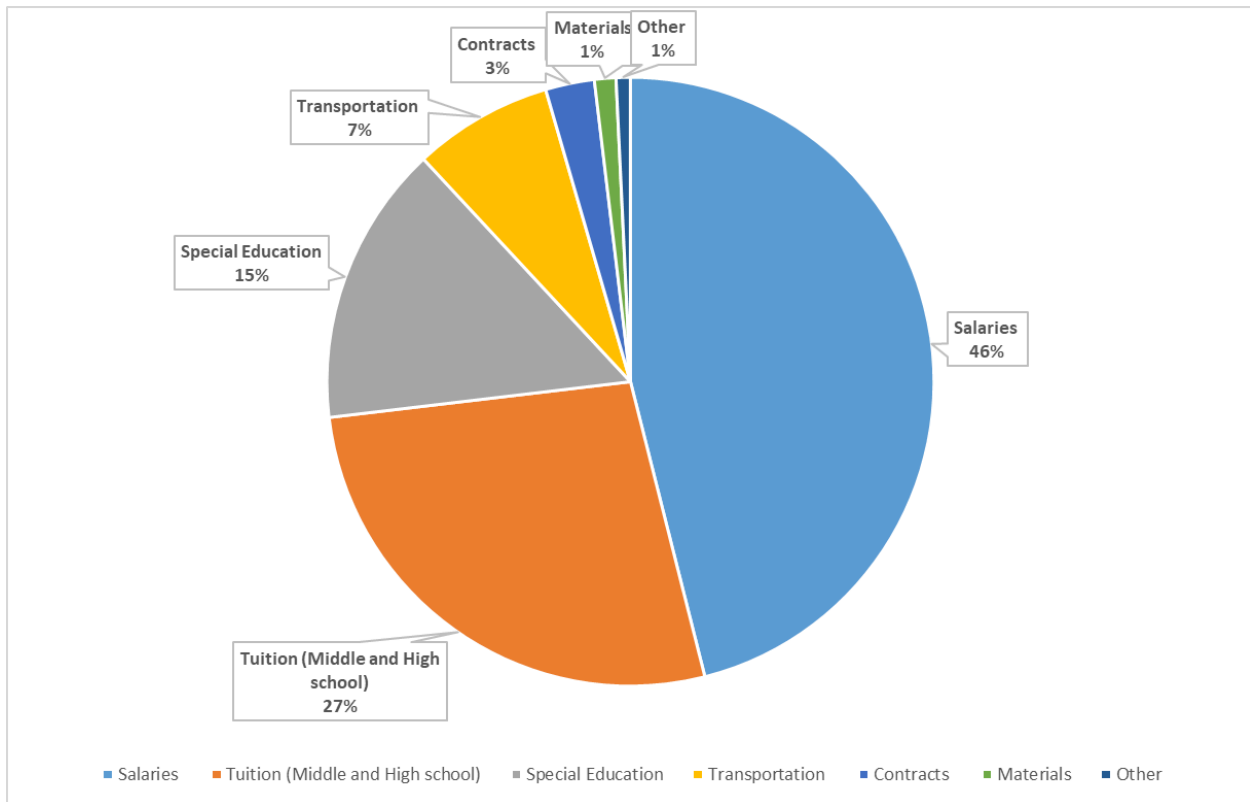


## Explanation of Worthington School District FY27 Budgets

The school and school committee put together the following information to accompany the budget spreadsheet and explain some of the significant factors determining this year’s budget request. The percentages below are based on the school budget request (gross minus revenue.)



### FY 26 School Expenses

Salaries	\$1,020,764.24
Tuition (Middle and High school)	\$600,000
Special Education	\$330,950
Transportation	\$164,737
Contracts	\$57,700.07
Materials	\$25,450.07
Other	\$16,750
<b>Total Gross</b>	<b>\$2,216,351.38</b>
Total Revenue	\$246,000
Total Town Approp.	\$1,970,351.38

**Student Demographic for 2025-2026**

<b>Worthington Students attending R.H. Conwell</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>School Choice into R.H. Conwell</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Total Students at R.H. Conwell</b>	<b>77</b> <b>(Preschool: 13, K: 8, 1st/2nd: 17,</b> <b>3rd/4th: 17, 5th/6th: 22)</b>
<b>Worthington Residents that School Choice Out Grades K-6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Worthington residents that Homeschool K-6</b>	<b>5</b>

**Education Budget Highlights**

The Elementary Budget is the one the superintendent and school committee have direct control over, and is therefore the best place to manage costs. However, Worthington’s elementary costs fluctuate more than larger schools when we have Worthington students who need high levels of special education services. A relatively modest increase in special education costs one year can result in a significant increase in the total “per-pupil” cost for that year. The increase in the gross elementary budget from SY25-26 to SY 26-27 is \$25,348.86.

