

Sunnyside Unified School District

FY 2026-2027 Staffing & Employee Compensation Update



January 27, 2026

Sunnyside Unified School District

FY 2026-2027 Staffing



SUSD 100th Day ADM Yearly Comparison

YEAR	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
ADM	16,308	15,823	15,429	15,234	14,752	14,139	13,753	13,710	13,359	13,245	12,732
ADM DIFF		-485	-394	-195	-482	-613	-386	-43	-351	-164	-513
% DIFF		-3.5%	-2.5%	-1.3%	-3.2%	-4.2%	-2.7%	-0.3%	-2.6%	-1.2%	-3.9%

- ✓ Budget was Adopted in July 2025 using 13,254 ADM
 - ✓ Budget is being Revised with 12,732 ADM as of 12/1/25
 - ✓ Loss is now at -4.0% - 12,719 ADM as of 12/8/25
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- ✓ ADM is significantly different than actual enrollment
 - ✓ Enrollment is down **600** compared to this time last year
 - ✓ 100th day occurs in January and actual enrollment will usually be higher than ADM, which is the number used for funding purposes
 - ✓ Preschool with disabilities and Kinder students are counted at half in ADM count
 - ✓ Students are not always enrolled on the 1st day of school

FY2025-2026 Budget Revision Overview

Declining Enrollment = Reduced Funding

- ✓ State revenues and budget limit directly tied to student count / ADM-Fewer students = Less per-pupil funding
- ✓ Reduced budget limit also decreases M&O override (8%)
- ✓ Rising fixed costs create a widening budget gap (utilities, benefits, materials, services)

Financial Impact

- ✓ Higher cost per student
- ✓ Pressure on M&O Budget & reserves/carryover
- ✓ Yearly budget adjustments needed to prevent risk of future structural deficit

Staffing Adjustments

- ✓ Employee Salaries & Benefits = largest district expense
- ✓ Must align staff with enrollment “Right Size” - currently overstaffed at current enrollment levels
- ✓ Review vacancies and evaluate if position can be phased out

Facilities & School Capacity / Space Utilization

- ✓ Under-utilized buildings increase per-pupil costs and overall efficiency

Stabilize / Increase Enrollment

- ✓ Strong school climate & communication
- ✓ Look at ways to increase enrollment and retention
- ✓ Look at open enrollment practices
- ✓ Track students that leave / reasons for leaving

FY2025-2026 Budget Revision Overview

Maintenance & Operation – Net increase of \$285,543 from the adopted budget

- Revenue Control Limit adjustment due to ADM decrease **-\$3,359,990**
- Budget Balance Carryforward (BBCF) increase **\$1,920,231**
- Override Limit adjustment **\$3,017**
- One-time State Aid adjustment **\$959,669**
- One-time FRPL adjustment **\$762,615**

One-time adjustments and budget balance carryforward offset ADM deficit

District Additional Assistance – Net increase of \$2,015,060 from adopted budget

- DAA Allocation adjustment **\$4,140**
- One- time DAA supplement **\$351,488**
- Budget Balance Carryforward (BBCF) increase **\$1,604,928**
- Interest Revenue adjustment **\$754,505**
- Additional budget capacity applied to Facility renovations, upgrades, equipment

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

OBJECTIVE

To right-size the district's staffing in response to declining enrollment while minimizing the impact on students, staff, and the community, avoiding school closures, and adhering to district's staffing allocation standards.

OVERVIEW

The district's enrollment is declining, which leads to a reduction in per-pupil funding. In turn, the goal is to adjust staffing levels ensuring educational quality remains high, while also maintaining fiscal responsibility. The district strives to achieve staffing reductions through attrition, rather than layoffs, while carefully managing resources.

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Minimize Impact on Students and Instruction:** Ensure that the quality of education remains high by focusing on maintaining appropriate class sizes and supporting student needs.
- **Adhere to Staffing Allocation Standards:** Ensure that staffing reductions are made in accordance with the district's staffing allocation guidelines, balancing student-teacher ratios and support staff availability.
- **Attrition as the Primary Strategy:** Reduce staff through retirements and resignations wherever possible. This will allow for a smoother transition and avoid layoffs.
- **Involve Stakeholders:** Engage school principals, department heads, and key administrators in staffing discussions to ensure transparency, fairness, and consistency.
- **Foster Communication:** Communicate the district's goals and rationale for staffing reductions clearly to all stakeholders, including staff, parents, and the community.

