



Ovid-Elsie Area Schools

Office of the Superintendent

8989 E. Colony Road | Elsie, MI 48831-9725

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www.ovidelsie.org

June 26, 2026

Dear Ovid-Elsie Community,

At Ovid-Elsie Area Schools, we are committed to transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public funds. As we prepare for the 2026-2027 school year, I would like to provide an update regarding the district's financial outlook and the steps we are taking to ensure a strong future for our students and community.

At this time, the district is projecting a budget deficit of approximately \$500,000 for the upcoming school year. As a result, we anticipate using a portion of our fund balance to continue supporting student programming, educational opportunities, and district operations. While this projected deficit is larger than we originally anticipated, our district remains in a stable financial position.

A fund balance is similar to a savings account. It provides financial stability, helps districts manage unexpected expenses, and allows for strategic investments when needed. Ovid-Elsie has worked diligently to build and maintain a healthy fund balance, and utilizing a portion of those reserves to support students during challenging financial periods is one of its intended purposes.

Several factors have contributed to this projected deficit. Like many school districts across Michigan, Ovid-Elsie has experienced a steady decline in enrollment. Over the past 15 years, enrollment has decreased from approximately 1,826 students to approximately 1,255 students. Because state funding is largely based on student enrollment, fewer students result in less revenue for the district. In addition, uncertainty surrounding state funding continues to create challenges for long-term financial planning.

In response, we are actively reviewing all areas of district operations to identify efficiencies, reduce expenditures where possible, and maximize available grant and categorical funding sources. We are also utilizing attrition and thoughtful staffing decisions to help manage costs while minimizing impacts on students and classrooms.

While these financial realities present challenges, they also create opportunities. They provide an opportunity to carefully examine how we deliver programs and services, evaluate the use of our facilities, explore innovative approaches to meeting student needs, and ensure that our resources are aligned with the priorities of our community. Through this process, we can position Ovid-Elsie Area Schools to remain strong, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of future generations.

The district's recently adopted Strategic Plan is helping guide these conversations. Throughout the planning process, students, parents, staff, and community members shared valuable feedback regarding what they value most about Ovid-Elsie Schools. As we consider future opportunities and potential efficiencies, that feedback will continue to serve as an important foundation for our decision-making.



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In the coming months, we will be seeking additional input from our community. We believe that meaningful stakeholder engagement is essential as we explore future opportunities and plan for the long-term success of the district. We encourage community members, parents, staff, and students to participate in these conversations when opportunities arise.

Even after utilizing a portion of our fund balance, we anticipate maintaining reserves that remain above the Board of Education's established fund balance goal, providing the district with a solid financial foundation moving forward.

Our focus remains unchanged: providing excellent educational opportunities for our students, supporting our staff, and being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. We are committed to keeping our community informed as we navigate these challenges and opportunities together.

Thank you for your continued support of Ovid-Elsie Area Schools and for the trust you place in us each day.

Sincerely,

Mark Horak
Superintendent