BUDGET COMMISSION

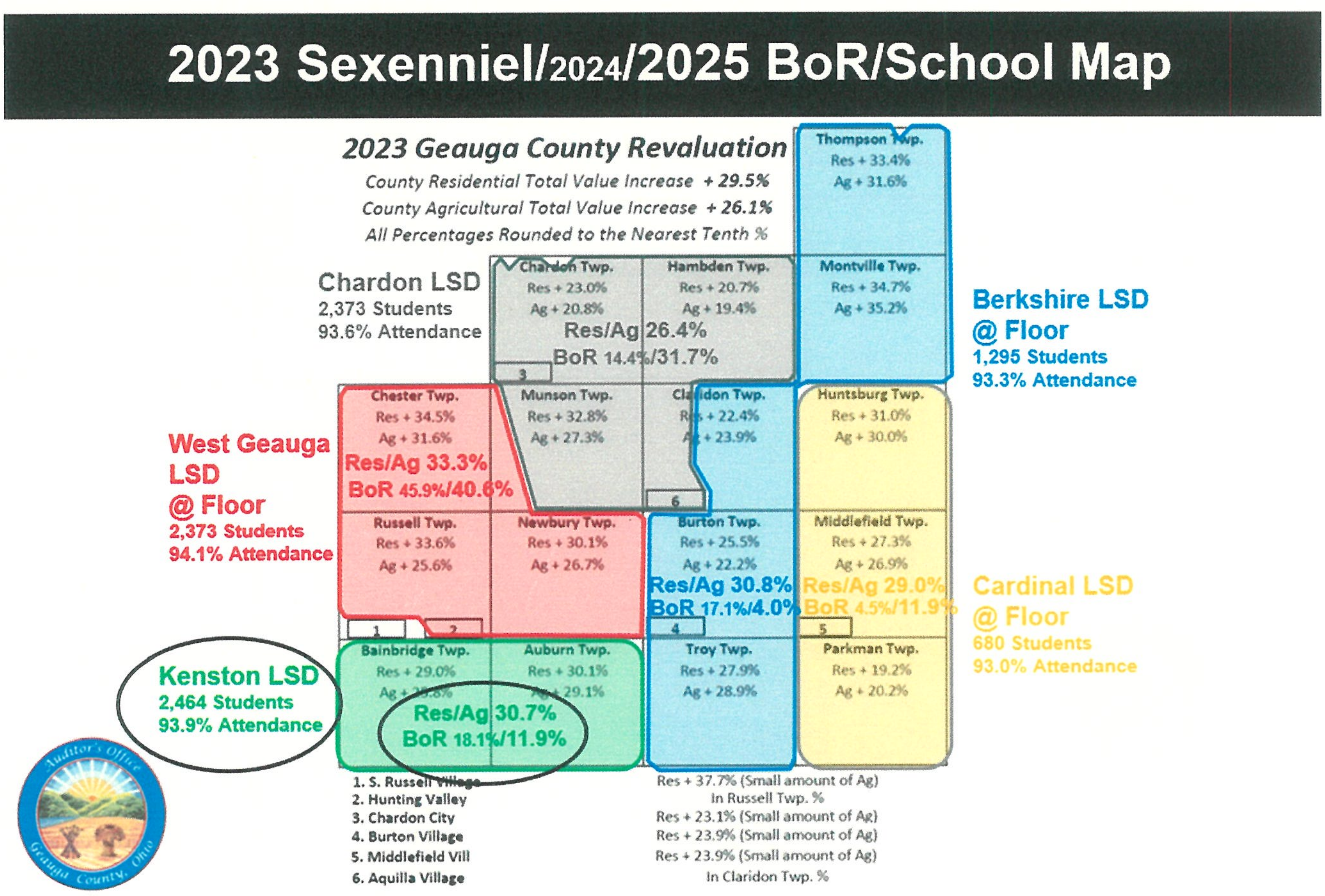
The Geauga County Budget Commission met in special session on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, at 9:01 a.m. at the Auditor's Conference Room 231 Main St. Chardon, Ohio.
Present: Geauga County Auditor Charles E. Walder, Geauga County Prosecutor James R. Flaiz, and Geauga County Treasurer C. P. Hitchcock.
Also Present: Deputy Chief Administrator DATA, CARE, DARC, Frank Antenucci, Chief Operations Officer, Pam McMahan, Deputy Auditors Tina Kloski and Kristen Sinatra.

Special Meeting Advertised: **2026/2027 School District Budget Hearings and Regular Business**
Virtual attendance was offered for public viewing.

<u>2026/2027 School District Budget Hearings were called to order at 9:01 a.m.</u>

These slides were part of Mr. Walder's presentation.
Information in the slides was sourced from the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Development.
The slides specific to each school are in that school's section.

<u>Kenson LSD (began at 9:01 a.m.)</u>
Motion by Charles E. Walder, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock, to approve the Kenston Local School District



2026/2027 budget as adjusted:

School Assessed Values

Geauga County School Districts
Assessed Value Comparison

	TY2025 Valuation				Change in Valuation					
	Res/Ag	Other	Public Utility	Total	Res / Ag	Percent	Other	Percent	Public Utility	Total
Kenson LSD	1,061,774,680	118,337,180	24,523,393	1,224,635,253	8,756,620	0.72%	4,663,780	3.94%	1,131,333	4.61%
Chardon LSD	823,894,960	107,671,030	56,851,857	988,417,847	4,559,380	0.47%	(1,539,730)	-1.43%	2,222,477	[illegible]
West Geauga LSD	1,141,278,370	66,842,260	55,649,173	1,263,769,803	5,487,150	0.43%	666,190	1.00%	1,836,493	3.30%
Berkshire LSD	441,162,170	50,835,680	19,693,872	511,691,722	3,549,330	0.69%	1,602,390	3.15%	1,009,252	5.12%
Cardinal LSD	355,060,860	95,902,410	22,734,219	473,697,489	6,608,960	1.40%	2,617,630	2.73%	1,362,019	5.99%
Total	3,843,171,040	439,588,560	159,452,514	4,442,212,114	28,961,440	0.75%	8,010,260	1.82%	7,561,574	4.74%

The Above Includes Overlap Values

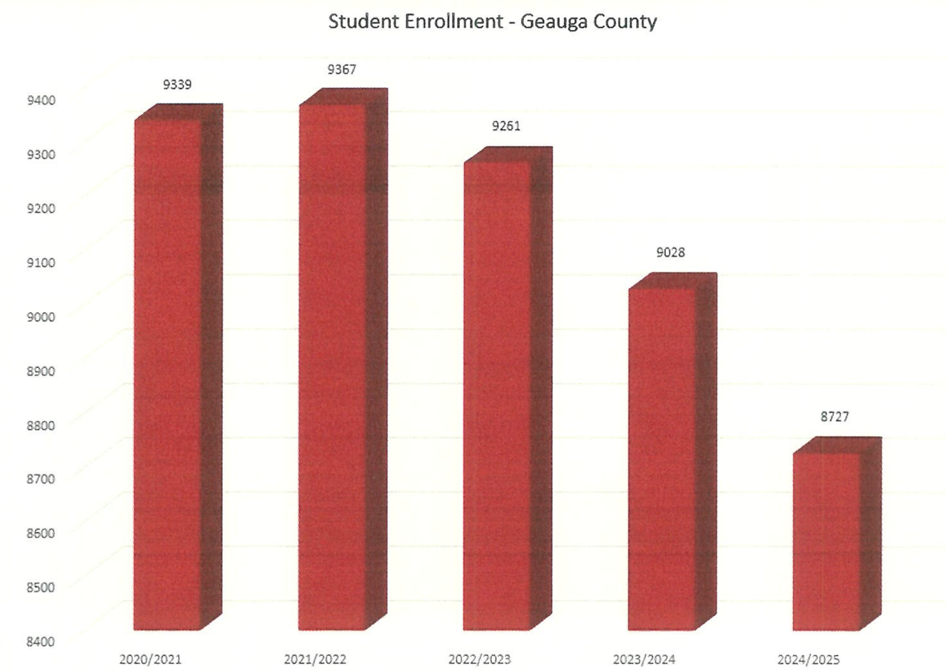
School Taxation Ranking

Geaua County
School Taxation Evaluation
Tax Year 2025/Collection 2026

Residential Effective Rates

	Full Rates		Inside*		Current	Perm						Total Eff.
	Rate	Rank	General	Perm Improv.	Expense*	Improv.	Bond	Classroom Facilities	Emergency	Substitute	Total	Rank
Kenston LSD	89.760000	1	4.500000	0.000000	23.210935	0.998860	2.770000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	31.479795	1
Chardon LSD	80.680000	2	3.500000	1.000000	24.816403	1.388650	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	30.705053	2
West Geauga LSD	48.090000	5	4.500000	0.000000	16.545053	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	4.790000	0.000000	25.835053	3
Berkshire LSD	52.250000	4	4.500000	0.000000	15.508001	0.000000	2.450000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	22.458001	4
Cardinal LSD	57.600000	3	4.000000	0.500000	16.757063	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	21.257063	5
Auburn JVSD	1.500000		1.500000								1.500000	
Lake County Financing	4.900000		1.466349								1.466349	

