels of excellence. Five of the trustees represent single-member districts and two are elected at-large.

GOALS

1

Early Literacy:

The percentage of 3rd grade students that scored Meets on STAAR RLA will improve from 58% in May 2025 to 63% in May 2030.

2

Early Math:

The percentage of 3rd grade students that scored Meets Grade Level on STAAR Math will improve from 48% in May 2025 to 58% in May 2030.

3

8th Algebra:

The percentage of 8th grade students that scored Meets Grade Level on STAAR EOC Algebra I will increase from 70% in May 2025 to 75% in May 2030.

4

CCMR:

The percentage of graduates who meet CCMR criteria will increase from 85% in 2025 to 93% in 2030.

CONSTRAINTS

1

Financial Responsibility:

The Superintendent shall not implement practices that compromise financial sustainability.

2

Financial Responsibility:

The Superintendent shall not allow the district to operate without a sustainable self-funded healthcare plan.

3

Stakeholder Engagement:

The Superintendent shall not operate without consideration of Socorro ISD Stakeholder Experience.



**SOCORRO ISD
BOARD GOALS AND CONSTRAINTS**

Scan the QR code to learn more.

THE NEXT
CHAPTER IS **OURS**
#TeamSISD

ALL IN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION - LETTER TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES	02
COMMITTEE OVERVIEW & PROCESS	03
FINANCIAL CHALLENGES & BUDGET CONTEXT	04
MYTH VS REALITY: DOES SOCORRO ISD HAVE THE HIGHEST SCHOOL TAX RATE?	06
MYTH VS REALITY: IS SOCORRO ISD EFFICIENT?	08
MYTH VS REALITY: DOES SOCORRO ISD SPEND TOO MUCH ON ADMIN?	10
BUDGET CHALLENGES	12
NEW REVENUE CONSIDERATIONS	14
RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	15
BAC FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	16
COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS / KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE PROCESS CONCLUSION	17

Tomorrow's Leaders Learning Today

VISION

The mission of the Socorro Independent School District is to optimize each students' academic, artistic, athletic, career, and interpersonal opportunities.

MISSION



2026 Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)

District Service Center • 12440 Rojas Dr. • El Paso, Texas 79928-5200 • Phone 915-937-0000 • www.sisd.net

On behalf of the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), we are proud to present this report and its recommendations to the Socorro Independent School District Board of Trustees.

The BAC was composed of representatives appointed by each Trustee and the Superintendent, including community members, district staff, and key stakeholder groups. Over four structured meetings, the Committee reviewed the district's financial position, examined the realities of public school funding, and developed recommendations to support the 2026–2027 budget process.

The process was designed to build understanding and move from awareness to application. Members reviewed financial data, examined historical trends, and participated in a hands-on budget development exercise that required balancing district priorities within existing financial constraints. This work required thoughtful discussion and a clear understanding of the tradeoffs necessary to maintain a balanced budget.

One of the most important outcomes of this process was a clearer distinction between perception and reality. Socorro ISD has taken deliberate and responsible steps to align staffing, manage costs, and maintain essential services in the face of declining enrollment and limited state funding. These actions reflect strong financial stewardship and have helped stabilize the district in the short term. At the same time, those actions have limits. Continued cost containment alone is impacting student learning conditions, instructional continuity, and employee capacity. The budget development exercise reinforced how difficult it is to balance competing needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility and protecting what matters most for students and staff.

Socorro ISD operates with fewer resources than many neighboring districts. On average, the district receives approximately \$1,000 less per student, which directly impacts the level of services, opportunities, and support that can be provided.

At the same time, neighboring districts have accessed additional local funding through voter-approved tax rate elections, allowing them to invest more in their schools. This has created a growing gap in available resources over time.

The Committee consistently returned to a shared principle: our students should be funded at the same level as students in surrounding communities. Addressing this gap is central to sustaining student outcomes and strengthening the district moving forward.

Sustaining and strengthening Socorro ISD requires a balanced approach, one that continues responsible stewardship while also considering additional revenue to invest in schools, similar to actions taken by neighboring communities.

As a result of this work, the Committee reached consensus on several key recommendations. These include pursuing a Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE), supported by continued community engagement and voter research; expanding local revenue opportunities through sponsorships and facility rentals; continuing cost-management strategies such as the separation incentive program; and prioritizing investments in HVAC and facilities, student and teacher devices, employee compensation, safety, and transportation.

The Committee also identified items for further consideration, including the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) and a potential future bond program, recognizing their potential long-term value and the importance of continued analysis and community input.

The BAC served strictly in an advisory capacity, and the Board of Trustees retains full authority to evaluate, modify, and act on these recommendations.

We extend our sincere appreciation to district staff for their transparency, preparation, and support throughout this process, and to the Board of Trustees for the opportunity to contribute to this work. It is our hope that this report provides a clear and informed foundation to support decision-making as the district plans for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Laign
Chair, BAC

Dr. Ginger Raya
Vice-Chair, BAC

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW & PROCESS

The Budget Advisory Committee was established to support development of the 2026–2027 budget by reviewing priorities, funding scenarios, and expenditures, while ensuring alignment with district goals, student needs, and community expectations. The process followed a structured progression.

The January meeting established a foundation in school finance and SISD’s fiscal history. The February meeting focused on community values, Board goals and constraints, and the district’s budget challenges and revenue options. The March meeting included a hands-on budget development exercise in which members worked to balance district priorities within existing financial

constraints. The April meeting focused on refining that work, deepening understanding of revenue options, and finalizing recommendations.

The budget development exercise was particularly impactful. Working through real scenarios demonstrated how lean the current budget has become and how difficult it is to maintain priorities while balancing competing needs.

A consensus-based model guided the process, emphasizing inclusive and respectful dialogue, shared ownership of decisions, and alignment around recommendations members could support or accept.



This report summarizes the activities and key findings of the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). Visit the BAC website for detailed summaries of all meetings and materials reviewed by the committee.