**Staff Salary Increases, lines 11,12, 19-23:** We are in our 3rd year of a 3-year contract with the classroom teachers in which they receive a 5% COLA.

**Preschool, included in Lines 19 and 20:** Conwell had 13 full-time preschool students in the 2025–26 school year. The program will continue to be free in order to be accessible to all Worthington families and to prevent the district having to pay out-of-district costs for preschool special education. Priority will be given to existing preschool students and incoming Worthington students before students from other towns. In SY 27-28 Worthington School District will resume charging tuition for preschool students from other towns.

**School Employee Benefits:** Full-time employees at Conwell (18) are eligible for health insurance benefits. Full-time and part-time employees with teacher status make their own mandatory payroll contributions to the state teacher retirement fund. The Town does not contribute to their retirement. The Town does contribute to Hampshire County retirement for non-teacher staff who work 20 or more hours. That is a total of 10 employees.

**Line 47: After-School Enrichment:** Conwell continues to provide an after-school enrichment program to students in grades kindergarten through grade 6, five days per week during the school year and for 4 weeks during the summer. It is almost entirely funded by grants. The program director, Shannon Madden, succeeded in securing the highly competitive 5-year 21st-Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Grant from DESE that funds \$150,000 per year for the first 3 years, with decreased funding for years 4 and 5. We are currently in year 5. We will be applying for the next level of 21st CCLC grant funding later this spring. This grant allows Conwell to offer the after school and summer programming free to all students. The program also has an After-School and Out of School Time grant (ASOST) in the amount of \$16,800.00 for the 2025-2026 school year. This grant is through the Massachusetts After-School Partnership. This funds our school year program.

**Line 48-50: Hampshire Regional.** This line is a per-pupil cost and cannot be adjusted by the school committee or superintendent. It reflects the total number of students (40) who plan to attend Hampshire Regional this fall for grades 7–12 under the tuition agreement between Worthington and Hampshire Regional. Worthington will pay \$15,000 per student in FY27, and pay our own transportation and special education costs. Hampshire Regional High School's per-pupil cost was \$21,900 in 2023. Hampshire calculates their FY26 per pupil cost to be \$23,359.

### **Special Education Services and Special Education Summer School**

**Lines 51–55.** These lines are for necessary special education services to Worthington students. They are services required by students' special education plans and Worthington is legally obligated to provide them. Each year the costs are determined by the particular needs of the individual students living in Worthington. In 2026-27 Conwell will host a new in-house special education program to serve students who would otherwise need an out-of-district placement. This will save the district \$164,375 as well as enrich our students' educational experience. For FY27 the school committee voted to apply \$90,000 from the special education reserve fund to offset the cost for the consultant helping develop the program. This revenue is over half the current balance of the reserve fund, but the committee made this decision to help balance the town budget.

### **Using Grant and Other Revenue to Reduce the Budget Request**

The Worthington district receives aid from multiple state and federal sources that help reduce the amount the town needs to raise through taxation to support the school budget. These grants and other revenue are listed at the bottom of the budget spreadsheet with an itemization of where they have been allocated to reduce line items in the budget.

### **School Choice**

One important source of funds continues to be our school choice income. The school committee voted several years ago to reserve one third of each year's school choice income in a revolving fund to cover unexpected special education costs. The remainder of funds are applied to various line items of the budget to reduce the request. This year, 2025-26, Conwell had 13

school choice students, resulting in \$65,000 income. We anticipate a similar number of school choice students for FY27.

**Town-By-Town Per-Pupil Cost Comparison** - FY2024, the most recent data available from DESE is at this site: [Resource Allocation and District Action Reports \(RADAR\) - Office of Planning and Research - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#)

These numbers include all employee benefits and building maintenance costs, in addition to all of the costs itemized in Worthington's budget. The same categories of costs are included for each town so we can compare "apples to apples". Total students are all residents in the district for whom the town pays educational costs. It includes all resident public school students: those who are not home-schooled or attending private schools.