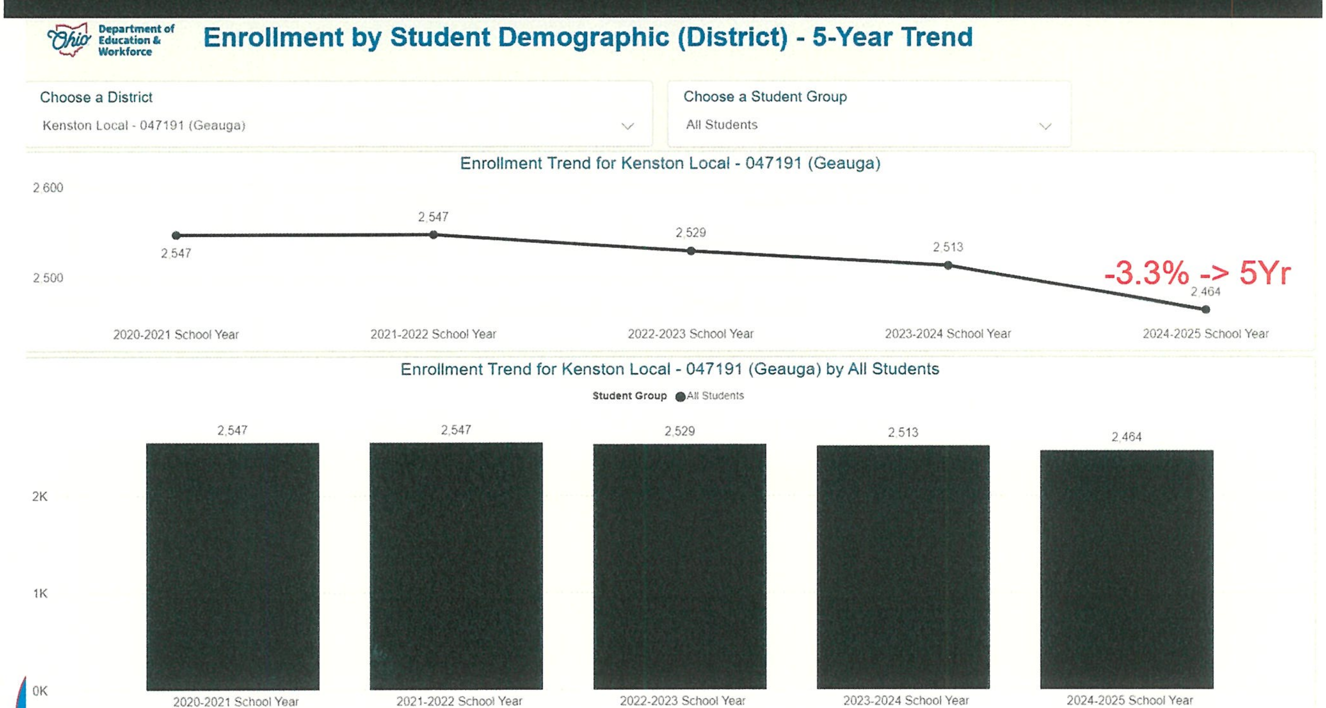
Geauga Enrollment Trend



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

* **Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Enrollment



County Wide
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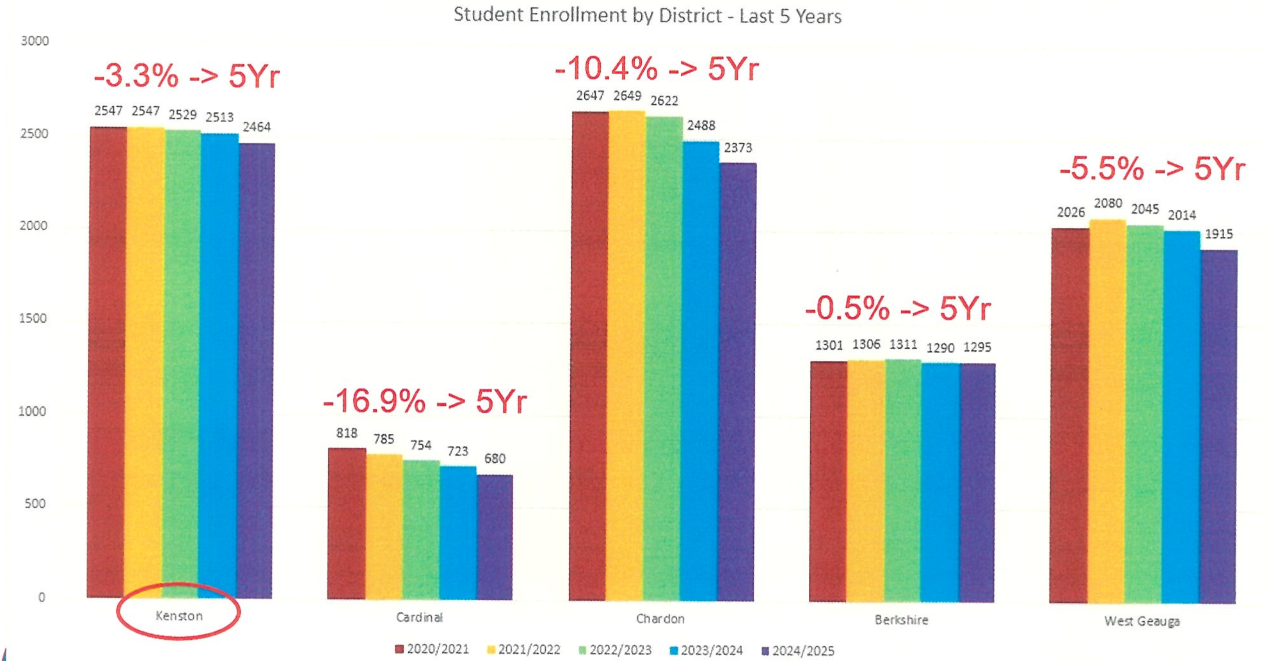
Geauga Enrollment Trend by District



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

* **Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Kenston Budget Submission Summary

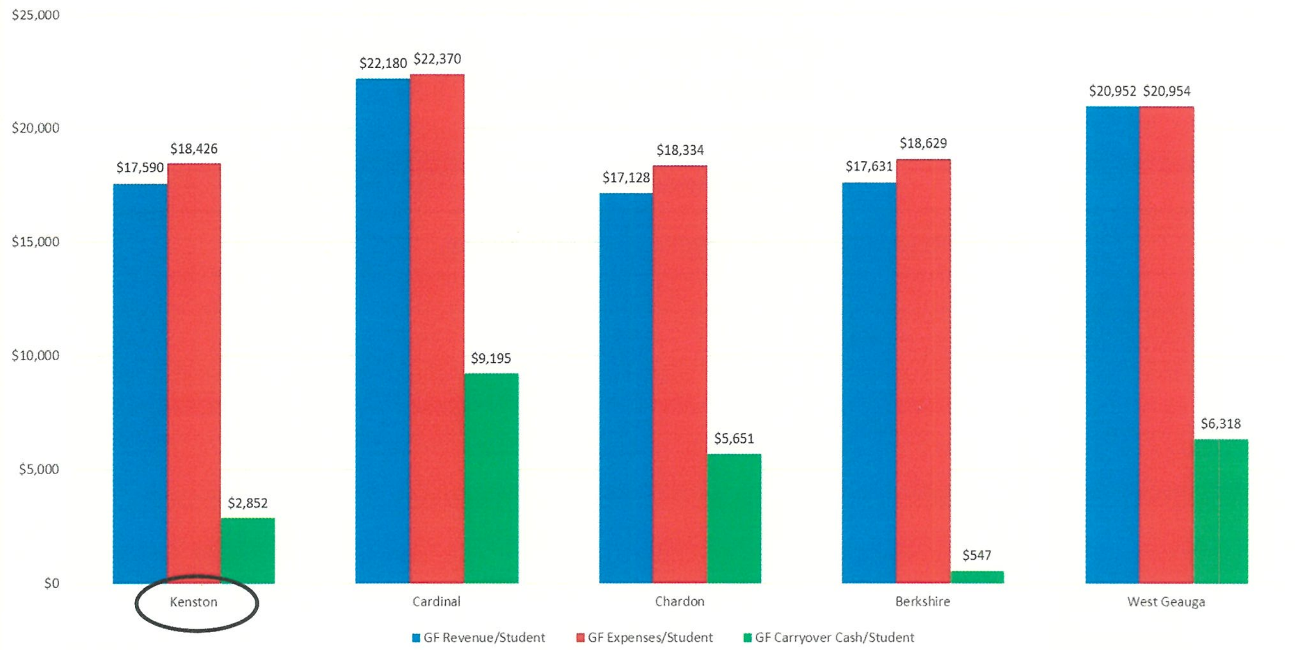
- General Fund (Adjusted):

Beginning Balance	$ 9,088,476
Revenue (As Certified)	$43,341,602
Expenses	$45,401,711
Ending Balance	$ 7,028,367

- Estimated Cash as % of Expenses 15.5%
- GF Revenue per Student* $ 17,590
- GF Expenses per Student* $ 18,426
- Carryover Cash per Student* $ 2,852

* Enrollment from Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website (2024/2025 = 2,464 Students)
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Geauga Revenue/Expense/Carryover per Student Comparisons



* **Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Cash as % of Expense

Cash as % of Expense Traditional District Comparison

Return to Traditional District Data | Return to Selection Page

Choose a District: Kenston Local - 047191 (Geauga)

Choose a Fiscal Year: Multiple selections

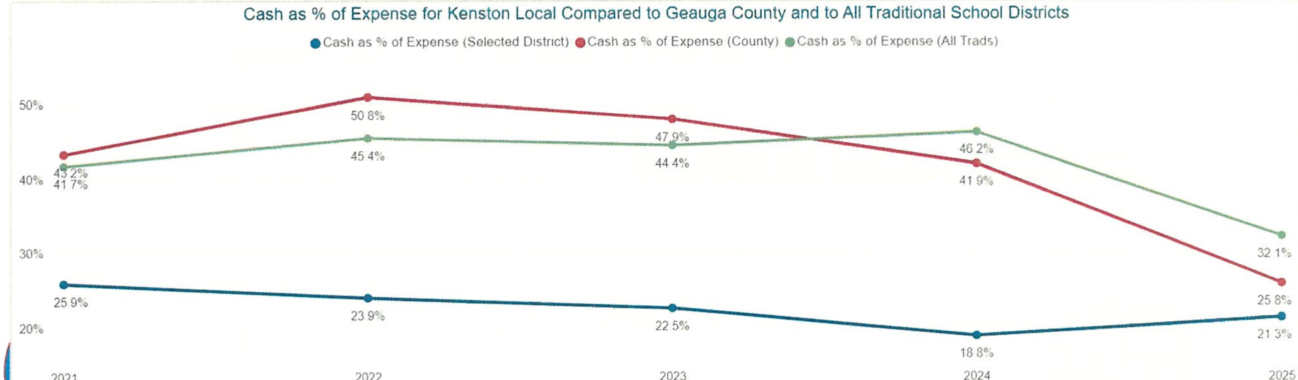
KENSTON

2025 - 21.3%
2026 - 20.8%
Budget Year - 15.5%

Cash as % of Expense for Kenston Local Compared to Geauga County and to All Traditional School Districts

Fiscal Year / District	2021 Cash as % of Expense	2021 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2021 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2022 Cash as % of Expense	2022 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2022 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2023 Cash as % of Expense	2023 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2023 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2024 Cash as % of Expense	2024 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2024 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2025 Cash as % of Expense	2025 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2025 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)
Kenston Local - 047191 (Geauga)	25.9%	43.2%	41.7%	23.9%	50.8%	45.4%	22.5%	47.9%	44.4%	18.8%	41.9%	46.2%	21.3%	25.8%	32.1%

Cash as % of Expense for Kenston Local Compared to Geauga County and to All Traditional School Districts



* **Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Kenston Budget PI Summary

- Permanent Improvement Fund (Adjusted):

Beginning Balances	$ 1,296,280
Revenues (As Certified)	$ 1,173,349
Expenses	$ 1,438,400
Ending Balances	$ 1,031,229

- Represents 71.7% Cash as a % of Expenses.

Kenston School Budget Summary

- 1mil = $1.22M @ 100% collection.
- New construction added $9.3k revenue to certain levies.
- 2023 Revaluation raised Inside Millage ~ $1.16M.
- Above the 20mill floor – (27.71mills Res/Ag).
- 2024/2025 GF Revenue decreased $170k over 2023/2024.
- 2024/2025 GF Expenditures decreased over $1.75M over 2023/2024.
- 2029 Sexennial has been moved to 2030 to better align cycles.

- ***Recommend Approving Budget.***

2026/2027 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET HEARINGS

KENSTON LSD

Treasurer - Seth Cales — Starting at 9:00 a.m. February 18, 2026 attended the hearing representing Kenston LSD.