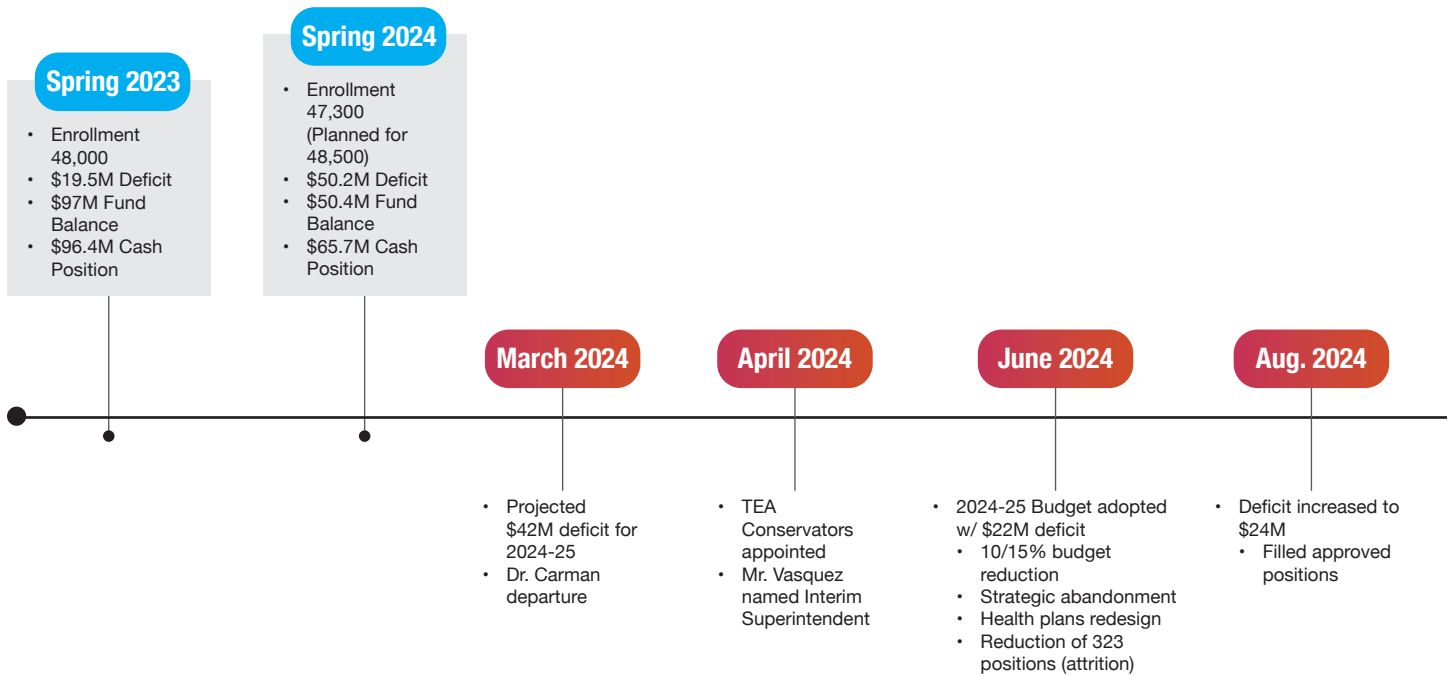
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The BAC included representatives appointed by each Trustee and the Superintendent, ensuring participation from community members, district staff, and key stakeholder groups. Per the committee charter, Board President Michael A. Najera named Tom Laign as Chair and Dr. Ginger Raya as Vice-Chair.

This structure provided a broad range of perspectives and ensured that the recommendations reflect the priorities and concerns of the Socorro ISD community.

- Robert Alvarez
- Ruben Avalos
- Maria Camargo
- Janet Carrillo
- Monica Castro
- Allan Cunyus
- Dr. Darius Davis II
- Drew Dungan
- Gabriela Elliott
- Dr. Ignacio Estorga
- Justine Farmer
- Caryn Gonzalez
- Sinhue Gonzalez
- Joseph Guerra
- Anna Nicole Guevara
- Andrew Haggerty
- Veronica Hernandez
- Jake Hidalgo
- Tom Laign
- Joe Lopez
- Roberto Medina
- Shawn Ollis
- Rebecca Parada
- Rosie Perez
- Isabel Ramirez
- Jacob H. Ramirez
- Dr. Jim Ramos
- Dr. Ginger Raya
- Jaymee D. Rivas
- Gabby Ruvalcaba
- Michael Sarabia
- Dr. Jesse Sepulveda
- Angelica Soto
- Nancy Torres

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES SUMMARY TIMELINE



- Over the last 15 months, the district has worked to reduce its deficit position from a projected (\$42 million) in March 2024 to (\$8 million) in June 2025, cutting \$34 million or some 8% of its operating budget.
- A total of 768 positions have been cut, including school and district support positions. Most reductions have been through attrition, with 30 employees losing positions in the reduction in force.

BUDGET CONTEXT: HISTORY & FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Socorro ISD's current financial position is the result of several years of structural challenges shaped by enrollment trends, rising costs, and limited growth in state funding.

Over time, the district has experienced recurring budget deficits, requiring ongoing adjustments to maintain a balanced budget. While short-term solutions have helped stabilize operations in individual years, underlying financial pressures have persisted.

In early 2024, the district faced a projected deficit of approximately \$42 million. Through a series of deliberate actions, including staffing alignment, cost-control measures, and expenditure reductions that gap was reduced to approximately \$22 million. These actions reflect a strong commitment to responsible stewardship and proactive financial management.

At the same time, those actions have not eliminated the structural nature of the challenge.

Fund balance levels have steadily declined over time. In 2014, the district maintained approximately 116 days of operating

fund balance, consistent with strong financial health. Since then the fund balance has declined significantly below the recommended standard of approximately 75 days resulting in cash flow issues.

Enrollment trends have contributed to current conditions. In Fall 2023, projected enrollment did not materialize as expected, resulting in a gap of more than 1,000 students. This created additional financial strain and required further adjustments to staffing and operations.

To manage cash flow, the district has relied on short-term borrowing through Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes (TRAN). Recent borrowing totals of \$25 million and \$35 million have resulted in approximately \$1.5 million in interest and fees. Current projections indicate continued reliance on borrowing at levels approaching \$30 million, underscoring the need for a more sustainable long-term approach.

These trends illustrate a clear pattern: short-term adjustments have helped manage annual budgets, but long-term financial stability must be addressed.



Spring 2025

- Enrollment 46,400
- \$16M Deficit*
- \$26.1M Fund Balance*
- \$18.1M Cash Position*

Nov. 2024

- TRAN #1
- \$25M
- Repaid Feb. 2025
- Cost of issuance \$120,000
- \$310,000 interest

Feb. 2025

- Projected \$38M deficit for 2025-26
- RIF announced

March-May 2025

- Budget reductions to close deficit to \$8M
 - Programs redesigns
 - Department allocation reductions
 - Maximizing federal funds
 - Reduction of 445 positions (30 RIF, remaining attrition)
- TRAN #2
 - \$35M
 - To be repaid Feb. 2026
 - Cost of issuance \$145,000
 - \$853,000 interest

June 2025

- HB2 passed
- Presenting balanced budget for approval

**Projected*

- HB2, recently passed by the legislature, is anticipated to provide some \$8 million in available funding which will result in the district presenting a balanced budget for Board approval on June 24, 2025.
- The district's fund balance and cash position will not be impacted (positively nor negatively) by the proposed budget.





MYTH VS REALITY

DOES SOCORRO ISD HAVE THE HIGHEST SCHOOL TAX RATE?

While property tax increases are often attributed solely to school district decisions, total tax bills are influenced by multiple factors beyond the district's direct control, including rising property values, state-mandated compression, and changes to homestead exemptions.

Socorro ISD's tax rate is governed by state law and voter approval requirements. Over time, the district has reduced its tax rate substantially, lowering both Maintenance and Operations (M&O) and Interest and Sinking (I&S) components and resulting in a total rate that is significantly below prior levels.

