

Budget Hearing
Wednesday, September 9, 2026 6:00 PM
East Butler School
212 South Madison Street
Brainard, NE 68626-0036

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Open Meetings Act Statement/Flag Salute
4. Discussion/Informational Items
 - 4.1. Proposed Budget
5. Adjournment

East Butler Public Schools 2026-2027 Budget Hearing



September 9, 2026
Board and Public Information

Prepared by Michael Eldridge, Supt.

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to assist the school board and the patrons of the East Butler school district in assessing the financial condition of the district. The district utilizes the following funds and an explanation of each is included.

GENERAL FUND - Is the account that is used for the regular operations of the school district. This fund receives revenue from property tax (levy), various county taxes, state reimbursements, net-option, and federal program support. The expenditure limit for this account is called budget authority and set through the TEEOSA formula established by the Nebraska Legislature and managed by the Nebraska Department of Education. The General fund has a levy limit of \$1.04.

SPECIAL BUILDING FUND - Is the account used for new construction or building improvements. This account generates revenue from property tax (separate levy) and/or bond funds. Expenditures should not include unplanned repairs; it is designed for specific improvement projects. The building fund has a levy limit of \$0.14.

DEPRECIATION FUND - Is the account established in order to facilitate the eventual purchase of costly capital outlay by reserving such monies by transferring unused funds from the general fund. The purpose of this fund is to spread replacement costs (by accumulation of funds over time) in order to avoid disproportionate tax effort in a single year to meet such an expense. Typical expenditures include buses, vans, technology, HVAC equipment, and IT equipment.

BOND FUND - Is the fund that is used to accumulate property tax funds that are levied in order to pay back general obligation bonds that are taken out by the school district to make improvements to a building(s) or certain infrastructure needs. There is no limit on the amount that can be levied, as long as it does not substantially exceed the annual bond obligation payments.

SCHOOL NUTRITION FUND - This was formerly called the lunch fund. The fund is designated to take receipts and make payments for the operation of the school nutrition program. Any deficit that would occur becomes the responsibility of the General Fund.

ACTIVITIES FUND - is required to account for the fiscal operations of student organizations, inter-school athletics, and other self-supporting or partially self-supporting activities. The fund does not count toward the annual expenditure limits established in the budget authority.

EMPLOYEE BENEFIT FUND – An employee benefit fund may be established in order to specifically reserve General Fund money for the benefit of school district employees. This is typically used to manage a 125 plan, unemployment compensation, early retirement, or HSA contributions.

CONTINGENCY FUND – A contingency fund is authorized by statute and may be used to fund uninsured losses and legal fees incurred by the district for the defense against public losses. This fund may not exceed 5% of the total budgeted general fund expenditures.

QUALIFIED CAPITAL PURPOSE UNDERTAKING FUND (QCPUF) – This fund may be established for the removal of environmental hazards and the reduction or elimination of accessibility barriers to schools. The tax levy for and duration of this fund is restricted to \$0.03 over five years.

COOPERATIVE FUND – The Cooperative Fund may be used by the school district acting as the fiscal agent for any cooperative activity between two or more political subdivisions. All school districts, including the school district acting as fiscal agent, shall show the payment for services to the cooperative in their General Fund.

STUDENT FEES FUND – as authorized by statute, is a separate fund not supported by tax revenue. Includes all monies collected from students pursuant to the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Included are the fees for Extracurricular Activities, Postsecondary Education, and Summer/Night School.

Tax Valuation of District

When taxing, the District uses the certified valuations of all property established by the Assessors Office(s) in Butler County, Saunders County, and Seward County. East Butler Public Schools does not have influence or input on the decisions regarding property valuation. The tax asking for each fund is determined by the valuation multiplied by the levy, with \$0.01 of levy accounting for \$10 per \$100,000 of property valuation.

District Valuation History

Year	Butler	Saunders	Seward	Total	% Change
11-12	\$281,689,813	\$159,978,419	\$36,233,045	\$477,901,277	13%
12-13	\$329,651,994	\$182,784,045	\$46,571,319	\$559,007,358	17%
13-14	\$399,816,601	\$244,248,865	\$55,536,649	\$699,602,115	25%
14-15	\$433,661,066	\$257,996,658	\$76,993,604	\$768,651,328	10%
15-16	\$484,915,362	\$286,902,585	\$80,684,984	\$852,502,931	11%