	REQUESTED	*APPROVED BY BUDGET COMMISSION
General Fund		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	9,088,476.00	9,088,476.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**44,096,709.00**	43,341,602.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	45,401,711.00	45,401,711.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	7,783,474.00	7,028,367.00
Difference is projected tax revenue collection	Revenue Considered:	**$ 43,341,602**
Bond Fund 2002		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	1,603,564.00	1,603,564.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**2,642,363.00**	2,646,247.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	2,642,363.00	2,642,363.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	1,603,564.00	1,607,448.00
Difference is projected tax revenue collection	Revenue Considered:	**$2,646,247**
2015 Bond Fund First Collection 2018		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	434,079.00	434,079.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**595,931.00**	611,577.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	595,931.00	595,931.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	434,079.00	449,725.00
Difference is projected tax revenue collection	Revenue Considered:	**$611,577**
2024 PI Levy Fund First Collection 2025		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	1,296,280.00	1,296,280.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**1,173,349.00**	1,173,349.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	1,438,400.00	1,438,400.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	1,031,229.00	1,031,229.00
	Revenue Considered:	**$1,173,349**

HB264 Energy Conservation Note is unvoted debt paid with proceeds transferred from the General Fund. Matures 12/1/27

Total estimated millage for Tax Year 2026 (2027 Collection) — Value of 1Mill TY25 $1.224.635.25

4.50	Inside General Fund
81.49	Outside (voted) Gneral Fund
1.00	Premanent Improvement (voted)
2.77	Bonds
89.76	Total Mills

Tentative approval subject to vote of the Budget Commission

TY2025 CY2025 Manufactured Home Collection N/A

Auditor Walder began by going through his slides for Kenston LSD. He explained that his office tracks Board of Revision (BOR) requests and which district the requests originate from to gauge the temperament of the taxpayers in each district. The Kenston LSD population appears to be good with their cost structure. He said the attendance is great in the school. There was a decline in enrollment

Kenston LSD continued:

but compared to other County school districts they are in the lower end. The remaining slides covered cash as a percentage of expenses, enrollment, carry over per student, as well as budget vs cash comparisons, and a summary. You are one of the highest funded schools; however, you need to look at how the taxpayers respond to that funding, and from the BOR's they are fine. They are in the middle of the pack with enrollment decline. Auditor Walder advised that they have consistently been below the State and County averages cash as a percentage of expenditure. Auditor Walder reviewed the PI Fund and indicated that there were a lot of funds there; however, you need to look at all the factors, the school had submitted several projects that are pending that will consume some of that money, so it is not an excessive carryover. Auditor Walder shared that he was advised by the Tax Commissioner that the 2029 sexennial is being moved to coincide with the 2030 schedule. The change was made to balance the equation better. He recommends approving the budget.

Treasurer Hitchcock reviewed the documents three times and was looking for something to grab on to; however, all he could come up with is a second to Auditor Walder's recommendation to approve. He commented that it was exceptional work, and he acknowledged it has not been easy. It well represents the County. He had no idea Auditor Walder would do such a strong job of presenting the case in support of the budget and the taxpayers should appreciate it. This was probably the best presentation in the State.

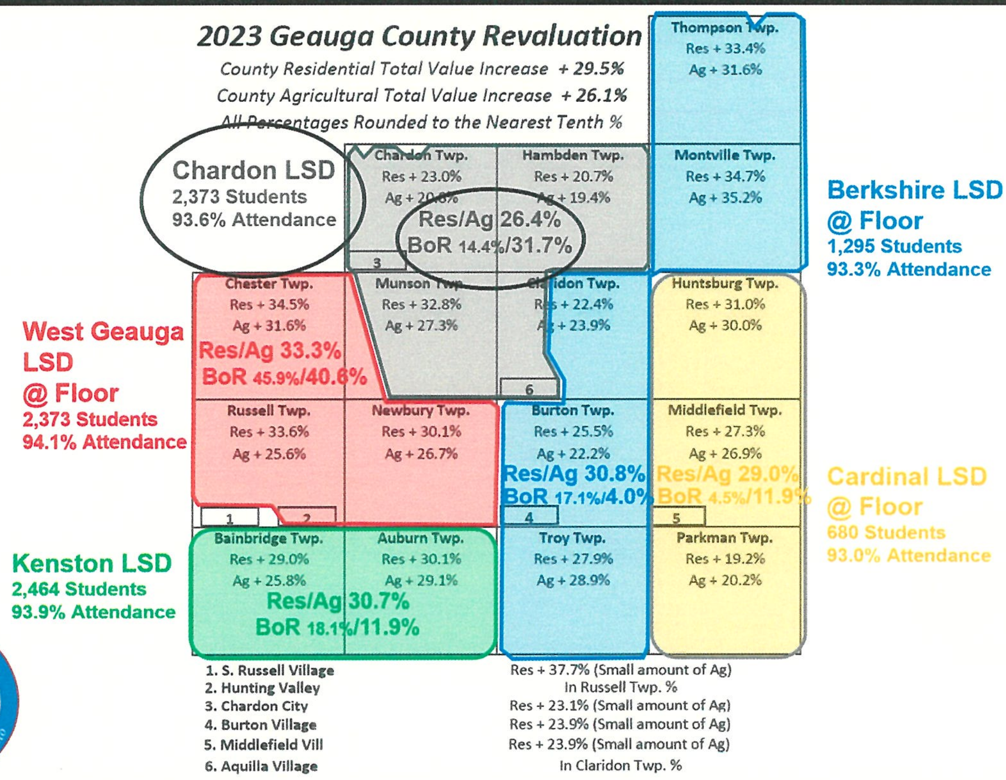
Prosecutor Flaiz advised that this budget was overall the best budget presented this round. Prosecutor Flaiz advised that the numbers are really tight. Your actuals are not very far away from your actuals. He thinks the PI levy was a good move. The only concern is cash carryover at 15% is a little tight. He would like to see it closer to 20%. Other than time, there is not much of a way out of that situation.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.
Certificate was signed and delivered to the Kenston LSD Treasurer along with Rate Resolution.

Chardon LSD (began at 9:19 a.m.)

Motion by Christopher Hitchcock, seconded by James Flaiz, to approve the Chardon Local School District 2026/2027 budget as presented:

2023 Sexenniel/2024/2025 BoR/School Map



School Assessed Values

Geauga County School Districts
Assessed Value Comparison

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Chardon LSD	823,894,960	107,671,030	36,851,857	968,417,847	4,559,380	0.47%	(1,539,730)	-1.43%	2,222,477	6.03%
West Geauga LSD	1,141,278,370	66,842,260	55,649,173	1,263,769,803	5,487,150	0.43%	666,190	1.00%	1,836,493	3.30%
Berkshire LSD	441,162,170	50,835,680	19,693,872	511,691,722	3,549,330	0.69%	1,602,390	3.15%	1,009,252	5.12%
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The Above Includes Overlap Values

School Taxation Ranking

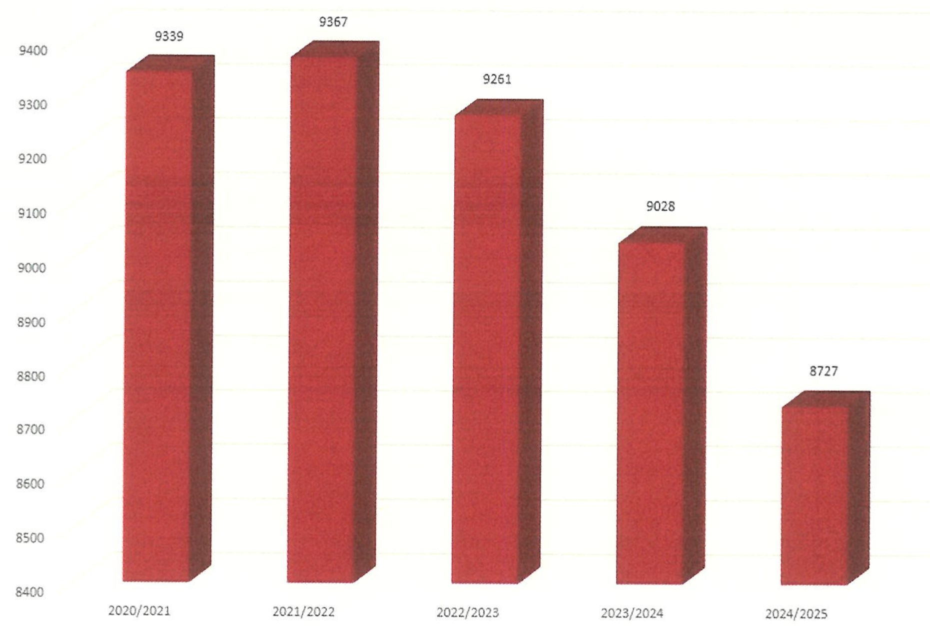
Geaua County
School Taxation Evaluation
Tax Year 2025/Collection 2026

Residential Effective Rates

	Full Rates Rate	Full Rates Rank	Inside* General	Inside* Perm Improv.	Current Expense*	Perm Improv.	Bond	Classroom Facilities	Emergency	Substitute	Total	Total Eff. Rank
Kenston LSD	89.780000	1	4.500000	0.000000	23.210935	0.998860	2.770000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	31.479795	1
Chardon LSD	80.680000	2	3.500000	1.000000	24.816403	1.388650	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	30.705053	2
West Geauga LSD	48.090000	5	4.500000	0.000000	16.545053	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	4.790000	0.000000	25.835053	3
Berkshire LSD	52.250000	4	4.500000	0.000000	15.508001	0.000000	2.450000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	22.458001	4
Cardinal LSD	57.600000	3	4.000000	0.500000	16.757063	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	21.257063	5
Auburn JVSD	1.500000		1.500000								1.500000	
Lake County Financing	4.900000		1.466349								1.466349	