Today, Socorro ISD maintains one of the lowest tax rates

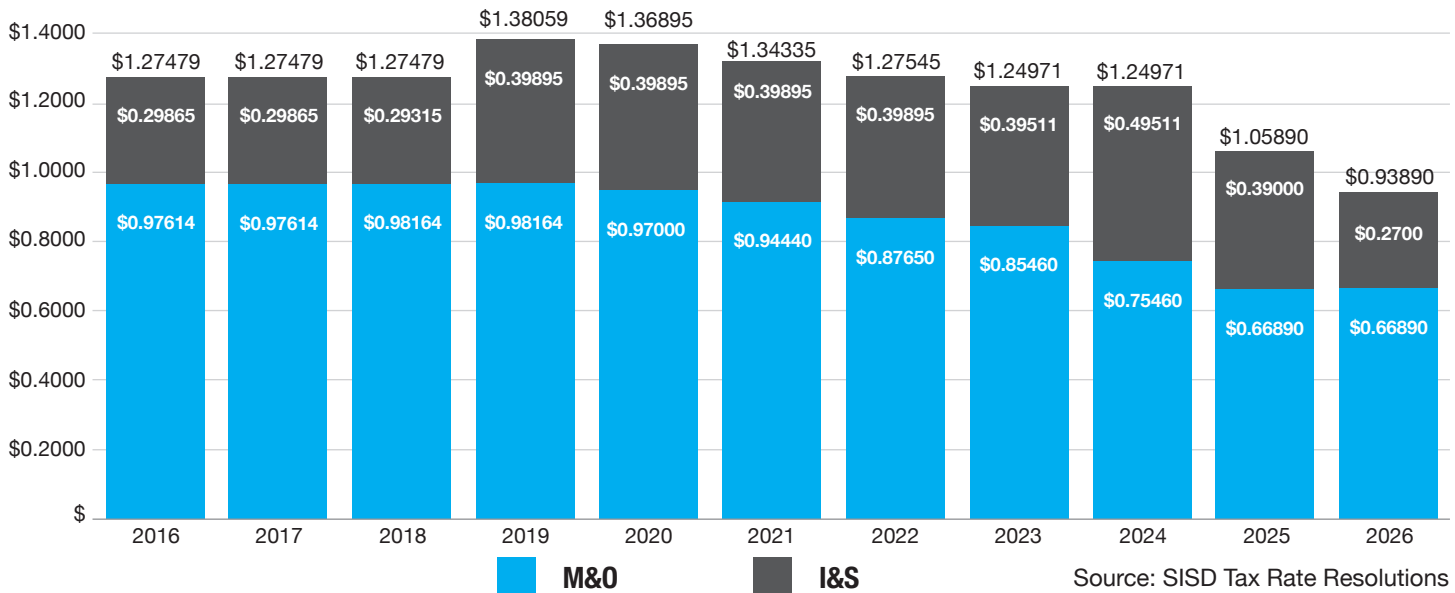
among comparable districts in the region across M&O, I&S, and overall rate. This reflects a consistent effort to manage the tax burden on the community while continuing to operate and support district priorities.

There is an important distinction between the tax rate and the tax bill. Even as the district has lowered its rate, increases in property values can still result in higher overall tax bills for homeowners.

Understanding this distinction is critical to accurately evaluating the district's role in property taxation and the implications of future financial decisions.

TAX RATE HISTORY

Socorro ISD has lowered its tax rate by 32% or \$.44 since 2019. Based on current calculations, this rate reduction equals over \$400 in annual savings to district taxpayers. Specifically, the M&O tax rate has decreased by \$0.31 since 2019.

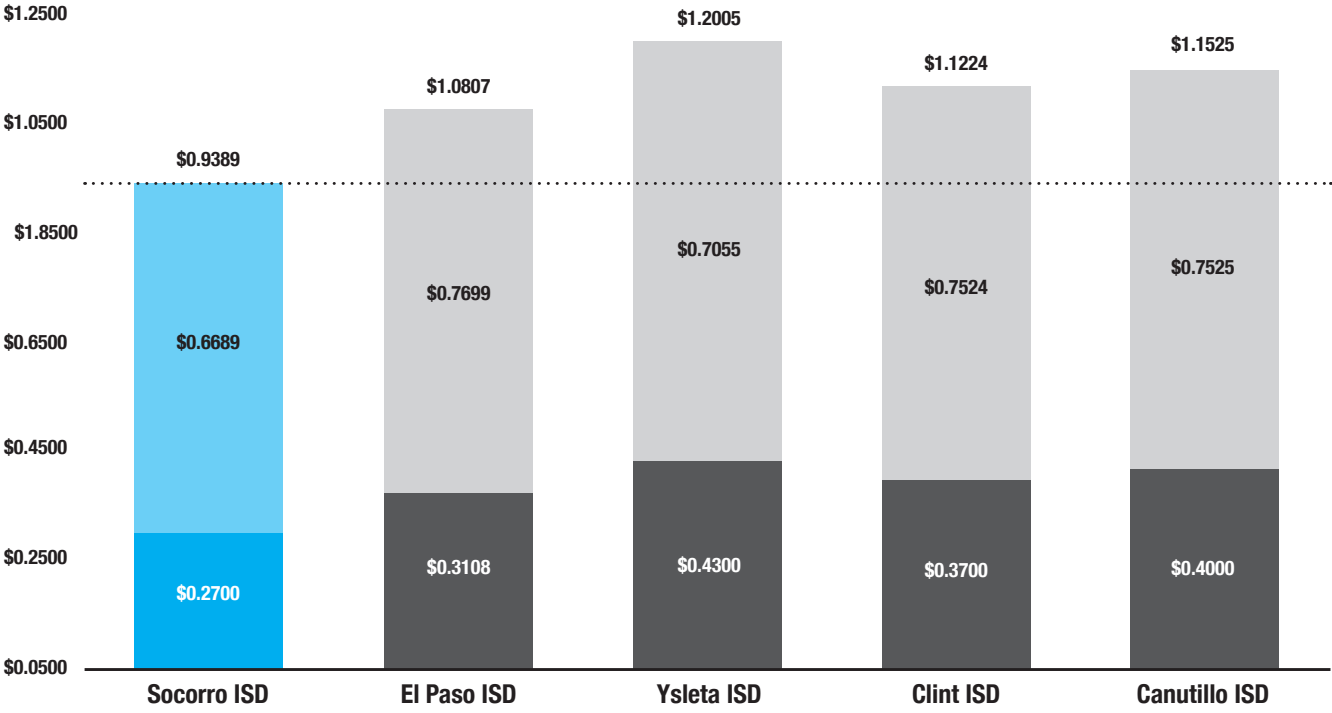


SOCORRO ISD MAINTAINS THE LOWEST TAX RATE AMONG THE LARGE DISTRICTS IN THE REGION:



TAX RATE DISTRICT COMPARISON

SISD has the lowest school district tax rate of the 5 large districts in our county.



I&S SISD has the lowest I&S tax rate of the five large districts in our county.

M&O SISD has the lowest M&O tax rate and is on average \$0.0924 lower than the other 5 large districts in our county.



ACROSS M&O, I&S, AND OVERALL, WHILE CONTINUING TO SERVE STUDENTS AND OPERATE THE DISTRICT.



MYTH VS REALITY

IS SOCORRO ISD EFFICIENT?

The district receives approximately \$1,000 less per student than many comparable districts. Despite this gap, Socorro ISD continues to maintain strong academic performance and provide a wide range of student opportunities. The district also invests a higher percentage of its budget in classroom instruction compared to peer districts, reflecting a continued focus on prioritizing students and campus-level support. Together, these factors reflect a system that is already highly aligned and operating with limited resources.