16-17	\$521,927,859	\$311,210,230	\$82,122,091	\$915,260,180	7.36%
17-18	\$522,290,268	\$314,981,408	\$82,935,418	\$920,207,094	0.54%
18-19	\$524,110,623	\$311,404,444	\$83,267,023	\$918,782,090	-0.15%
19-20	\$500,594,248	\$315,779,996	\$80,518,784	\$896,893,028	-2.4%
20-21	\$496,797,085	\$314,779,754	\$77,639,718	\$889,216,557	-1%
21-22	\$499,279,948	\$313,071,389	\$79,039,715	\$891,391,052	+1%
22-23	\$512,087,243	\$331,103,279	\$82,786,931	\$925,977,453	+3.88%
23-24	\$584,779,673	\$353,928,549	\$89,261,552	\$1,027,969,774	+11.01%
24-25	\$612,907,834	\$400,946,371	\$97,944,217	\$1,111,798,422	+8.15%
25-26	\$741,751,912	\$450,071,220	\$110,974,246	\$1,302,797,378	+17.18%
26-27	\$772,089,051	\$473,323,505	\$117,969,708	\$1,363,382,264	+4.65%

District Revenue

East Butler receives minimal state aid. State aid for the purposes of this chart includes revenue received for teacher allocation aid, state income tax, and net-option funding.

A Historical Chart for State Aid Revenue

Year	State Aid	% Change
09-10	\$18,507.36	
10-11	\$49,524.11	167.59%
11-12	\$35,219.04	-28.8%
12-13	\$46,747	32.73%
13-14	\$112,169.17	139.95%
14-15	\$73,422	-34.54%
15-16	\$19,379	-73.60%
16-17	\$0.00	-100%

17-18	\$43,057	10,000%
18-19	\$42,012	2.43%
19-20	\$46,091	9.71%
20-21	\$50,068	8.63%
21-22	\$49,965	- 0.99%
22-23	\$53,932	7.93%
23-24	\$486,010	801%
24-25	\$512,723	5.21%
25-26	\$543,718	6.04%
26-27	\$587,773	8.10%

Additional revenue for the General Fund comes in the form of State or Federal Program Grants (qualifications and limitations apply), county taxes, and local property tax. All other funds receive their revenue from direct property tax or general fund transfers.

A historical chart for Property Tax Asking to support the General Fund.

Year	GF Levy	GF Tax Asking	% Levy Change	% Tax Change
11-12	\$0.9649	\$4,611,576		
12-13	\$0.9500	\$5,310,568	-1.5%	15%
13-14	\$0.6274	\$4,389,589	-34%	-17%
14-15	\$0.5703	\$4,383,838	-9%	-.13%
15-16	\$0.5906	\$5,035,056	4%	15%
16-17	\$0.5373	\$4,917,375	-9%	-2.33%
17-18	\$0.5604	\$5,157,129	4.30%	4.87%
18-19	\$0.5684	\$5,222,459	1.43%	1.26%
19-20	\$0.54052	\$4,847,906	-4.90%	-7%
20-21	\$0.615326	\$5,471,581	-13.83%	13%

21-22	\$0.649895	\$5,793,105	-5.62%	6%
22-23	\$0.670867	\$6,212,080	-3.22%	3%
23-24	\$0.623942	\$6,413,936	-7%	3.25%
24-25	\$0.588162	\$6,542,341	-6%	2%
25-26	\$0.507249	\$6,608,425	-13.75%	1%
26-27	\$0.497013	\$6,776,187	-2%	2.5%

Factors that impact Tax Asking include State Aid, State/Federal Program Grants, and SPED Reimbursements. The tax asking is the difference between that total and the total anticipated expenditures from the General Fund. In 2013-2014 the district had a Cash Reserve that was calculated into the formula for necessary revenue. The District attempts to carry enough Cash Reserve to operate for three-four months to offset the delayed timeline for receipts from Property Tax and the State of Nebraska.