Geauga Enrollment Trend

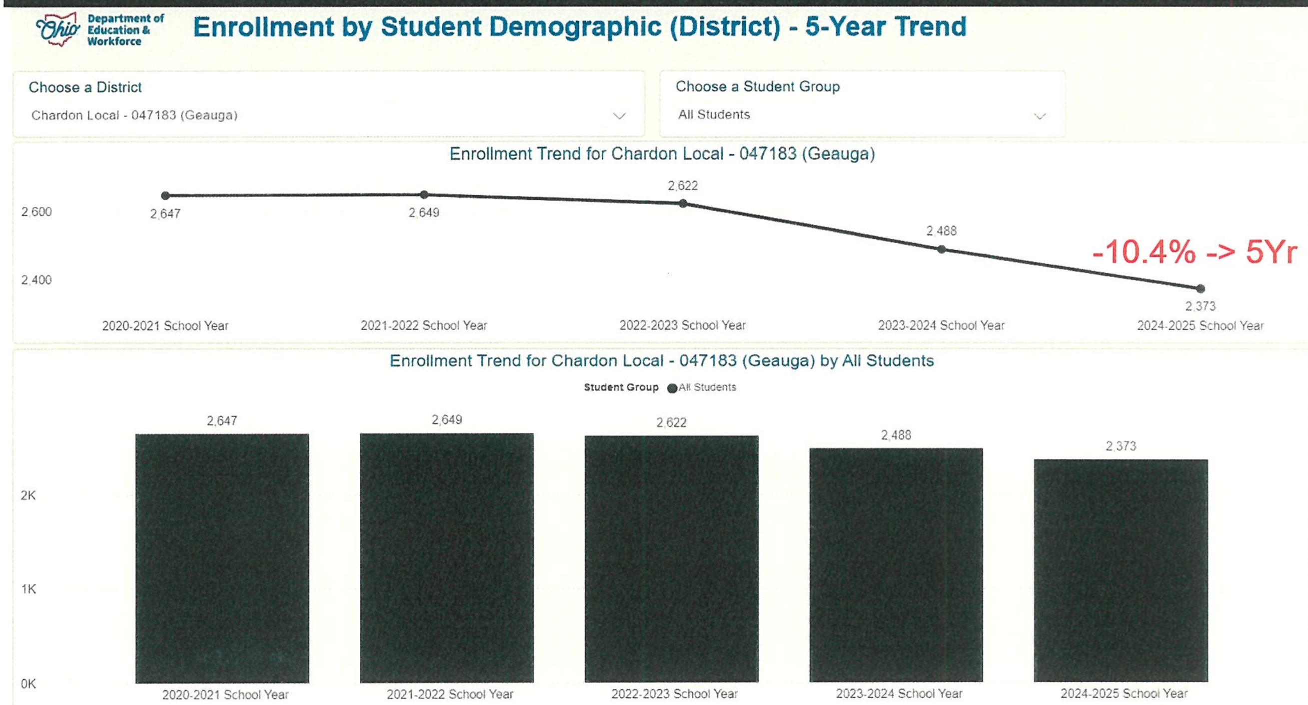
Student Enrollment - Geauga County



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

* **Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Enrollment



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

*** Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
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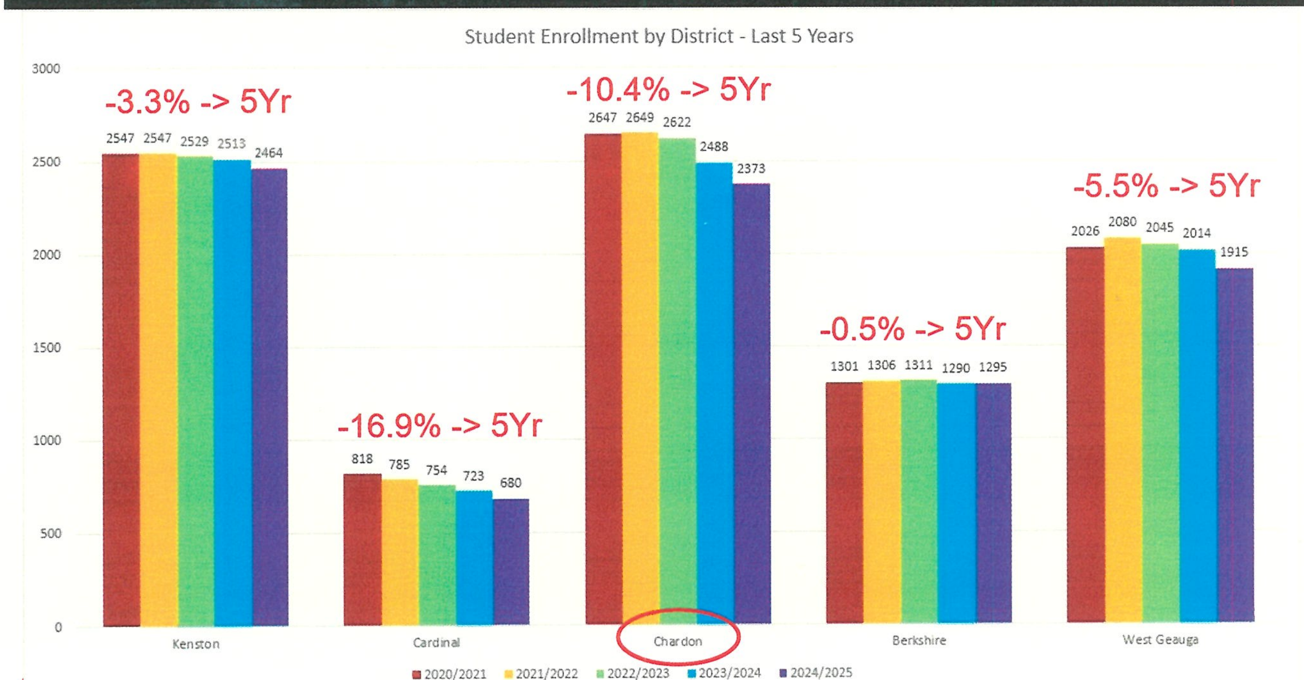
Geauga Enrollment Trend by District



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

*** Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Chardon Budget Submission Summary

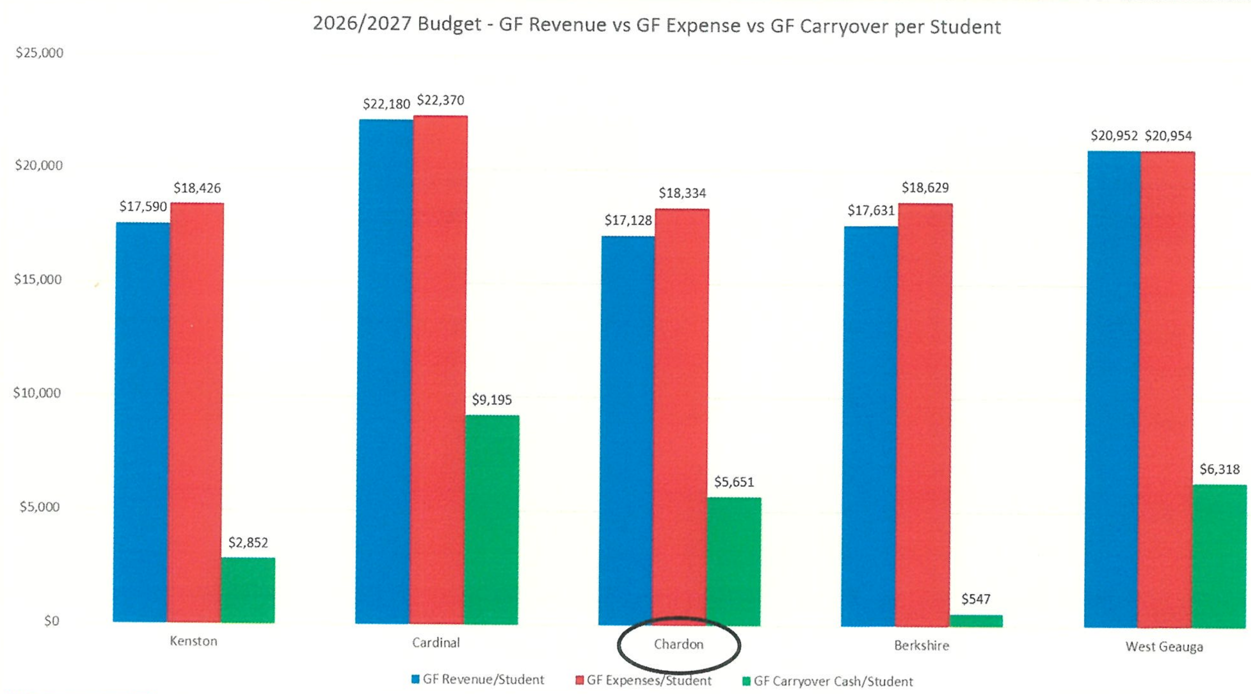
- General Fund (Adjusted):

Beginning Balance	$16,270,631	↓
Revenue (As Certified)	$40,644,482	↑
Expenses	$43,506,452	↓
Ending Balance	$13,408,661	↓

- Estimated Cash as % of Expenses 30.8% ↑
- GF Revenue per Student* $ 17,128 ↑
- GF Expenses per Student* $ 18,334 ↑
- Carryover Cash per Student* $ 5,651 ↑

* Enrollment from Ohio Department of Education Website (2024/2025 = 2,373 Students)
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Geauga Revenue/Expense/Carryover per Student Comparisons



* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
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Cash as % of Expense

Cash as % of Expense Traditional District Comparison

Return to Traditional District Data | Return to Selection Page

Choose a District: Chardon Local - 047183 (Geauga)

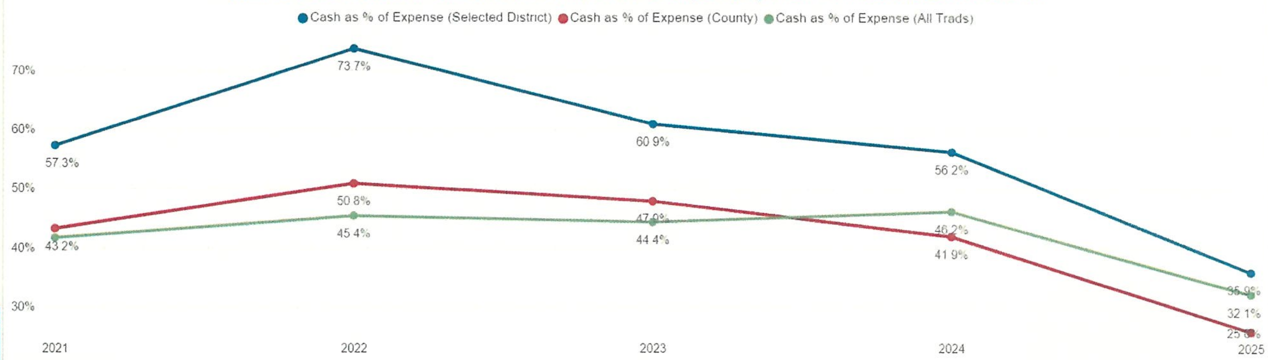
Choose a Fiscal Year: Multiple selections

CHARDON
2025 - 35.9%
2026 - 38.9%
Budget Year - 30.8%

Cash as % of Expense for Chardon Local Compared to Geauga County and to All Traditional School Districts

Fiscal Year	2021			2022			2023			2024			2025		
District	Cash as % of Expense	Cash as % of Expense (County)	Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	Cash as % of Expense	Cash as % of Expense (County)	Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	Cash as % of Expense	Cash as % of Expense (County)	Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	Cash as % of Expense	Cash as % of Expense (County)	Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	Cash as % of Expense	Cash as % of Expense (County)	Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)
Chardon Local - 047183 (Geauga)	57.3%	43.2%	41.7%	73.7%	50.8%	45.4%	60.9%	47.9%	44.4%	56.2%	41.9%	46.2%	35.9%	25.8%	32.1%