Over time, the district has implemented staffing alignment, cost-control measures, and operational adjustments to maximize available resources. These actions have resulted

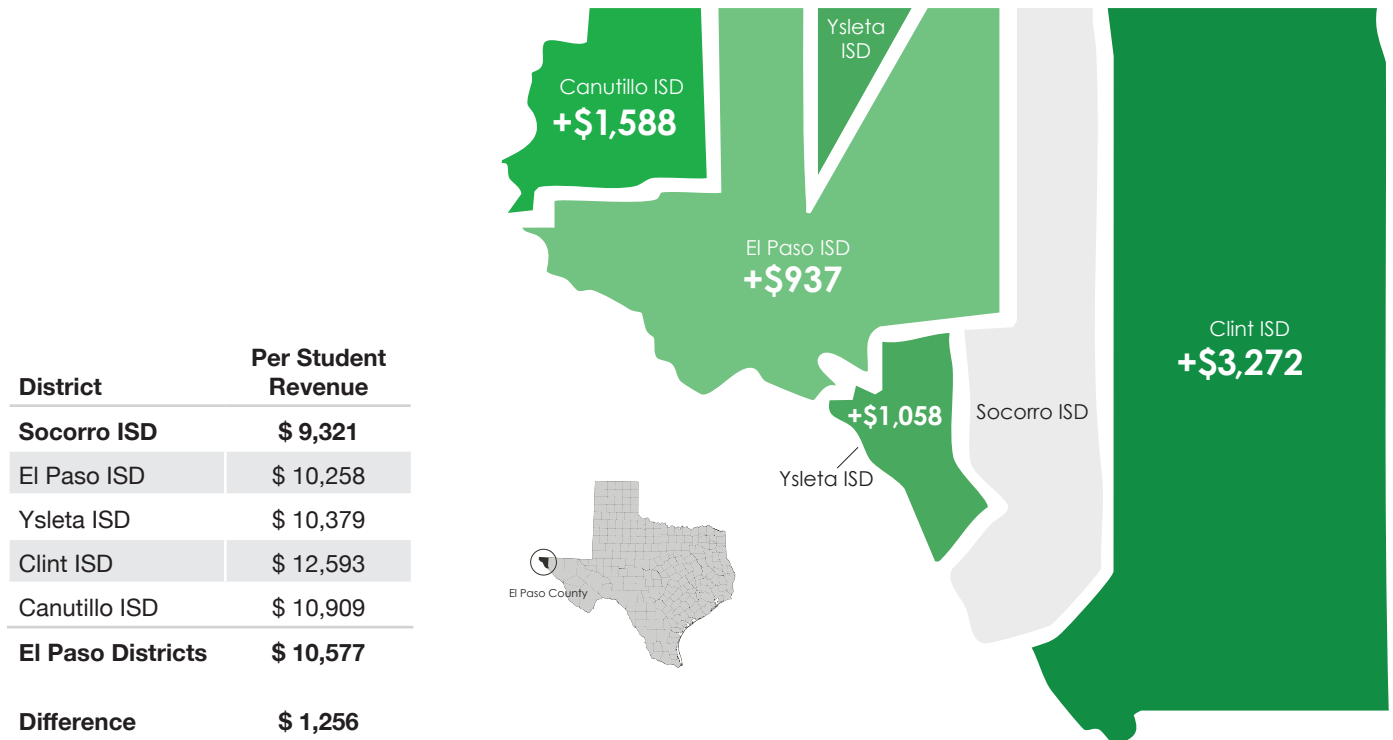
in a lean operating structure focused on supporting campuses and students.

The budget development exercise reinforced this reality. Identifying additional efficiencies while maintaining programs and services proved difficult, and further reductions consistently resulted in direct impacts to classrooms, student opportunities, or staff capacity.

Efficiency remains a priority and an ongoing responsibility. At the same time, the district is not operating with excess capacity. It is operating within tight constraints.

PER STUDENT REVENUE COMPARISON

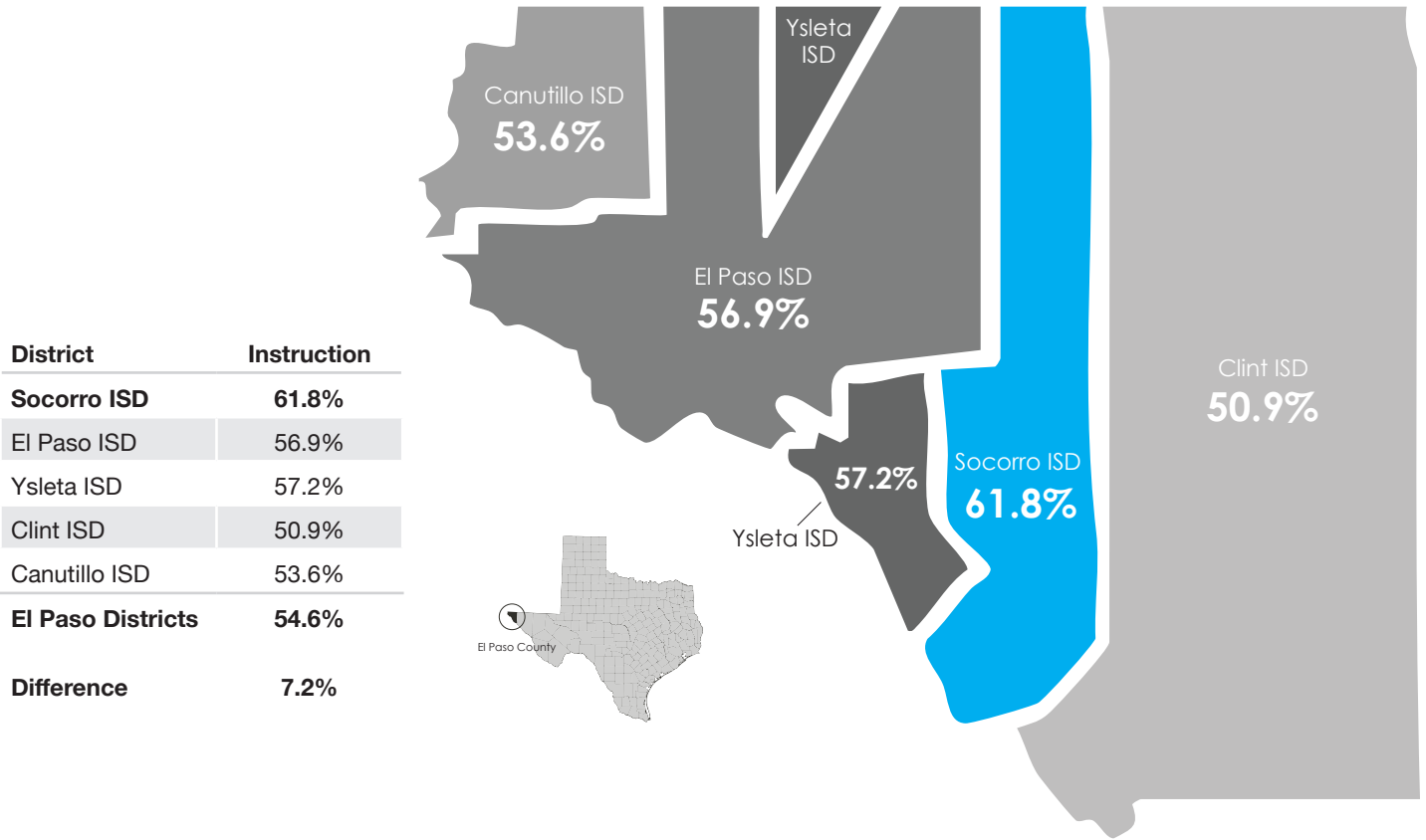
Lowest Revenue Per Student – SISD operates with fewer operating dollars than neighboring districts.



SOCORRO ISD OPERATES EFFICIENTLY:

SPENDING COMPARISON

SISD spends a larger share of its operating expenditures on instruction and less on administration compared to neighboring districts.



