



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 7, 2024
To: Chief School Administrators
Route To: District School Business Administrators
From: Amanda Schultz, Executive Director/CFO
Division of Finance and Business Services

Initial Release of 2024-2025 Budget Software Application

The initial release of the 2024-2025 Budget Software Application was accessible to authorized school district personnel on January 17, 2024 through the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) [Homeroom portal](#). The budget software in the Homeroom portal is named "2024-2025 Budget Statement Software." This release included the revenue screen, appropriations screen, recapitulation of balances screen, enrollments screen, and many of the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) calculations and supporting documentation items. A list of the screens not yet released will be found on the home screen in the budget software.

Key Steps/Actions

The 2024 school election and budget procedures calendar for 2024-2025 is available through the NJDOE's School Finance webpage at [Election Calendar](#). The Election Calendar includes dates and deadlines relevant to school budget preparation, as well as the four special election dates in January, March, September, and December.

Accessing the Budget Software Application

Access to the 2024-2025 Budget Software Application is restricted to those school district employees for whom the school district's Homeroom Administrator has created a user account. Only through this account will district personnel be able to access the school district budget. First-time users authorized by the school district must contact the school district's Homeroom Administrator to create a unique User Identification and Password. Instructions for establishing a Homeroom Administrator and for establishing authorized users are documented in the "Homeroom Administrator Manual" available through the Homeroom portal. Important message to Homeroom Administrators: once you have entered the Homeroom Administration system, the 2024-2025 Budget Software Application is named "Budget Statement."

Guidance Documents

The NJDOE has prepared formal guidance for completing the 2024-2025 budget software. The 2024-2025 Budget Guidelines and Electronic Data Collection Manual and related appendices will be accessible through the NJDOE's [School Finance webpage](#) on or about January 31, 2024. Authorized users of the Budget Software Application are encouraged to review the manual prior to preparing the school district's budget statement.

Significant revisions and enhancements to the school district budget software are highlighted in the executive summary section of the 2024-2025 Budget Guidelines and Electronic Data Collection Manual and are detailed throughout that document.

To highlight revisions and enhancements included in the 2024-2025 Budget Software Application and guidance:

- On the SFRA report for health care cost adjustment, because the 2024 School Employees Health Benefit Program (SEHBP) insurance premium increased by 6.3 percent, there will be a maximum adjustment of 4.3 percent for increases to the tax levy cap for a school district's budgeted increase in

health care premium costs. This is calculated as increases in health care costs more than two percent and less than 6.3 percent, resulting in a 4.3 percent maximum adjustment.

- The recapitulation of balances screen contains a new reserve for State Military Impact Aid. This reserve is only applicable to the districts receiving 2021-2022 State Military Impact Aid pursuant to P.L. 2022, c.19.
- On January 16, 2024, Governor Murphy signed Senate Bill 4209 into law ([P.L. 2023, c.289](#)), eliminating vote on school budgets for Type II school districts in April elections except for separate proposals to spend above cap, modifying the dates for the board reorganization meeting for Type II April election districts, and clarifying the term dates of school board members. Updates to the budget process regarding this legislation are included in the budget guidelines document.

A message on the “Home” tab of the “2024-2025 Budget Statement Software” will indicate when an update to the software has been made after the software’s initial release. As in prior years, updates may include, but are not limited to, the release of software edits and notification of the availability of the following sections of the application: the “SEMI” selector; the “advertised budget” file selector; the “prepare user-friendly budget document” selector; the “minimum tax levy report” selector; the report of “district status above or below the expected local levy” selector; the “printable PDF” file selector; and the “county review and approval” page. The NJDOE will also update the software to load state aid upon release of the 2024-2025 state aid numbers. Please note the NJDOE’s updates will not overwrite the district’s previously entered data.

Budget Planning

For purposes of developing preliminary budgets, districts should make allowances for the possibility of changes in State Aid from 2023-2024 amounts. This recommendation is for planning purposes only and is no indication of the final State Aid allocation for 2024-2025. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-5, State Aid numbers will be provided to school districts within two days after the Governor’s budget message and represent the anticipated amount of aid payable to the district.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) applicable for the 2024-2025 budget year is 5.81 percent. The applicable regional administrative cost limits for 2024-2025 for the north, central, and south are \$2,776, \$2,585, and \$2,575, respectively.

Contact Information

Budget related questions should be directed to the Office of Fiscal Policy and Planning at budget@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
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