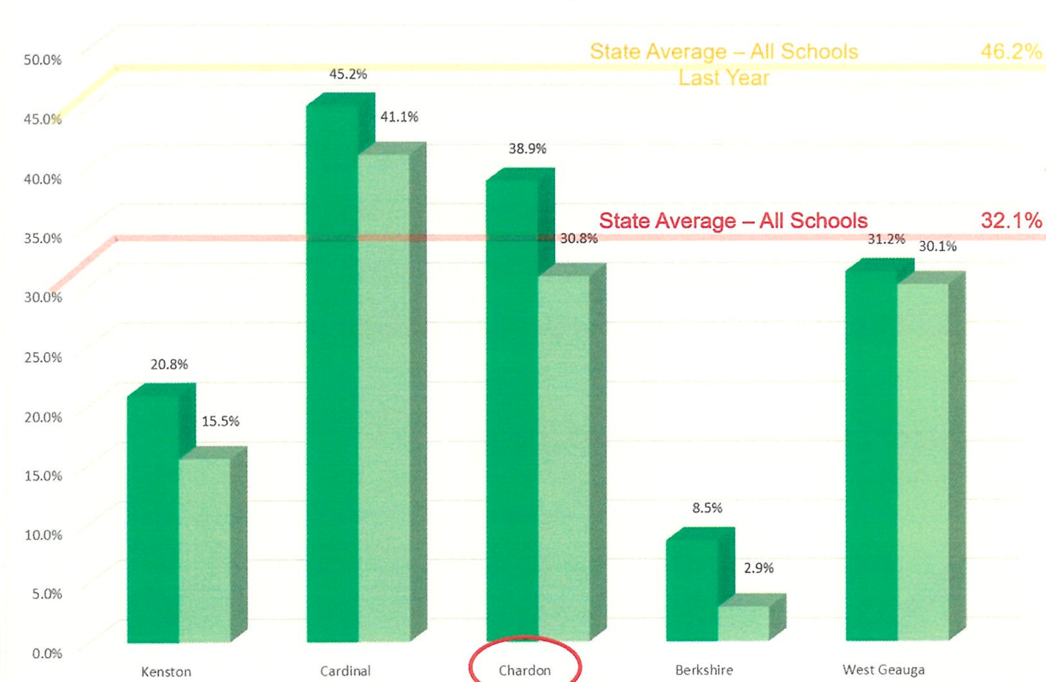
Cash as % of Expense for Chardon Local Compared to Geauga County and to All Traditional School Districts



* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Geauga 2025/2026 Actual vs 2026/2027 Budget GF Cash Comparisons

2025/2026 Actual vs. 2026/2027 Budget - GF Cash as % Expenses



* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Chardon Budget PI Summary

- Permanent Improvement Fund (Adjusted):

Beginning Balances	$ 2
Revenues (As Certified)	$ 2,393,721
Expenses	$ 2,371,941
Ending Balances	$ 21,782

  - Represents 1% Cash as a % of Expenses.

Chardon School Summary

- 1mil = $968k @ 100% collection.
- New construction added $6.1k revenue to certain 2026 levies.
- 2023 Revaluation raised Inside Millage ~ $828k.
- Above the 20mil floor – (28.316mills Res/Ag).
- 2024/2025 GF Revenue decreased $1.66M over 2023/2024.
- 2024/2025 GF Expenditures increased over $4.98M over 2023/2024.
- 2029 Sexennial has been moved to 2030 to better align cycles.

- ***Recommend Approving Budget.***

CHARDON LSD

Starting at 9:00 AM February 18, 2026

Deb Armbruster, Treasurer attended the hearing representing Chardon LSD.

	REQUESTED		* APPROVED BY BUDGET COMMISSION
General Fund			
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	16,270,631.00		16,270,631.00
Estimated 2026/20267Revenue	**40,658,892.00**	*	40,644,482.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	43,506,452.00		43,506,452.00
Estimated 6/30/2026 Cash Balance	13,423,071.00		13,408,661.00
Tax calculation is higher in budget.	**Revenue Considered**		**$40,644,482.00**
Permanent Improvement			
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	2.53		2.53
Estimated 2026/20267Revenue	**2,379,309.00**	*	2,393,721.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	2,371,941.00		2,371,941.00
Estimated 6/30/2026 Cash Balance	7,370.53		21,782.53
Tax calculation is lower in budget.	**Revenue Considered**		**$2,393,721.00**
Debt Fund			
Tax Anticipation Note			
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	45,186.00		45,186.00
Estimated 2026/20267Revenue	**405,000.00**		405,000.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	405,000.00		405,000.00
Estimated 6/30/2026 Cash Balance	45,186.00		45,186.00

*TAN obligation revenue coming from Permanent Improvement tax revenues
Obligation to be recalculated each Fiscal Year

****Tentative approval subject to vote of the Budget Commission*** Value of 1Mill TY25 $968,417.85

Total estimated millage for Tax Year 2026 (2027 Collection)

		MFG Homes	Net dist TY25CY25
3.50	Inside General Fund	General w/Current Exp F	99,175.21
1.00	Inside Permanent Improv. Fund	Perm Impr Fund	7,776.54
74.18	Outside (voted) General Fund	State Credits	49,589.82
2.00	Outside Permanent Improvement		
80.68	Total Mills	TOTAL	156,541.57

Auditor Walder began his presentation regarding the Chardon Local School District. Their BOR complaints went up significantly over the year before; he thinks it may be due to the way the numbers fell out due to the delay of the sexennial. Student attendance is great. They were the highest increase in the County of 6%. The indicator is more of what the population is saying. Your residents have not raised higher concern over the funding. Their trend is lower enrollment, which for the County and State is on the decline. Auditor Walder stated that the school has directed their cash to perform improvements on the facilitites and added the bus garage. He feels they will quickly be reaching the average for the State. He ran the PI at 1% of cash to % of expenses. The value of 1Mill is a bit south of $1,000,000 for the school. Recommends approving the budget.

Treasurer Hitchcock advised he believes they are close but not quite there. He sees their general fund went down compared to estimated expenses verses the actual expenses. Chardon LSD Treasurer, Deb Armbruster, advised they actually spent $47 million last year, compared to the year before of $42 million. This was due to the bus garage project. Treasurer Hitchcock asked if that was paid out of the

Chardon LSD continued:

PI fund. Deb Armbruster advised that part of it was funded with PI, with the balance from the General Fund. Auditor Walder inquired what the total cost was for the completion of the Bus/Business Compound project. Deb Armbruster indicated it was 7.5 million. Treasurer Hitchcock inquired, should that project not have bene paid out of the PI fund? Auditor Walder referred to the slide reflecting the PI fund ending balance [not enough funds remained to cover the full project via PI funds].

Prosecutor Flaiz said they did a great job. He continued sharing, there were some sharp criticisms a few years ago; some folks take it and act on it and others do not. He felt they acted on it and invested in capital projects and brought the cash carryover down. He said the bus garage project was such an improvement to the campus and greatly improved the traffic flow. He shared, it was a great use of the funds and spending the money on a need. Great job.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

Certificate was signed and delivered to the Chardon LSD Treasurer along with Rate Resolution.

Cardinal LSD (began at 9:33 a.m.)
Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Charles E. Walder, to approve the Cardinal Local School District 2026/20267 budget as presented and accept the post submission received 01/20/2026:

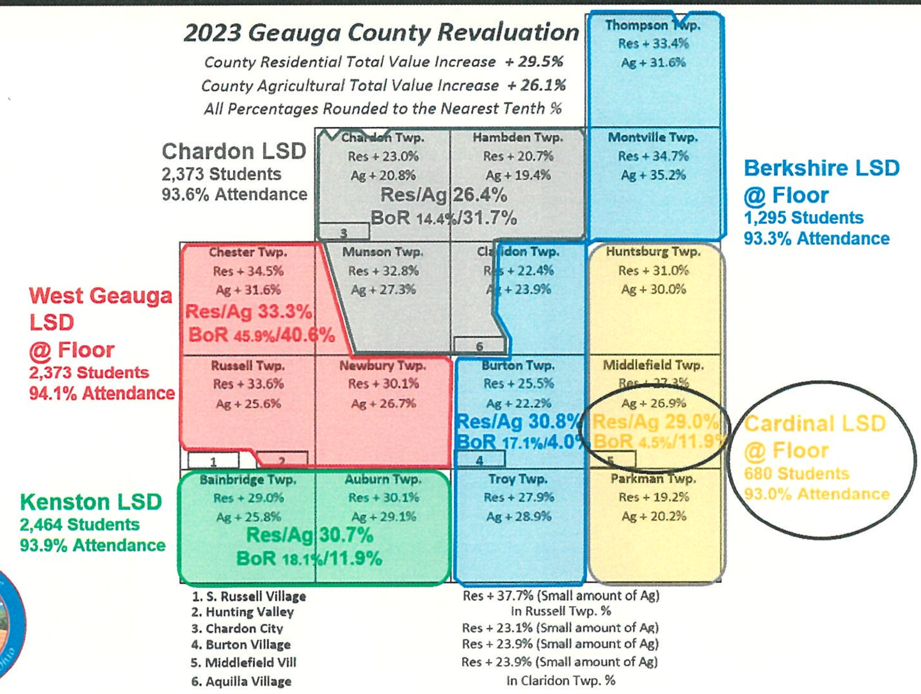
School Assessed Values

Geauga County School Districts
Assessed Value Comparison

	TY2025 Valuation				Change in Valuation					
	Res/Ag	Other	Public Utility	Total	Res / Ag	Percent	Other	Percent	Public Utility	Total
Kenson LSD	1,081,774,680	118,337,180	24,523,393	1,224,635,253	8,756,620	0.72%	4,663,780	3.94%	1,131,333	4.61%
Chardon LSD	823,894,960	107,671,030	36,851,857	968,417,847	4,559,380	0.47%	(1,539,730)	-1.43%	2,222,477	6.03%
West Geauga LSD	1,141,278,370	66,842,260	55,649,173	1,263,769,803	5,487,150	0.43%	666,190	1.00%	1,836,493	3.30%
Berkshire LSD	441,162,170	50,835,680	19,693,872	511,691,722	3,549,330	0.69%	1,602,390	3.15%	1,009,252	5.12%
Cardinal LSD	355,060,860	95,902,410	22,734,219	473,697,489	6,608,960	1.40%	2,617,630	2.73%	1,362,019	5.99%
Total	3,843,171,040	439,588,560	159,452,514	4,442,212,114	28,961,440	0.75%	8,010,260	1.82%	7,561,574	4.74%

The Above Includes Overlap Values

2023 Sexenniel/2024/2025 BoR/School Map



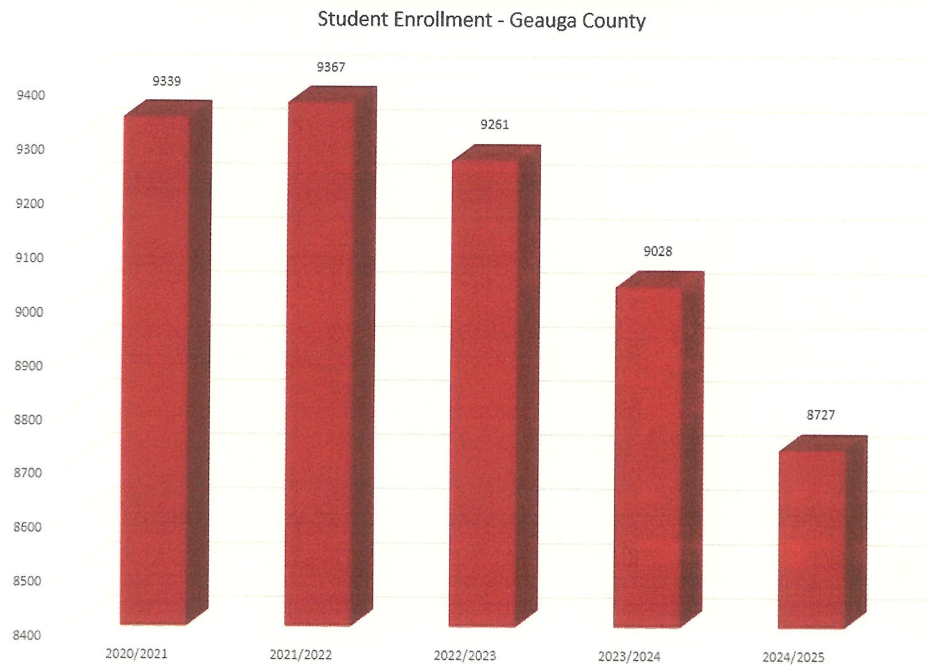
School Taxation Ranking

Geaua County
School Taxation Evaluation
Tax Year 2025/Collection 2026

Residential Effective Rates

	Full Rates		Inside*		Current	Perm						Total Eff.
	Rate	Rank	General	Perm Improv.	Expense*	Improv.	Bond	Classroom Facilities	Emergency	Substitute	Total	Rank
Kenston LSD	89.760000	1	4.500000	0.000000	23.210935	0.998860	2.770000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	31.479795	1
Chardon LSD	80.680000	2	3.500000	1.000000	24.816403	1.388650	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	30.705053	2
West Geauga LSD	48.090000	5	4.500000	0.000000	16.545053	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	4.790000	0.000000	25.835053	3
Berkshire LSD	52.260000	4	4.500000	0.000000	15.508001	0.000000	2.450000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	22.458001	4
Cardinal LSD	57.600000	3	4.000000	0.500000	16.757063	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	21.257063	5
Auburn JVSD	1.500000		1.500000								1.500000	
Lake County Financing	4.900000		1.466349								1.466349	