STUDENT OUTCOMES

2025 STAAR/EOC PERFORMANCE

APPROACHES		MEETS		MASTERS	
Socorro ISD	81%	Socorro ISD	55%	Socorro ISD	22%
Ysleta ISD	80%	Ysleta ISD	54%	Ysleta ISD	21%
Canutillo ISD	76%	Canutillo ISD	48%	Canutillo ISD	17%
El Paso ISD	74%	El Paso ISD	46%	El Paso ISD	17%
Clint ISD	72%	Clint ISD	42%	Clint ISD	14%

ATTENDANCE

District	Attendance %
Socorro ISD	94.1%
Canutillo ISD	94.1%
El Paso ISD	90.7%
Clint ISD	94.1%
Ysleta ISD	94.0%
El Paso Districts	93.2%
Difference	0.9%

RECEIVING ABOUT \$1,000 LESS PER STUDENT, INVESTING MORE IN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION, AND CONTINUING TO DELIVER STRONG OUTCOMES THROUGH RESPONSIBLE BUDGET MANAGEMENT.



MYTH VS REALITY

DOES SOCORRO ISD SPEND TOO MUCH ON ADMINISTRATION?

The majority of district funding is directed toward classroom instruction and direct student support.

Administrative functions represent a comparatively small portion of the overall budget and are necessary to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements, manage district operations, and support campuses. These responsibilities include transportation, technology, facilities, and other essential systems that enable schools to function effectively.

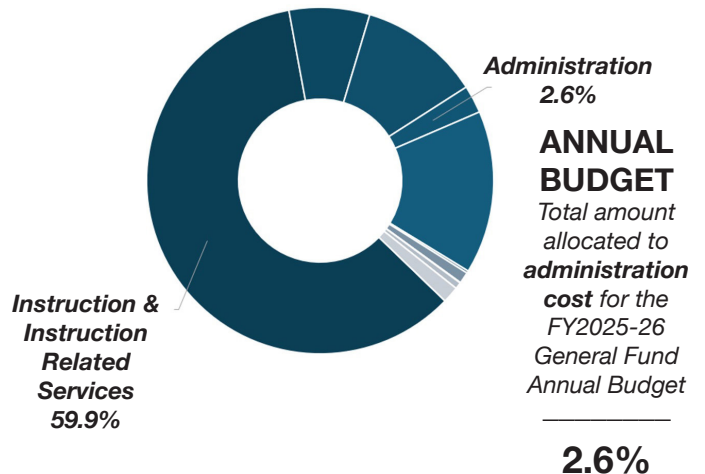
Socorro ISD spends less on administrative functions than neighboring districts. This reflects a continued focus on directing resources to classrooms and student-facing services.

Through recent reductions, administrative positions have been reduced at a higher percentage than teaching and general staff positions. Overall, the district operates with fewer senior executive roles compared to peer districts. These actions reflect a deliberate effort to maintain a lean central office structure while preserving support for campuses.

PERCENT OF OPERATING BUDGET: ADMINISTRATION

SISD prioritizes allocating resources to direct classroom instruction and support. The amount allocated for direct classroom instruction and/or resources totals approximately 60%.

OPERATING BUDGET



ADMINISTRATIVE SPENDING – SENIOR LEADERSHIP

	Students*	Schools	Senior Leadership**
Socorro ISD	46,589	50	8
Ysleta ISD	34,005	49	10
El Paso ISD	47,994	71	13
Clint ISD	10,053	14	6
Canutillo ISD	5,727	10	7

* 2024-2025 Snapshot

**Superintendent's Cabinet: Chief (excluding Chief of Police/Security), Associate/Assistant Superintendent, Executive Director as found on district websites.

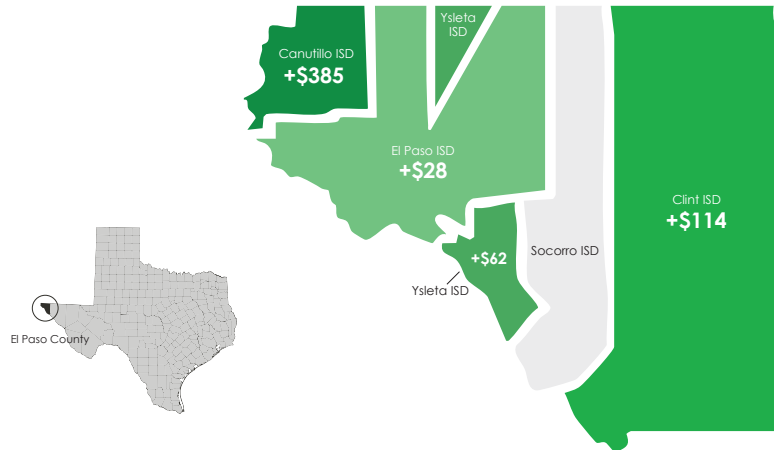


SOCORRO ISD OPERATES WITH A LEAN CENTRAL OFFICE:

ADMINISTRATIVE SPENDING PER STUDENT

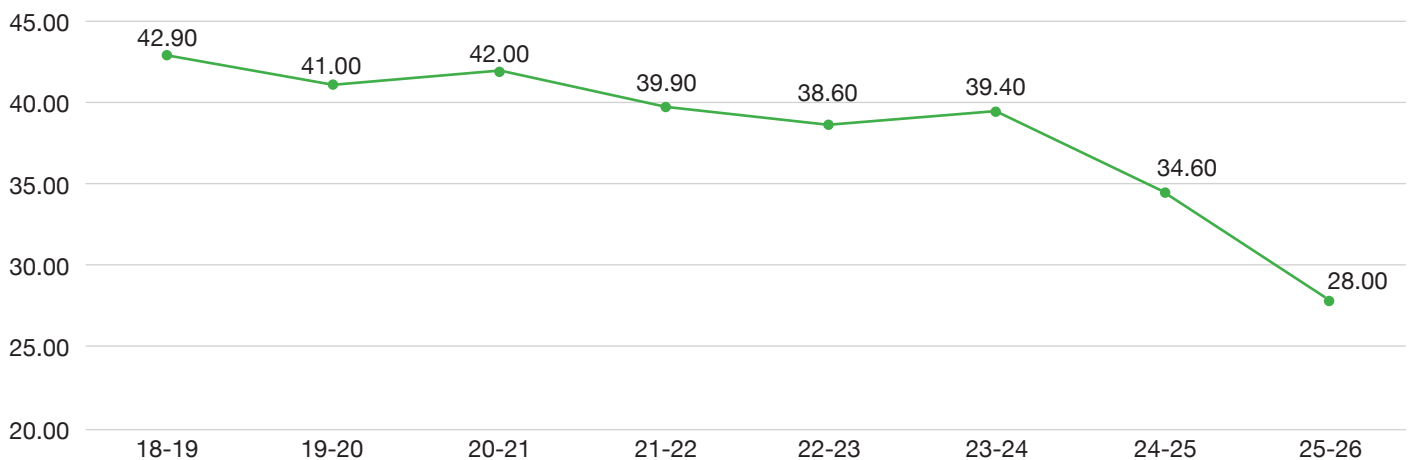
SISD spends less per student on central office administration than neighboring districts.

District	Per Student Spend
Socorro ISD	\$ 276
El Paso ISD	\$ 304
Ysleta ISD	\$ 338
Clint ISD	\$ 390
Canutillo ISD	\$ 661
El Paso Districts	\$ 345
Difference	\$ (69)



ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING LEVEL CHANGES

SISD administrative FTEs have declined over time. Since 2023-24, SISD reduced administrative FTEs by 11.4 (29%). Administrative FTEs now make up only 0.5% of the district's workforce—the lowest level in eight years.



Administration FTEs are the full-time equivalent positions at the district level, such as the superintendent, executive leaders, and human resources directors. This does not include campus principals or assistant principals.