General Fund

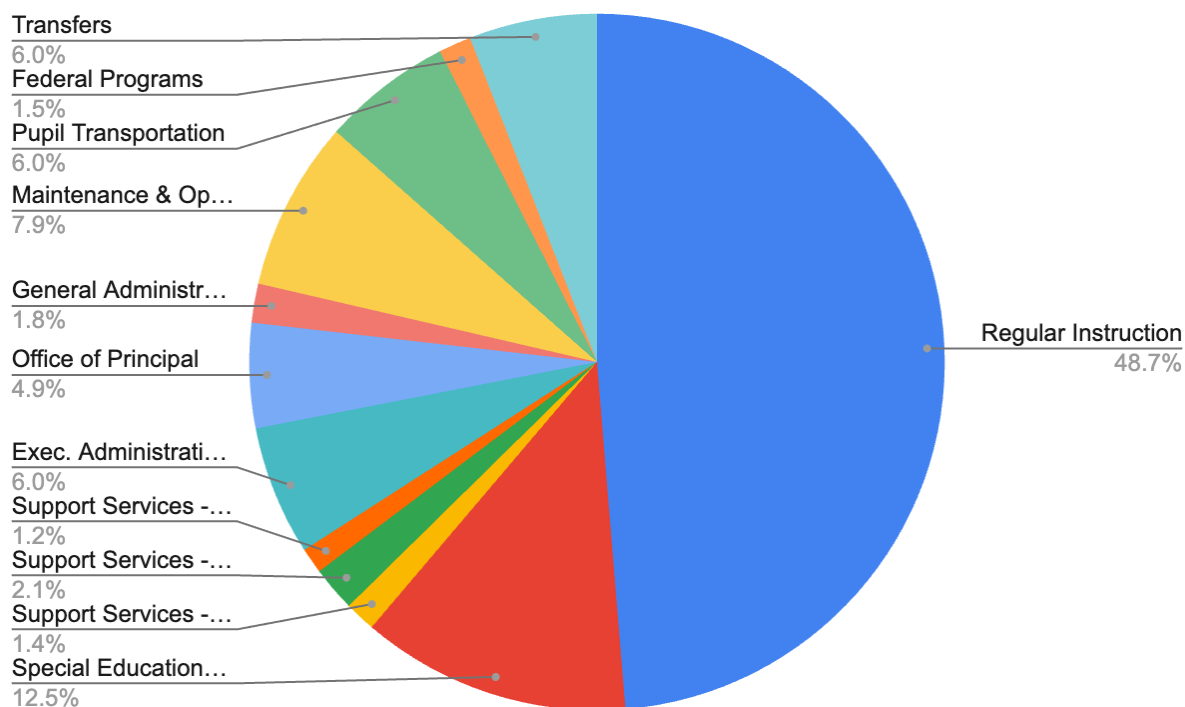
The General Fund cash balance on August 31, 2025 was \$2,764,508 compared to \$1,804,378 at the end of the 2024 fiscal period. This is considered a required cash reserve and is not factored into the 2025-2026 fiscal year revenue.

Below is a comparison of annual budgeted expenditures by year and actual expenditures and transfers by year. The percentage change will show the budget expenditure (planned and actual) increase or decrease by year.

Year	GF Planned Budget	% Change	GF Actual Expenditures	% Change
11-12	\$5,107,668		\$4,833,645	
12-13	\$5,418,482	+6%	\$4,779,625	-1.11%
13-14	\$5,620,900	+3.73%	\$4,769,404	-0.21%
14-15	\$5,892,136	+5%	\$5,264,302	+10.38%
15-16	\$5,961,835	+1%	\$5,505,601	+4.58%
16-17	\$6,062,579	+1.68%	\$5,485,955	-0.36%
17-18	\$6,145,599	+1.36%	\$6,202,397	+13.05%

18-19	\$6,486,336	+5.54%	\$6,173,895	-0.46%
19-20	\$6,707,665	+3.41%	\$6,490,132	+8.41%
20-21	\$7,218,148	+7.61%	\$7,070,808	+6.41%
21-22	\$7,534,692	+4.38%	\$7,154,405	+1.18%
22-23	\$7,735,352	+2.66%	\$7,174,415	+0.28%
23-24	\$7,988,118	+3.26%	\$7,620,310	+6.22%
24-25	\$8,217,916	+4%	\$7,778,814	+2.07%
25-26	\$8,579,684	+4%	\$8,550,029 (estimate)	+9.91%
26-27	\$8,415,574	-2%		

General Fund Expenses



The above chart shows you the breakdown of expenses in the East Butler Public Schools general fund on an annual basis. These are areas where the expenses from year to year continue to increase. You will notice that the expenses for regular and SPED instruction make

up 70% of the total general fund expenses. The remaining expenses consist of maintenance, transportation, support services, and administration.

Special Building Fund

The District will levy \$0.106536 for the Special Building Fund for the 2026-2027 fiscal period. The current balance of the building fund is \$1,500,249.80 as of August 31, 2026. The fund will be used to make the payments on the lease purchase of \$365,000 per year through 2026 (December - \$186,000, and an interest payment towards the new project - \$430,000).

In prior years, tax asking for the Special Building Fund was used for land acquisition, land development, excavation/demolition, and large construction/repair projects. Below is a historical chart of tax asking by year for the Special Building Fund.