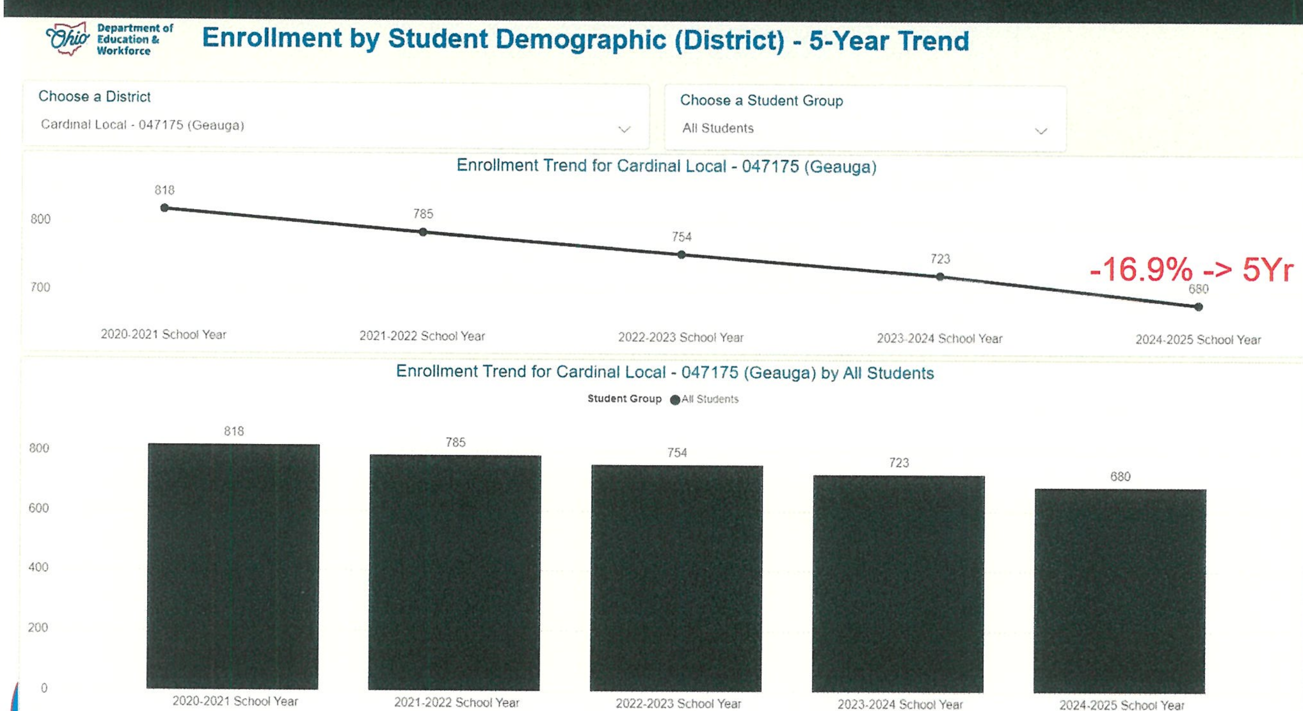
Geauga Enrollment Trend



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

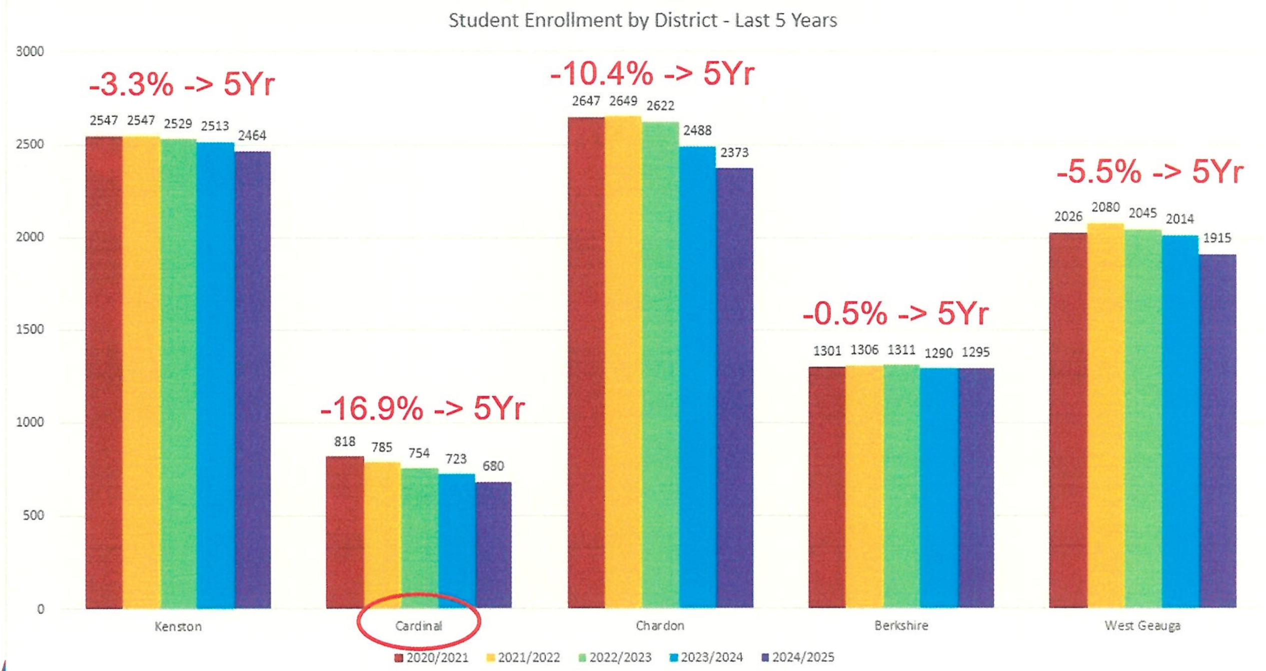
Enrollment



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Geauga Enrollment Trend by District



County Wide
-6.6% -> 5Yr

*** Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website**
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Cardinal Budget Submission Summary

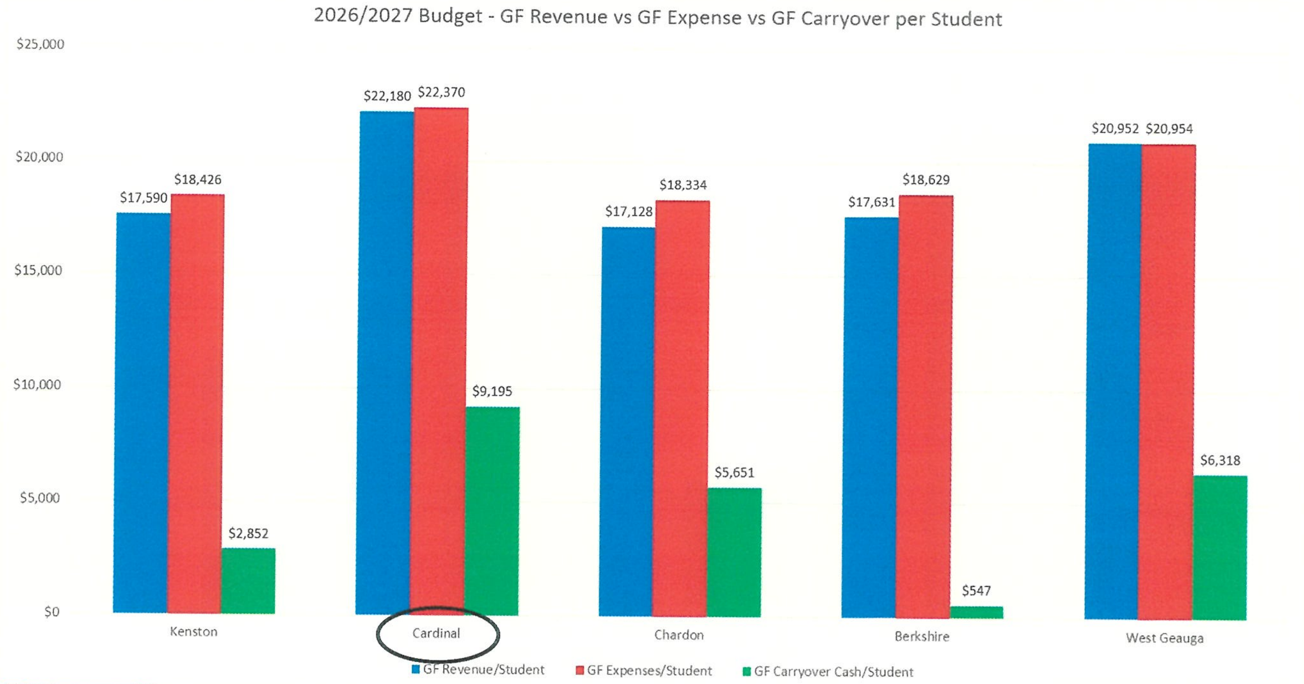
- General Fund (Adjusted):

Beginning Balance	$ 6,382,197	↑
Revenue (As Certified)	$15,082,100	↑
Expenses	$15,211,405	↓
Ending Balance	$ 6,252,892	↑

- Estimated Cash as % of Expenses 41.1% ↑
- GF Revenue per Student* $ 22,180 ↑
- GF Expenses per Student* $ 22,370 ↑
- Carryover Cash per Student* $ 9,195 ↑

* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website (2024/2025 = 680 Students)
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Geauga Revenue/Expense/Carryover per Student Comparisons



* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Cash as % of Expense

Cash as % of Expense Traditional District Comparison

Return to Traditional District Data | Return to Selection Page

Choose a District: Cardinal Local - 047175 (Geauga)