	23-24 FTE	24-25 FTE	25-26 FTE	# Change	% Change
Total Staff	6,120.21	5,711.06	5,567.29	-552.92	-9%
Teacher	2,821.79	2,802.13	2,547.11	-274.68	-10%
Professional Support	719.04	602.13	631.29	-87.75	-12%
Campus Administration	157.17	149.04	146	-11.17	-7%
Central Administration	39.44	34.6	28	-11.44	-29%
Educational Aides	591.76	503.73	507.21	-84.55	-14%
Auxiliary Staff	1,690.34	1,586.84	1,617.01	-73.33	-4%

SPENDING LESS ON ADMINISTRATION, WITH FEWER EXECUTIVE ROLES, AND PRIORITIZING RESOURCES FOR CLASSROOMS AND STUDENTS.

BUDGET CHALLENGES

Socorro ISD faces ongoing financial challenges driven by declining enrollment and rising operational costs.

Enrollment directly impacts funding. Recent declines have reduced the district's revenue base, requiring adjustments to staffing and operations to maintain alignment with available resources. These trends are expected to continue and will require ongoing monitoring and planning.

At the same time, the district is experiencing increased costs due to inflation. Expenses related to staffing, utilities, transportation, materials, and facility maintenance continue

to rise, while revenue growth has remained limited under the current school finance system.

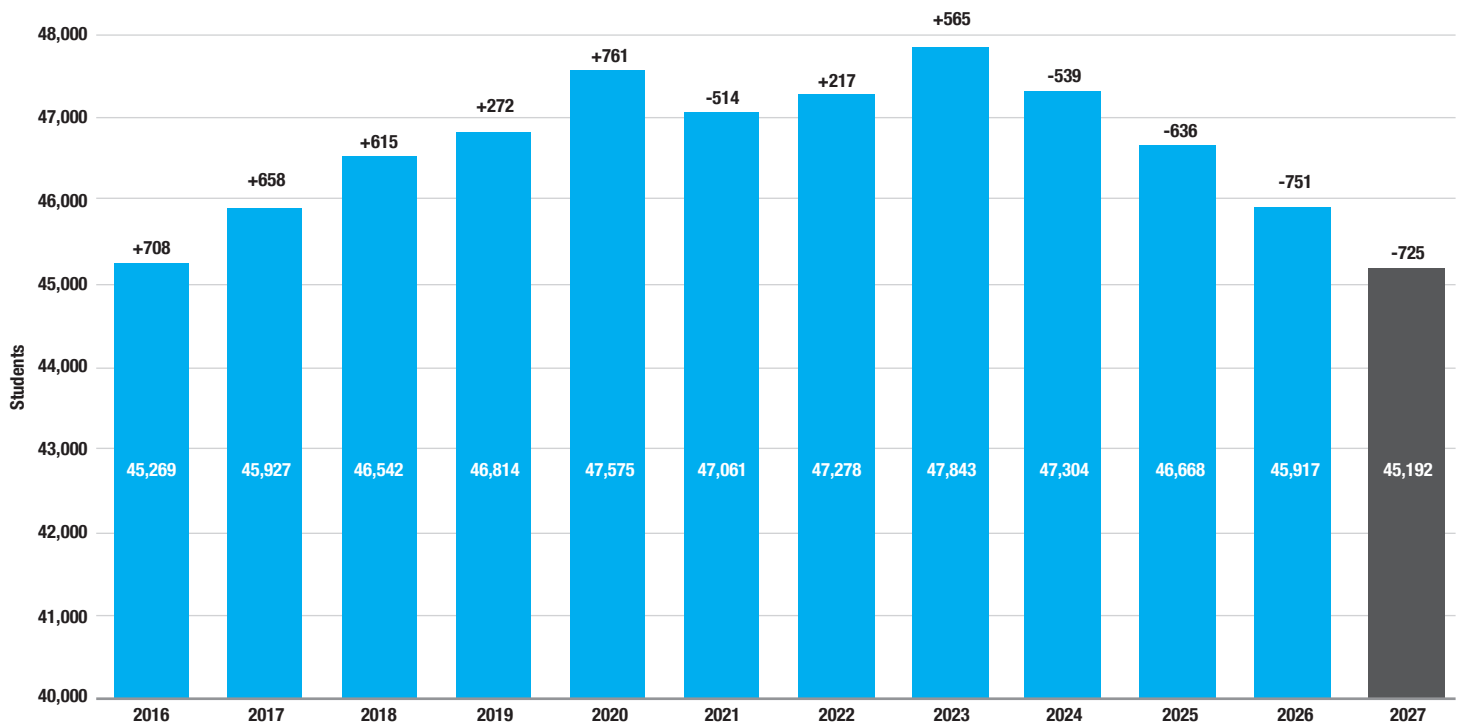
This creates a compounding challenge: fewer students generating revenue, while the cost of operating schools continues to increase.

As a result, maintaining current programs and services becomes increasingly difficult without either additional reductions or new revenue. These conditions reinforce the need for a long-term approach that addresses both cost management and revenue stability.



ENROLLMENT HISTORY

From 2016 to 2023, enrollment increased over 400 students per year on average. Enrollment for 2024 was projected to continue increasing, instead for the first time in district history enrollment began a steady decline. Since then enrollment has declined an average of 663 students annually, resulting in some \$26.5 million in reduced funding.



Source: TEA Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR)

SCHOOL COST OF INFLATION 2019 VS 2024

Schools, just like our households and businesses, are seeing increased costs for fuel, energy, food, and supplies.