Special Building Fund

Year	Tax Asking	Levy
11-12	\$477,901.22	\$0.10
12-13	\$559,006.40	\$0.10
13-14	\$600,000	\$0.083692
14-15	\$303,030	\$0.038522
15-16	\$464,646.46	\$0.054504
16-17	\$129,494.95	\$0.014148
17-18	\$92,020	\$0.01
18-19	\$90,909	\$0.009895
19-20	\$454,545	\$0.050608
20-21	\$662,731	\$0.074353
21-22	\$824,488	\$0.092495
22-23	\$856,048	\$0.092419
23-24	\$875,240	\$0.085190
24-25	\$906,989	\$0.081539
25-26	\$1,437,967	\$0.110375
26-27	\$1,452,492	\$0.106536

Depreciation Fund

The balance at the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year (August 31, 2025) was \$576,353. Annually the increase in the account comes from the sale of surplus equipment that is depreciated out, interest, and General Fund transfers.

Expenditures are anticipated for the 2025-2026 fiscal period. The goal of the account balance is to address any two items (if needed) from the anticipated expenditure item list below.

- Technology
 - Laptops \$150,000
 - Infrastructure \$25,000
- Transportation
 - Bus \$120,000
 - Micro Bus \$100,000
 - Van \$60,000
- Equipment
 - Maintenance \$25,000
 - Industrial Technology \$50,000
- Renovations
 - Classroom Renovations \$200,000

Bond Fund

The district currently does not have a bond fund.

School Nutrition Fund

The District's Food Program received approximately \$50,000 in federal funds to reimburse free and reduced-price lunch-qualified students. In addition to this revenue, a transfer is made from the general fund to support the program's costs. The program is self-sufficient, with all expenditures, including staffing, benefits, supplies, and equipment, being paid from program receipts. Meal prices are set by formula from the Federal Program based on student meal participation.

Activities Fund

Annually, the District transfers funds from the General Fund to balance out expenses from school activities that do not generate revenue. At the end of the 2025-2026 school year, the General Fund transferred \$50,000.00 to activities. The end of the fiscal period balance (August 31, 2026) for the Activity Fund was as follows:

Cash Balance \$173,681

Employee Benefit Fund

The District uses this fund to manage the 125-plan for certificated employees. Funds are withheld from monthly paychecks and deposited here. The expenditures equal claims made by participating employees.

Contingency Fund

Is not used by the District.

Cooperative Fund

Is not used by the District.

Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund (QCPUF)

Currently, the district utilizes the QCPUF fund to pay the loan taken out for the HVAC, roof, and window renovations in 2010. Currently, there is \$515,924 left on this debt. Annually, the district pays approximately \$180,000 towards principal and interest.

Student Fee Fund

Has a balance of \$20,000 that is collected and distributed back into the Activities Fund if no expenditures are required.

Inter-Fund Loans

Currently, the District does not have any inter-fund loans outstanding.

Total Levy of District - Historical

The total levy is the combined tax asking for all the above funds. For the 2026-2027 school year, the total tax levy will be approximately \$0.619905, a 2% reduction.

Year	Valuation	Total Levy	Total Tax Asking	% Levy Rate Change	% Tax Change
12-13	\$559,007,358	\$0.6861	\$5,498,388		-11%
13-14	\$699,602,115	\$0.6855	\$4,989,898	-0.08%	-9%
14-15	\$768,651,328	\$0.5739	\$5,699,290	-16.28%	+14%
15-16	\$852,502,931	\$0.5739	\$5,252,999	0%	-7.83%
16-17	\$915,260,180	\$0.5912	\$5,441,068	+3%	+3.58%

17-18	\$920,207,094	\$0.599	\$5,503,756	+1.32%	+0.23%
18-19	\$918,782,090	\$0.612178	\$5,490,583	+2.2%	-0.24%
19-20	\$896,893,028	\$0.612178	\$5,490,583	0%	0%
20-21	\$889,216,557	\$0.701646	\$6,239,147	+14.6%	+13.63%
21-22	\$891,391,052	\$0.754151	\$6,722,428	+7.48%	+7.75%
22-23	\$925,971,453	\$0.775160	\$7,177,810	+2.79%	+6.77%
23-24	\$1,027,969,774	\$0.726913	\$7,472,439	-6.22%	+4%
24-25	\$1,111,798,422	\$0.690083	\$7,672,321	-5.07%	+2.67%
25-26	\$1,302,797,378	\$0.634740	\$8,269,383	-8%	+7.78%
26-27	\$1,363,382,264	\$0.619905	\$8,451,670	-2%	+2.20%

The significant increase in 2020-2021 and 2015-2016 resulted from lower-than-average tax requests in the years preceding. Cash reserves were depleted over several years, 2012-2020. To build up the cash reserves, larger-than-normal tax requests have had to be made. The school district is much better financially than it was five years ago. Additionally, the school district is currently in the middle of a facility project that includes parking, gym space, weight room, band room, and additional amenities.