Choose a Fiscal Year: Multiple selections

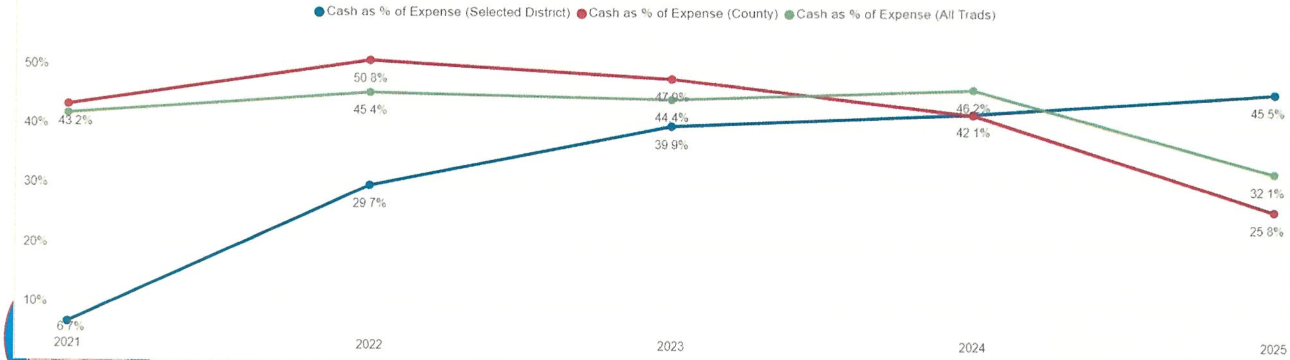
CARDINAL

2025 - 45.5%
2026 - 45.2%
Budget Year - 41.1%

Cash as % of Expense for Cardinal Local Compared to Geauga County and to All Traditional School Districts

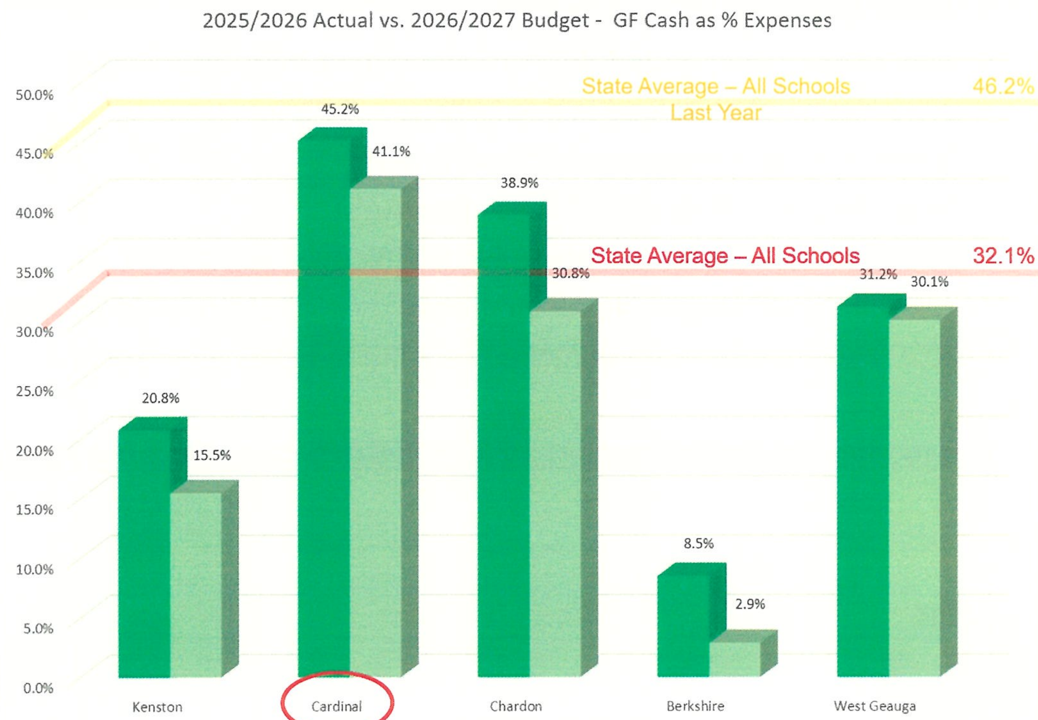
Fiscal Year / District	2021 Cash as % of Expense	2021 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2021 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2022 Cash as % of Expense	2022 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2022 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2023 Cash as % of Expense	2023 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2023 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2024 Cash as % of Expense	2024 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2024 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)	2025 Cash as % of Expense	2025 Cash as % of Expense (County)	2025 Cash as % of Expense (All Trads)
Cardinal Local - 047175 (Geauga)	6.7%	43.2%	41.7%	29.7%	50.8%	45.4%	39.9%	47.9%	44.4%	42.1%	41.9%	46.2%	45.5%	25.8%	32.1%

Cash as % of Expense for Cardinal Local Compared to Geauga County and to All Traditional School Districts



* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Geauga 2025/2026 Actual vs 2026/2027 Budget GF Cash Comparisons



* Source: Ohio Department of Education & Workforce Website
(https://reports.education.ohio.gov/report/report-card-data-district-enrollment-by-student-demographic)

Cardinal Budget PI & COPS/Lease Summary

- Permanent Improvement Fund (Adjusted):

Beginning Balances	\$ 190,478
Revenues (As Certified)	\$ 232,112
Expenses	\$ 320,000
Ending Balances	\$ 102,590

- Represents 32% Cash as a % of Expenses.

- COPS/Ground Lease Debt Fund:

Beginning Balances	\$ 35,072
Revenues (As Certified)	\$ 400,891
Expenses	\$ 400,891
Ending Balances	\$ 35,072

Cardinal School Summary

- 1mil = $474k @ 100% collection.
- New construction added $8.5k revenue to certain 2026 levies.
- 2023 Revaluation raised Inside Millage ~ $400k.
- 0.5mill Inside -> Permanent Improvement.
- Near the 20mill floor (20.757mills Res/Ag).
- 2024/2025 GF Revenue increased $336k over 2023/2024.
- 2024/2025 GF Expenditures increased over $621k over 2023/2024.
- 2029 Sexennial has been moved to 2030 to better align cycles.

- ***Recommend accepting post 1/20/26 PI/COPS submission & Approving Budget.***

2026/2027 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET HEARINGS

CARDINAL LSD

Dan Wilson - Treasurer

Starting at 9:00 a.m. February 18, 2026 attended the

	REQUESTED	*APPROVED BY BUDGET COMMISSION
General Fund		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	6,382,197.00	6,382,197.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**15,599,135.00**	15,082,100.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	15,211,405.00	15,211,405.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	6,769,927.00	6,252,892.00
Includes Transfer-out to COPS Debt Service	**Revenue Considered:**	**$15,082,100**
Debt /Bond Retirement		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	210,569.00	210,569.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**0.00**	0.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	0.00	0.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	210,569.00	210,569.00
	Revenue Considered:	**$0**
Permanent Improvement		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	190,478.00	190,478.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**249,982.00**	232,112.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	320,000.00	320,000.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	120,460.00	102,590.00
Tax revenue at 98%	**Revenue Considered:**	**$232,112.00**
COPS Ground Lease DEBT		
Estimated 7/1/2026 Unencumbered Cash Balance	35,072.00	35,072.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Revenue	**400,891.00**	400,891.00
Estimated 2026/2027 Expense	400,891.00	400,891.00
Estimated 6/30/2027 Cash Balance	35,072.00	35,072.00

**Based upon submitted Debt Schedule.*

Transfer-in from GF	**Revenue Considered:**	**$400,891**

Total estimated millage for Tax Year 2026 (2027 Collection)	
4.00	Inside General Fund
0.50	Inside Permanent Improvement
53.10	Outside (voted) General Fund
0.00	Bond Retirement
0	Library Bond Retirement
57.60	Total

MFG Homes Revenue	Net Dist TY25CY25
General Fund w/Current E:	16,099.31
Perm Improvement	706.79
Bond Fund	0.00
State Credits	4,579.05
TOTAL	21,385.15
Value of 1Mill TY25	$473,697.49

***Tentative approval subject to vote of the Budget Commission**

Form GCA-002 Revised 02/04/2026

Auditor Walder advised they had 12% of the BOR cases. They increased considerably from prior year; however, because of the volume reduction in percentages, this can be misleading. Assessed value is the lowest in the district, increase was almost 6%. This is a good indicator. There are some other concerns; they are third ranked in full milage at a rate of 57.6 and they are last ranked as effective mills by your residents at 21.25 mils. They are underfunded in comparison to other districts. They have a low student count. Cardinal school treasurer, Dan Wilson, asked to addressed the matter on enrollment at which time he introduced the superintendent who shared information about the Husky Virtual Academy.

Prosecutor Flaiz asked, at what point when there are 50 children in kindergarten do you decide if this is viable? There are fixed costs to running a school. There is a treasurer, school nurses, bus drivers, etc. These are there regardless of the number of students. Then you have the facility issues. The

Superintendent inquired what he was implying . . . closing? Prosecutor Flaiz advised consolidating or closing. Since the Prosecutor has been on the Budget Commission this has happened twice in the county. The school replied that they have reduced the number of school buildings and they have no current facility issues. They are also comfortable with 50 students in the class as they are still providing quality products for what they do and further added that the community likes the product they are providing. The school treasurer advised, there have been significate incentives: the Husky Virtual Academy and ACE program; offering that the school has seen some growth.

Auditor Walder offered that the general fund is a bit misleading as they sold a building and those funds are placed in the general fund. This is why the indicators appear to be spiked. All of the metrics are up but Auditor Walder believes that this was due to the cash influx from the building sale. The school treasurer indicated the cash will be coming down; 40% is the recommended spot from the State. Auditor Walder offered that he would be concerned at the old average or above that average. Auditor Walder looked at PI and Ground Lease - both have a modiste carryover. Auditor Walder shared that some post 01/20/26 data was received. Therefore, he recommended accepting the post submission for PI and COPS and further recommended approving the budget.

Treasurer Hitchcock ask about the debt retirement fund, as it has a balance yet no activity coming or going. Is that money that could be returned to the taxpayers? The school treasurer indicated their goal is to get guidance from the State Auditor this year of how best to do that. Treasurer Hitchcock encouraged them to look into that.

Prosecutor Flaiz offered that he realizes that he already offended them with the mention of consolidation. However, Cardinal LSD is spending the most per student in the County. The other four districts are exceptionally rated by the State. You look at the spending per student and look at the fixed costs of running a school district; are your students getting the same quality as the other districts. The school treasurer commented that he has worked with various schools with various student counts; he believes that they have a unique need in their community for education. They are addressing that and feel they can sustain themselves as an individual district. They are focused more on investing in teaching and learning while being as efficient as possible.

Auditor Walder offered, to the Prosecutor's point, we are all facing a potential threat on the horizon to our entire funding system for government. We believe that we owe it to our taxpayers to have the dialogue, and the people can decide what they want for education. There are people willing to pay a higher price per student or a higher millage depending on where they live and the quality of education that they want. His worry is when we stop asking the question locally that question is asked by someone in Columbus, and we lose local control. He absolutely accepts their answers as valid and believes the residents need to hear the dialogue. Prosecutor Flaiz shared that he got the same reaction from the former Newbury LSD. They were offering two AP classes in the high school and they did not have extracurricular sports. Now (after consolidating with West Geauga LSD) those students have those opportunities. He advised that Cardinal LSD may not be there yet; however, the trend is concerning.