Fuel

+\$0.5M
29%



General Insurance Policies

+\$1.0M
41%



Facility M&O Costs

+\$7.9M
18%



Health Insurance Costs

+\$9.7M
19%



Food Services

+\$5.9M
21%

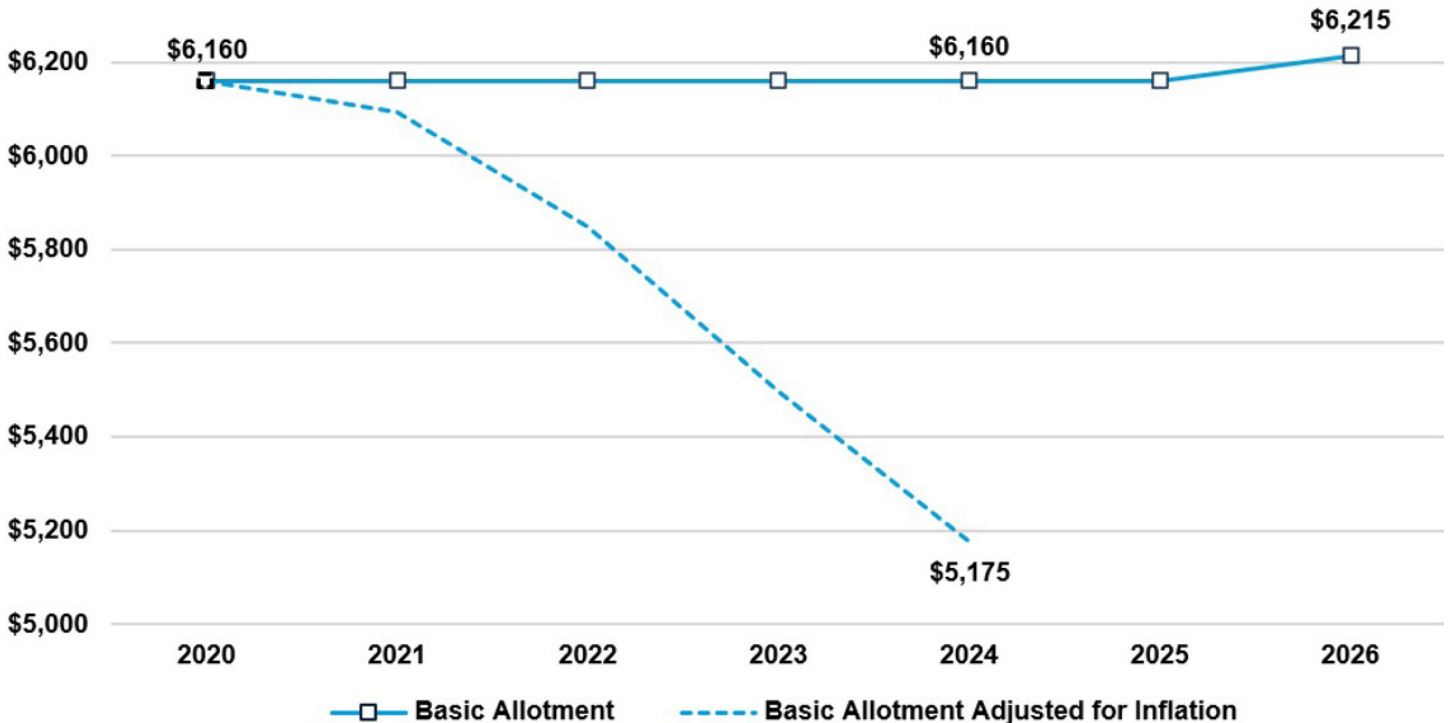


Inflation since 2019 - \$24.9M

Schools no longer have the same buying power as they did in 2019 when the \$6,160 basic allotment was set. Since 2019, inflation has increased by 22.7% according to the Consumer Price Index. That means in order to have the same buying power as they did after HB3 was passed five years ago, schools would need the basic allotment to be over \$7,558. Instead, HB2 which was just passed increased the allotment to just \$6,215.

WHAT INFLATION MEANS FOR THE BASIC ALLOTMENT

Over the past decade, the Basic School Allotment was increased only twice, not including the adjustment made during the most recent legislative session. During that same period, districts faced major new pressures—including the COVID-19 pandemic, unfunded mandates, teacher shortages, higher accountability expectations, and historically high inflation. Since 2019, the purchasing power of school funding has declined by nearly 23%.



NEW REVENUE CONSIDERATIONS

Additional revenue options provide opportunities to address both immediate needs and long-term financial stability.

A Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE) provides access to additional local funding, with the first three pennies generating the greatest impact. Many neighboring districts have already accessed this funding through voter-approved elections, allowing them to invest more in their schools.

As a result, Socorro ISD currently operates with a gap of some \$1,000 in per-student funding compared to surrounding districts. Addressing this gap would support the district's ability to maintain programs, invest in priority areas, and sustain student outcomes.

A consistent theme throughout committee discussions was the importance of ensuring that Socorro ISD students are funded at the same level as students in surrounding communities. A VATRE represents the primary mechanism to move toward that goal.

Bond funding also provides a mechanism to address long-term facility and infrastructure needs and may be considered as part of future planning.

Revenue decisions must be evaluated alongside community capacity and informed by continued engagement, voter research, and clear communication regarding both needs and impacts.

VATRE FUNDING

POTENTIAL IMPACT: GOLDEN PENNIES



**1 Golden Penny = \$6.2 million (State)
\$1.5 million (Local)
\$7.7 million**

- Three of the eight are only accessible with voter approval
- Other factors impact potential gain
 - Local property wealth
 - TEA calculated tax effort (DTR)
- Not subject to recapture

POTENTIAL IMPACT: COPPER PENNIES



**1 Copper Penny = \$1.4 million (State)
\$1.5 million (Local)
\$2.9 million**

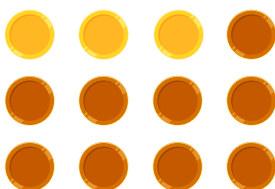
- Nine pennies accessible only with voter approval
- Other factors impact yield
 - TEA calculated tax effort (DTR)
- Subject to recapture



= \$23.1 million



= \$26.1 million



= \$49.2 million

Efficiency Audit – A school board must conduct an efficiency audit before holding a VATRE.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON HOMEOWNERS

VATRE/BOND (Cents)	Annual Cost (Avg Home)	Monthly Cost
3¢	\$27.90	\$2.33
6¢	\$55.80	\$4.65
9¢	\$83.70	\$6.98
12¢	\$111.60	\$9.30
15¢	\$139.50	\$11.63
18¢	\$167.40	\$13.95
21¢	\$195.30	\$16.28
24¢	\$223.20	\$18.60
27¢	\$251.10	\$20.93
30¢	\$279.00	\$23.25
33¢	\$306.90	\$25.58
35¢	\$325.50	\$27.13

Based on average home value of \$233,000 with \$140,000 homestead exemption → taxable value ~\$93,000

Each penny is approximately \$9 per year (about \$0.78 per month) for the average homeowner.

RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

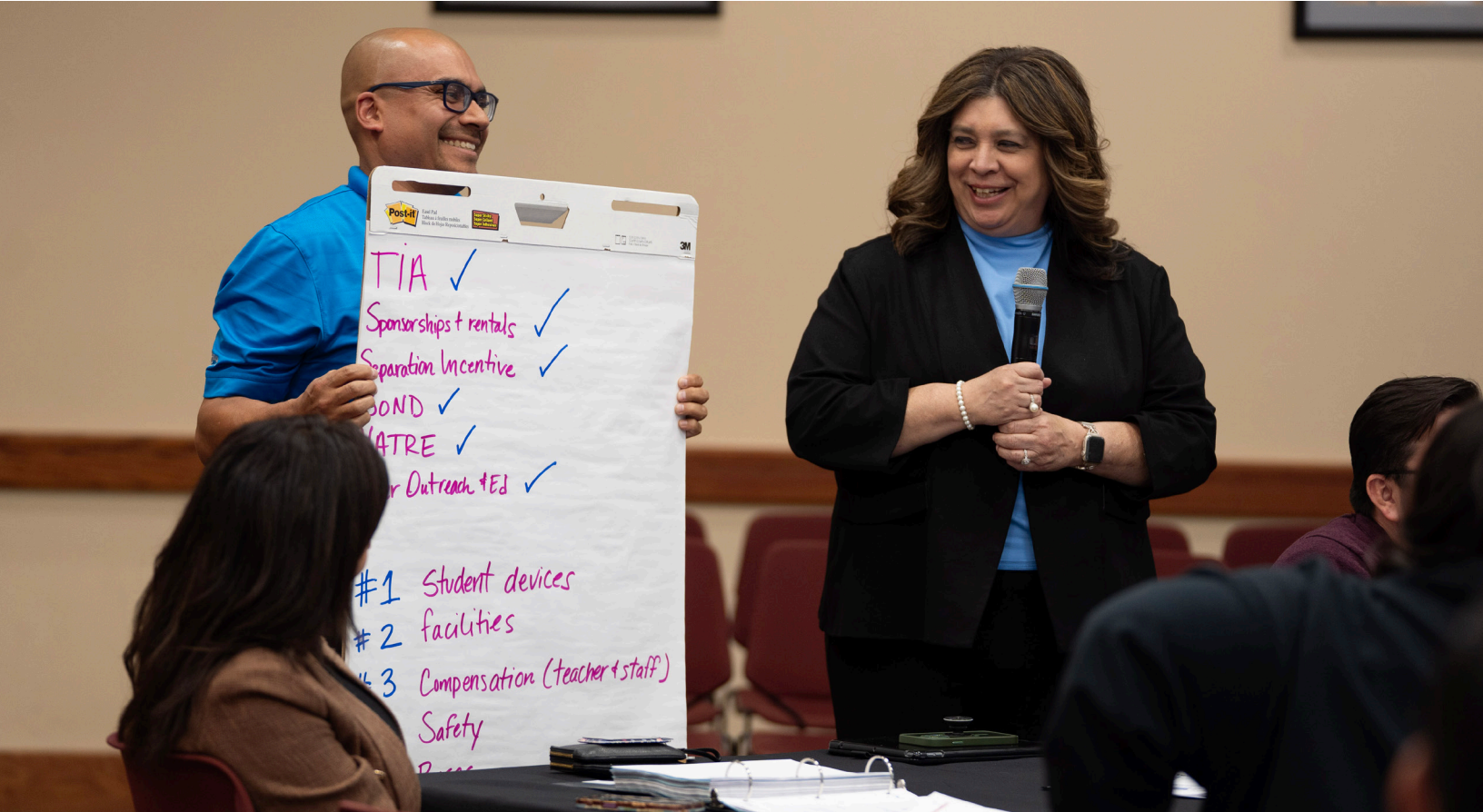
Recommendations were developed through a structured and collaborative process that progressed across each meeting.

