

HILLSBORO R-3 SCHOOL DISTRICT

100 Leon Hall Parkway Hillsboro, MO 63050 636-789-0060

District Motto: *Together, we educate and inspire the learners of today and the leaders of tomorrow*

Dr. Jon Isaacson, Superintendent



October 19, 2026

State Funding Reductions: Impact on Hillsboro R-3

The financial challenges facing Hillsboro R-3 are not new, and they are not unique to our district. State funding concerns have been discussed throughout the district's budget development process, at Board of Education meetings, and in local news reports.

When the district developed its 2026–27 budget, information from Jefferson City indicated Hillsboro would receive about \$786,445 less in state funding than the amount Missouri's school funding formula calculated.

However, following the September 15, 2026, Missouri State Board of Education meeting, and updated state funding information and projection details has increased Hillsboro's projected funding shortfall by another \$671,967.

The district's estimated state funding shortfall is now approximately \$1,458,412. This follows an actual reduction of \$713,770 during the 2025–26 school year. Combined, Hillsboro R-3 has lost or is projected to receive \$2,172,182 less in state funding thus far.

The same state funding challenges are affecting public schools throughout Jefferson County and across Missouri. Jefferson County's 11 school districts face an estimated combined \$11.1 million state funding shortfall.

While every district has different financial resources and operational needs, reduced state funding is forcing school districts across our region to reevaluate their budgets, staffing, educational programs, and services.

Proposition H, on the November 3, 2026, ballot, is about more than building new facilities and improving existing buildings. It also addresses the financial resources needed to maintain the educational programs, staffing, transportation, services, and opportunities Hillsboro R-3 currently provides.

The proposal includes identified facility and safety improvements, but the additional operating revenue will allow the district to respond to reduced state funding and maintain existing operations.

Over the years, Hillsboro has provided services and opportunities beyond the minimum requirements of Missouri law. These include transportation, extracurricular activities, field trips, specialized instructional programs, and community use of district facilities.

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These services benefit our students, families, and community, but they also have ongoing costs.

Without additional local revenue, the district must reduce expenditures and reconsider services it has historically provided.

As part of its financial planning, the district has identified the following reductions and operational changes if additional local revenue is not available.

2026–27 School Year — Anticipated Changes

- **Staffing:** Not filling the vacant district communications director position, with responsibilities reassigned to existing personnel.
- **Student Transportation:** Ending district-funded bus transportation for athletic events, extracurricular activities, and field trips. Transportation could remain available when groups or teams cover the associated costs.
- **Community Facility Use:** Adjusting fees and procedures for groups and organizations not affiliated with the school district, including youth sports organizations and other groups using district facilities.
- **Community Events:** Reviewing district funding for events such as Boo at the Barn and Christmas at the Farm.
- **Staffing Costs:** Evaluating vacant positions and consolidating responsibilities when employees leave or retire, rather than replacing every position.

2027–28 School Year — Additional Reductions

- **Educational Programs:** Changes to instructional staffing, elective offerings, career and technical education, and sixth-grade band scheduling.
- **Student Services:** Reductions or reassignments involving library support, lunch aides, student-conduct support, and other positions.
- **District Support Positions:** Reductions in curriculum support, data analysis, and leadership development roles.
- **Athletics:** Scheduling fewer nonconference home contests to reduce event staffing and operating expenses.
- **Regular Bus Transportation:** Considering the elimination of district-provided transportation for students living within one mile of school, where transportation generally does not qualify for state reimbursement.

Additional transportation changes, including larger service boundaries up to 3.5 miles door-to-door (in accordance with state law) or combined bus routes, may also be considered.

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These changes are not all final decisions. Some have already been implemented, others are recommended for specific dates, and additional measures may require Board of Education consideration.

What Happens With Proposition H?

If Proposition H is approved: The district would receive additional local operating revenue to help address state funding shortfalls, allowing the district to maintain existing programs and services and undertake the identified safety and facility improvements. The district would continue to determine future expenditures through its annual budget process and the Board of Education's approval of the budget.

If Proposition H is not approved: The additional operating revenue would not be available. The district would need to reduce expenditures and evaluate further changes to programs, staffing, transportation, and services to align ongoing expenses with available revenue. Proposed facility improvements will not occur.

Regardless of the election outcome, Hillsboro R-3 must operate within its available financial resources while prioritizing quality instruction, student safety, and long-term financial sustainability.

Our goal is to ensure that residents understand both the proposed facility improvements and the impact of state and local funding on existing programs and services provided by the Hillsboro R-3 School District.

Dr. Jon Isaacson
Superintendent