Treasurer Hitchcock asked, what do you think makes Cardinal specifically unique. The school treasurer replied that their students are able to go into the trades and follow family in their chosen pathway. They offer College credit plus, and a lot of extracurriculars that they do not charge for. Also, there are no fees. They do not charge anything. Treasurer Hitchcock inquired if the school participated in Auburn Career Center? The response from the school was, yes and further added, which also has no charge associated with it. Treasurer Hitchcock continued, asking if there was an impact with the Amish community? The school responded, yes and further commented that the Amish are expected to support their own schools even though they have to pay to attend.

Auditor Walder feels that the mistake the legislature is making is that they are considering all schools on a level playing field. He continued offering, there are cottage schools throughout the State where people just want their school the way they want it.

Treasurer Hitchcock advised that we are lucky Geauga County taxpayers are paying their bill; and though these calculations are based on 98% you will get more. Next year he cannot make that promise. He is already considering moving tax collections to 95% based on what he is hearing in finance world.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

Certificate was signed and was delivered to the Cardinal LSD Treasurer along with Rate Resolution.

A Rate Resolution for each school district was prepared and delivered for presentment to the respective BOE for their consideration and vote. The executed resolution is to be returned to the Auditor's Office (ORC 5705.34) by April 1st.

<u>School Budget hearings ended at 10:05 a.m</u>

<u>Regular Business:</u>

<u>Prior Minutes</u>

Motion by Charles E. Walder, seconded by James Flaiz, to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2026 - regular session.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

<u>2025/2026 School Amendments</u>

<u>Chardon L.S.D. – 2026 Amendment #5</u>
Motion by Christopher Hitchcock, seconded by James Flaiz, to amend Chardon LSD's Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified for the 2025/2026 School Year.

<u>Special Revenue Fund</u>
Increase #499 Misc. State Grants other source revenue 43,832.00 from 0.00 to 43,832.00.
Increase #516 Idea Part B other source revenue 6,407.74, from 1,247,415.52 to 1,253,923.26
Decrease #531 Title III other source revenue (2,390.99), from 17,645.43 to 15,254.44
Increase #572 Title I other source revenue 1,251.32, from 414,833.69 to 416,085.01
Decrease #584 Title IV other source revenue (19,932.86), from 71,321.40 to 51,388.54
Increase #587 IDEA – Preschool other source revenue 370.25, from 34,141.62 to 34,511.87
Decrease #590 Title II – A other source revenue (4,736.77), from 152,870.81 to 148,134.04
Decrease # 599 Misc. Federal Grants other source revenue (22,365.37), from 207,116.93 to 184,751.56

Net Adjustment: $2,435.32

New Special Revenue Funds Total:	$ 6,641,460.03
New 2025/2026 Certificate Total:	**$80,050,069.56**

**Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 2-18-2026 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

2026 Amendments

Chester Township – 2026 Amendment #1

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Charles E. Walder, to amend the Chester Township's 2026 Official Certificate of Estimated Resources as follows to reflect "actual" January 1, 2026 unencumbered cash balances and changes to tax revenue due to the new real estate values and rates for collection in 2026:

Chester Township

	New Fund Totals GCA-015 #1	Net change over (under) the GCA-014	
General Fund	1,725,101.54	839,286.38	Beginning Balances
	2,083,430.20	5,316.00	Other Source Revenue
Special Revenue funds	4,275,143.91	1,161,333.69	Beginning Balances
	8,215,744.30	31,446.00	Other Source Revenue
Capital Project Funds	410,511.24	410,511.24	Beginning Balances
	284,323.00	0.00	Other Source Revenue
New total - All Funds	16,994,254.19		
Net Change over Original Certificate		2,447,893.31	

New General Fund Total	3,808,531.74
New Special Revenue Fund Total	12,490,888.21
New Capital Projects Funds Total	694,834.24
Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds	16,994,254.19
Net Change in Beginning balances	2,411,131.31
Net Change in Tax Revenue	33,973.00
Net Change in Other Source Revenue	2,789.00
Total Net Changes	2,447,893.31

Auditor Walder voted to amend but wanted some discussion first. The unencumbered balance in the Fire Fund with 1.7 million beginning balance, General Fund beginning balance is 1.725 million, Road and Bridge beginning balance $821,000. Prosecutor Flaiz asked if he could run and grab his paperwork from last year to see what the township projected last year.

(Prosecutor Flaiz and Treasurer Hitchcock exited the meeting at 10:09 a.m. returning to the meeting at 10:12 a.m. and 10:13 a.m. respectively.)

Prosecutor Flaiz advised the township stated the General Fund 2026 estimated $888,000, Road & Bridge, they advised $562,000, Fire Fund they advised they would have 1.488 million. Auditor Walder said he is not trying to get heavy; he just wanted to get ahead of the budget. He had two entities jump out at him like a giant brick. This was one of them.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

East Geauga Fire District – 2026 Amendment #1

Motion by Charles E. Walder by James Flaiz, to amend the East Geauga Fire District 2026 Official Certificate of Estimated Resources as follows to reflect "actual" January 1, 2026 unencumbered cash balances and changes to tax revenue due to the new real estate values and rates for collection in 2026:

East Geauga Fire District

	New Fund Totals GCA-015 #1	Net change over (under) the GCA-014	
General Fund	489,189.33	6,800.08	Beginning Balances
	1,149,829.00	26,441.00	Other Source Revenue
New total - All Funds	1,639,018.33		
Net Change over Original Certificate		33,241.08	

New General Fund Total	1,639,018.33
Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds	1,639,018.33
Net Change in Beginning balances	6,800.08
Net Change in Tax Revenue	26,354.00
Net Change in Other Source Revenue	87.00
Total Net Changes	33,241.08

**Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 2-18-2026 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

Bainbridge Township – 2026 Amendment #1

Motion by Christpher Hitchcock, seconded by James Flaiz, to amend the Bainbridge Township 2026 Official Certificate of Estimated Resources as follows to reflect "actual" January 1, 2026 unencumbered cash balances and changes to tax revenue due to the new real estate values and rates for collection in 2026:

Bainbridge Township			
	New Fund Totals GCA-015 #1	Net change over (under) the GCA-014	
General Fund	1,812,070.78	386,870.08	Beginning Balances
	2,035,626.61	16,775.00	Other Source Revenue
Special Revenue funds	6,519,778.28	3,884,363.38	Beginning Balances
	14,133,359.62	354,578.38	Other Source Revenue
Debt Service Funds	1,228,282.70	(441,542.74)	Beginning Balances
	0.00	0.00	Other Source Revenue
Capital Projects Funds	3,236,434.47	39,909.88	Beginning Balances
	2,055,000.00	0.00	Other Source Revenue
Fiduciary Funds	2,272.83	(0.84)	Beginning Balances
	0.87	0.00	Other Source Revenue
New total - All Funds	31,022,826.16		
Net Change over Original Certificate		4,240,953.14	
	New General Fund Total		3,847,697.39
	New Special Revenue Fund Total		20,653,137.90
	New Debt Service Funds Total		1,228,282.70
	New Capital Projects Funds Total		5,291,434.47
	New Fiduciary Funds Total		2,273.70
	Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds		31,022,826.16
	Net Change in Beginning balances		3,869,599.76
	Net Change in Tax Revenue		220,330.00
	Net Change in Other Source Revenue	*	151,023.38
	Total Net Changes		4,240,953.14
	*Other Source revenue includes Fiscal increase of 3,966.38 +125,000 =$128,866.38 ESIDS and ODNR Grant (Centerville Mills)		

**Temporary Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 11-25-2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Prosecutor Flaiz asked what the current beginning balance was - $1.8 Million? Bainbridge advised the Commission last year that General would be $1,425,200

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

Thompson Township – Amendment #2

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Charles E. Walder, to amend the Thompson Township's Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

Special Revenue Funds:

Increase (new) FEMA Asst. Firefighters Grant (AFG) other source revenue 149,757.14, from 0.00 to 149,757.14.

New Special Revenue Funds Total:	$ 2,070,938.80
New 2026 Certificate Total:	**$ 2,603,158.91**

*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 2-18-2026 does not exceed estimated revenue.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

Russell Township – 2026 Amendment #1

Motion by Charles E. Walder, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock, to amend the Russell Township 2026 Official Certificate of Estimated Resources as follows to reflect "actual" January 1, 2026 unencumbered cash balances and changes to tax revenue due to the new real estate values and rates for collection in 2026:

Russell Township			
	New Fund Totals GCA-015 #1	Net change over (under) the GCA-014	
General Fund	1,046,653.49	565,231.35	Beginning Balances
	1,594,009.38	10,093.00	Other Source Revenue
Special Revenue funds	3,939,910.44	1,312,148.50	Beginning Balances
	6,626,584.19	1,170,123.00	Other Source Revenue
Debt Service Funds	0.00	0.00	Beginning Balances
	16,666.66	0.00	Other Source Revenue
Capital Projects Funds	1,906,414.24	380,860.92	Beginning Balances
	399,164.00	0.00	Other Source Revenue
New total - All Funds	15,529,402.40		
Net Change over Original Certificate		3,438,456.77	
	New General Fund Total		2,640,662.87
	New Special Revenue Fund Total		10,566,494.63
	New Debt Service Funds Total		16,666.66
	New Capital Projects Funds Total		2,305,578.24
	Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds		15,529,402.40
	Net Change in Beginning balances		2,258,240.77
	Net Change in Tax Revenue		1,172,592.00
	Net Change in Other Source Revenue		7,624.00
	Total Net Changes		3,438,456.77

**Temporary Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 11-21-2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Auditor Walder wanted to look at their funds. The general fund has a beginning balance of $1 Mill. Prosecutor Flaiz advised they estimated $481,000. Auditor Walder stated that it is off 100 %. More importantly, the police fund has a 1.3 million beginning balance. Prosecutor Flaiz stated that the township projected they would have $843,000. Auditor Walder said they have not collected the $1,000,000 levy (new police levy) yet. This is prior to collecting the $ 1 million. Treasurer Hitchcock advised that the voters said they wanted to give them 1 million. It is now up to them to show us that there is 1 million in expense. The review continued: Road and Bridge estimate: $815,000, the actual carryover was 1.2 million. Fire was estimated to be $489,000; the actual was $718,000 in carryover. Auditor Walder commented, they are all up.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

Geauga County – Amendment #2
Motion by Christopher Hitchcock, seconded by James Flaiz, to amend the Geauga County Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

Capital Projects Fund
Increase #4019 Senior Center Addition other source revenue 2,600,000.00, from 0.00 to 2,600,000.00.

New Capital Projects Fund Total:	$ 21,460,648.14
New 2026 Certificate Total:	**$240,768,644.19**

Voice vote: Two ayes. Mr. Flaiz nay. Motion carried

General Discussion

Public Comment:
Sarah, Representative from GLWV, requested copies of handouts, revenue certificates, sign-in sheets as well as PowerPoint presentation from the Budget Commission meeting. Auditor Walder shared that he would provide PowerPoint at the conclusion of the 2026/2027 School Budget Hearings (2/19/2026).

Being no further business to conduct it was moved by C. P. Hitchcock to adjourn the February 18, 2026 - special meeting at 10:34 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles E. Walder, Auditor
Secretary/Budget Commission