The March budget development exercise served as a critical foundation. Participants worked through real-world scenarios to balance district priorities within existing financial constraints. This exercise highlighted the tradeoffs required to maintain a balanced budget and reinforced how limited current resources have become.

The April meeting focused on refining those priorities and finalizing recommendations. Members reviewed updated financial context, including revenue options and long-term considerations, and participated in small-group discussions to evaluate potential strategies.

Through this process, participants identified areas of alignment, prioritized key investments, and distinguished between items with strong consensus and those requiring further consideration. The use of a consensus-based model ensured that recommendations reflect positions that members could support or accept, consistent with the Committee’s advisory role.

The Committee’s work was grounded in both data and experience, combining financial analysis with the practical understanding gained through the budget exercise. This approach strengthened the quality of the recommendations and ensured they reflect both fiscal realities and the needs of students and staff.



BAC FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations reflect the collective work of the Budget Advisory Committee and are grounded in the priorities, discussions, and budget scenarios developed throughout the process.

Socorro ISD has taken deliberate and sustained action to manage financial challenges responsibly. Staffing has been aligned through attrition, operational expenditures have been evaluated, and cost-control measures have been implemented across the district. These efforts reflect a continued focus on responsible stewardship and have helped stabilize the district in the short term.

Many of the most accessible efficiencies have already been realized, and additional reductions increasingly affect

classrooms, student opportunities, and staff capacity.

The budget development exercise reinforced this reality. As participants worked to balance priorities within existing resources, it became clear that further reductions would result in meaningful impacts to student learning conditions, instructional continuity, and the district's ability to sustain programs over time.

Through structured dialogue and consensus-building, members identified strategies to support financial stability while maintaining a focus on students and staff. Recommendations are organized to reflect areas of strong consensus, priority investments, and items that warrant further consideration.



Areas of Full Consensus

The following recommendations received unanimous support from the Committee.

- Pursue a Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE)
- Expand sponsorship and facility rental opportunities
- Continue the separation incentive program
- Strengthen voter outreach and education efforts



Investment Priorities

The following priorities reflect areas identified through the budget development process for available funds within the current budget and/or through future new revenue.

1. HVAC and Facilities
2. Student and Teacher Devices
3. Compensation
4. Safety
5. Buses



Items for Further Consideration

The following items were supported by a majority of the Committee through discussion; however, members recommended that additional information and analysis be provided prior to implementation.

- Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA)
- Bond funding for long-term facility needs

Budget Advisory Committee
April 1, 2026 Recommendation Development

	Group #1	Group #2	Group #3	Group #4	Group #5
Preliminary Consensus Items					
TIA	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍
Sponsorships & Rentals	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍
Separation Incentive	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍
BOND	👍	👎	👎	👍	👍
VATRE	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍
Voter Outreach & Education	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍
Funding Priorities					
#1	HVAC	Facilities	HVAC/Maint Needs	HVAC	Student Devices
#2	Devices	Safety	Teacher/Student Devices	Safety	Facilities
#3	Compensation	Compensation	Facilities Assessment	Operations/DW Maintenance Needs	Compensation (Teacher & Staff)
#4	Facilities	Devices	Bus Replacement	Instruction Technology	Safety
#5	Safety	Buses		Teacher Salary Increase	Buses
#6	Buses				
Other					
VATRE	\$0.10		\$0.06		
Comments	Need more info on TIA	Need more info on TIA and Bond			

Agree
Disagree
Neutral



#1 HVAC/Facilities
#2 Devices
#3 Compensation

#4 Safety
#5 Buses

COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

The BAC process was informative, collaborative, and, for many members, eye-opening.

Working through real budget scenarios demonstrated how lean the current budget has become and reinforced the complexity of balancing priorities within limited resources. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of protecting student learning conditions, supporting staff, and maintaining essential services, while also recognizing the financial realities facing the district.

The process created a shared understanding of both the progress that has been made and the challenges that remain.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE PROCESS



Socorro ISD maintains one of the lowest tax rates in the region: across M&O, I&S, and overall, while continuing to serve students and operate the district.



Socorro ISD operates efficiently: receiving about \$1,000 less per student, investing more in classroom instruction, and continuing to deliver strong outcomes through responsible budget management.



Socorro ISD operates with a lean central office: spending less on administration, with fewer executive roles, and prioritizing resources for classrooms and students.



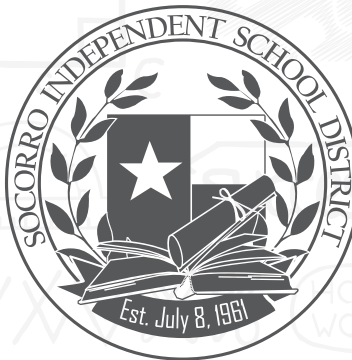
The district is operating lean, and continued reductions have direct impacts on students, staff, and programs, reinforcing the need for a balanced path forward, including consideration of additional revenue options such as a Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election (VATRE).

CONCLUSION

The Budget Advisory Committee submits this report and its recommendations for consideration by the Board of Trustees. These recommendations reflect months of work, thoughtful discussion, and a shared commitment to student learning conditions, instructional continuity, and long-term financial stability.

The recommendations will be presented to the Board of Trustees on April 15, 2026, for consideration and potential action.





Socorro ISD Board of Trustees

Michael A. Najera, President
Paul Guerra, Vice President
Marivel N. Macias, Secretary
Alice Gardea, Trustee
Manny Rodriguez, Trustee
Charles W. Smith, Trustee
Ryan Woodcraft, Trustee

Superintendent of Schools

James P. Vasquez

SOCORRO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

THE NEXT
CHAPTER IS **OURS**
#TeamSISD

ALL IN

WELCOME BACK! FOLLOW SOCORRO ISD



Socorro ISD District Service Center

12440 Rojas Dr. • El Paso, TX 79928 • Phn 915.937.0000 • www.sisd.net

Socorro Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law in its employment practices or in providing education services, activities, and programs, including career and technical education (vocational programs). For additional information regarding Socorro Independent School District's policy of nondiscrimination contact: (915) 937-0201, 12440 Rojas Dr., El Paso, TX 79928.