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

Step 1: Analyze Enrollment and Financial Data

- **Enrollment Projections:** Conduct a detailed review of student enrollment trends, broken down by grade level, school site, and program type (e.g., special education, English language learners).
- **Revenue Impact:** Estimate the decrease in per-pupil funding based on the enrollment decline. Work with the finance department to project a realistic reduction in funding and compare it to current staffing levels.
- **Current Staffing Analysis:** Review staffing levels by school and department, assessing the ratio of staff to students, as well as compliance with contractual obligations and staffing allocation standards (e.g., class size ratios, instructional time, special education mandates, teacher certifications, temp and sub contracts).

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

Step 2: Review Staffing Allocation Standards and Identify Reductions

- Classroom Teachers: Review student enrollment numbers for each grade level and classroom, ensuring that class sizes (including electives and specials) are balanced according to district staffing standards. Reduce the number of sections at schools with significant enrollment declines.
- Special Education and Support Staff: Review the needs for special education staff, paraprofessionals, counselors, and other support positions based on student needs. Ensure that reductions are made in a way that minimizes impact on services for students with disabilities or other support needs.
- Non-Classroom Staff: Review administrative and operational staffing levels. Where feasible, identify potential reductions in roles such as central office staff, custodial services, and non-essential positions that can be consolidated or reallocated.

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

Step 3: Develop a Staffing Reduction Strategy

- **Attrition Focus:** Aim to achieve as much of the reduction as possible through natural attrition (retirements and resignations).
- **Reassignments and Transfers:** Some staff members may be reassigned to different schools/departments due to enrollment shifts. Ensure that these transfers are done with transparency and fairness, taking into account seniority and the needs of the students.
- **Programs and Services Review:** Review all district programs to assess whether any services can be reduced or consolidated without negatively impacting students. This includes extracurricular activities, special education services, and after-school/community programs.

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

Step 4: Conduct Staffing Meetings with School Leaders

- **Principal and Department Head Meetings:** Meet with principals and department heads to discuss the enrollment projections, funding reductions, and the potential impact on staffing. Principals should be part of the decision-making process to help identify areas where reductions can be made with the least impact on student outcomes.
- **Collaboration on Implementation:** Discuss specific staffing needs at the school level, and ensure that any potential staff reductions are aligned with student needs. Principals should also be involved in identifying areas where reassignments may be possible and help in communicating those changes to staff.

FY 2026-2027 Staffing

Step 5: Communicate and Implement Adjustments

- **Communication Plan:** Develop a communication plan to ensure transparency and clarity around the staffing adjustment process. This includes regular updates to staff and school communities.
- **Support for Employees:** Provide resources and support for staff who may be impacted by reductions or reassignment.
- **Monitor and Adjust:** Once adjustments have been made, continuously monitor enrollment and staffing levels to ensure the plan remains effective. Make adjustments as necessary, particularly if enrollment projections increase or decrease.

Sunnyside Unified School District

FY 2026-2027 Employee Compensation Update



FY 2026-2027 Employee Compensation Update

Through the Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) process, we have had discussions regarding FY 2026-2027 Employee Salary Schedules, Employee Contracts and Wage Agreements and district policy changes.

Tonight we'll provide an update on:

- Projected budget changes
- Salary schedules for certified, classified, PNT, and administrative employees
- Employee Contracts and Wage Agreements
- Proposed District Policy changes

FY 2026-2027 State Budget

The Governor's FY27 Budget was officially published. This marks the start of the lengthy state budget adoption season. We have a long road to go before the House, Senate and Governor agree on a budget.

K-12 Budget Highlights includes:

\$2M for ADE for Literacy Coaching Grant (bringing total FY27 investment to \$5.1 million)

\$29M for the District Additional Assistance

\$37M for FRPL Weight

\$3.8M for reduced price school meal programs

Standard 2% inflationary adjustment included (equals +\$174M in FY27)

Prop 123 renewal (additional 4.4% from state land trust | \$271.3M in Base Support Level increase | Pursuing \$1.5B bond for school facilities funds (\$500M annually for 3 years), paid over 20 years through the new PROP123 distribution (~\$36.8M annually)

ESA Reform: Seeking to establish income cap of \$250,000 for programmatic eligibility, which will result in \$89.3M in savings and 11,000 reduction in students)

ESA Policy Reform: Fingerprint clearance requirements, special ESA audit, prohibition of luxury purchases, new public reporting for private schools accepting ESA dollars

\$94.1M one-time for 3 new school construction (per SFOB December 2025 recommendations)

\$49.1M for one-time construction costs (per SFOB December 2025 recommendations)

Sunnyside Unified School District

FY 2026-2027 Employee Salary Schedules



Proposed FY 2026-2027 Certified Salary Schedule

- Increase base pay by \$2,000 – New entry level \$50,000 (\$1,000 to be funded by Classroom Site Fund)
- Authorize level increase for certified staff \$1,000
- Total increase \$3,000
- Estimated cost \$3,090,504 for 844 FTE

Proposed FY 2026-2027 Classified Hourly Salary Schedule

- Increase all entry levels by .80/hour to ensure compliance with minimum wage in effect January 2027 – New starting rate \$16.50
- Authorize level increase for classified staff .30/hour
- Maintain current decompressed salary schedule
- Total increase \$1.10/hour
- Estimated cost \$1,683,050 for 703 FTE

Proposed FY 2026-2027 PNT Salary Schedule

PNT 211 Days

- Increase base pay by \$2,000
- Authorize level increase for PNT staff \$1,096
- Total increase \$3,096

PNT 225 Days

- Increase base pay by \$2,133
- Authorize level increase for PNT staff \$1,168
- Total increase \$3,301

PNT 238 Days

- Increase base pay by \$2,256
- Authorize level increase for PNT staff \$1,236
- Total increase \$3,492

PNT 260 Days

- Increase base pay by \$2,464
- Authorize level increase for PNT staff \$1,350
- Total increase \$3,814
- Estimated cost \$593,521 for 146 FTE

Proposed FY 2026-2027 Administrator Salary Schedule

Administrator 238 Days

- Increase base pay by \$2,256
- Authorize level increase for administrative staff \$2,100
- Total increase \$4,356

Administrator 260 Days

- Increase base pay by \$2,465
- Authorize level increase for administrative staff \$2,294*
- Minimum increase \$4,759

*adjust from prior \$2,100 increase (prorated to 260 days)

- Estimated cost \$319,529 for 58 positions

Sunnyside Unified School District

FY 2026-2027 Employee Contracts and Wage Agreements



Employee Contracts and Wage Agreements

Add language to all contracts-This Contract may be cancelled if a **conflict of interest** is present as set out in A.R.S. §38-511, the terms of which statute are deemed incorporated herein.

Add language to classified contracts-During the entire term of this Contract, Employee agrees **to hold and maintain a valid IVP fingerprint clearance card** issued pursuant to A.R.S. §41-1758 or proof of compliance with A.R.S. §15-534(A)(2). Employee's failure to meet the conditions set forth in this paragraph as of the Start Date of this Contract, or at any time thereafter during the term of this Contract, shall be deemed a material breach of this Contract and shall render this Contract null and void.

Add language to bus driver contracts-During the entire term of this Contract, Employee agrees to hold and maintain: (a) **a valid Arizona Commercial Driver's License** with appropriate endorsements and certifications to fulfill the functions of Employee's position and (b) either **a valid IVP fingerprint clearance card** issued pursuant to A.R.S. §41-1758 or proof of compliance with A.R.S. §15-534(A)(2). Employee's failure to meet the conditions set forth in this paragraph as of the Start Date of this Contract, or at any time thereafter during the terms of this Contract, shall be deemed a material breach of this Contract and shall render this Contract null and void.

Removed language on Administrator and District Leadership Team contract-administrative growth activities and/or professional association dues. This amount will be moved to a site budget line item.

Revised language on Professional Non-Teaching contract to accept from fifteen to thirty days.

Sunnyside Unified School District

FY 2026-2027 Proposed Policy Changes



Proposed Policy Changes

Policy GCQEA - Retirement of Professional/Support Staff Members

Basis of Employee Contract/Wage Agreement for Employment After the First Year(of Post-Retirement Employment)

Currently, a retiree's prior experience for Certified and Administrative staff are capped at Step 10 plus one year. Support staff retirees are capped at 10 years.

We are proposing to change the policy to allow all SUSD retired employees to return at the step they had before they retired. For example, if an employee was at Step 22 when they chose to go retire or go ESI, he/she would return to Step 22 and not be capped at step 10 (or step 10 plus 1)

Proposed Policy Changes

Policy GCCA - Professional/Support Staff General Leave

Currently employees are paid for their holiday breaks even if they do not return from break or are recently hired before a break.

We are proposing to add language in policy that requires the employee to have worked for the district for a specified time frame before being paid for the break and/or that the employee remains employed with the district up to the break and for a specified time period after the break.

Thank you

