Licking Heights
LOCAL SCHOOLS

POPULAR ANNUAL
FINANCIAL REPORT

For the year ended
June 30, 2025
Pataskala, Ohio

lhschools.org

Todd Griffith,
Treasurer

November 26, 2025

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE LICKING HEIGHTS LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

We are pleased to present the Licking Heights Local School District's Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. This report makes our District's finances easier to understand and communicates our financials in an open and accountable manner.

The PAFR summarizes the financial activities and operating results previously reported in the Licking Heights Local School District's audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The PAFR is unaudited and presented on a non-GAAP basis, which addresses full disclosure and segregated funds. The PAFR focuses on the District's General Fund. The General Fund is the general operating fund of the District. It accounts for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund. The most significant items not reported in the General Fund include: debt issuance, capital projects, building and permanent improvements, retirement, and food service. For more detailed financial information, a copy of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is available from the Treasurer's office or can be viewed on the District's website.

The Licking Heights Local School District is proud of this report. Ultimately, we thank our citizens for their encouragement in creating a report to address their needs as taxpayers more adequately. Questions, comments, and feedback regarding this report are encouraged, so please do not hesitate to contact the Treasurer's office at 740-927-6926 or at tgriffith@lhschools.org

Respectfully submitted,
Todd Griffith

MISSION:

Elevating Every Learner to New Heights

PILLARS OF SUCCESS:

- We Provide the Right Opportunity
- We Are Welcoming
- We Celebrate Diversity
- We Adapt to Change and Growth
- We Commit to Strong Communication

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District Leadership

Board of Education

The Licking Heights Board of Education is made up of five members. Ohio law requires that Board members must be residents of the District in which they serve.

The Licking Heights Board Members are (left to right): Mark Rader, Tracy Russ (President), Hannington Tsikiwa (Vice President), Tiffane Blumhorst, and Paul Johnson , as of FY2025 ending. After 12 years of service, Tracy Russ left the Board of Education as of July 31, 2025. Karlie Bishop joined the Board to fill the vacancy.

Special Programs

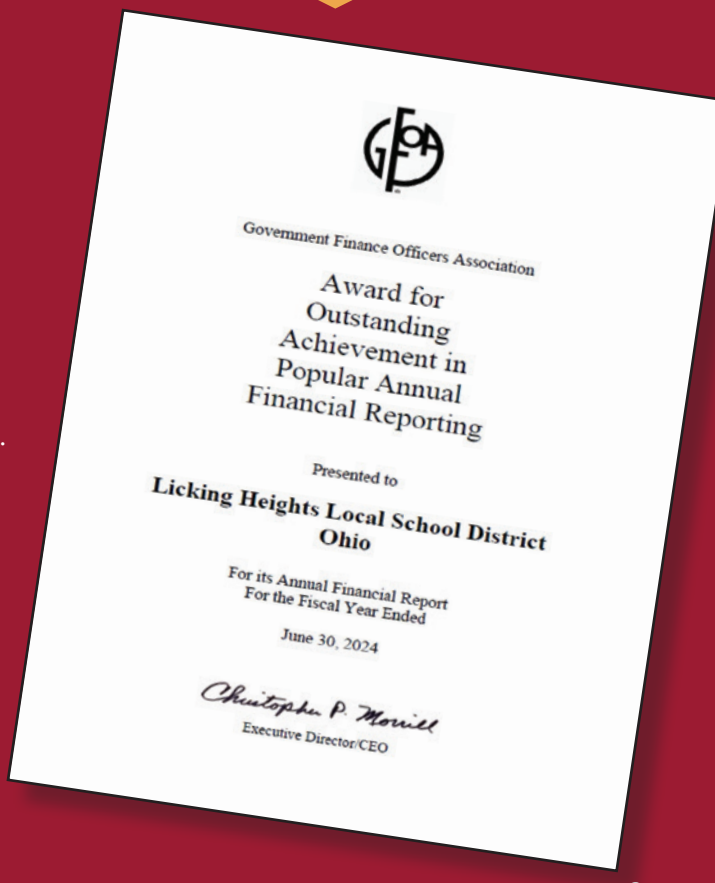
- Elementary schools are piloting a STEM special, and the district supports gifted education through self-contained and clustered classrooms for grades 3–5, along with advanced and accelerated coursework in middle and high school.
- Students have access to a diverse range of clubs and organizations, including DECA, Quiz Bowl, Model UN, National Honor Society, Chess Club, Cultural Identity Club, Diaspora, the Gay-Straight Alliance, and Google Code Next.
- The district offers Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and American Sign Language, along with several career tech pathways. Two pathways—Teaching Careers and STNA—are offered in partnership with C-TEC.
- Licking Heights has fully implemented The Academy, a specialized pathway supporting students with credit recovery, career exploration, and workforce development.

Award for Outstanding Achievement

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has given an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting to the Licking Heights Local School District for its PAFR for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024. The Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is a prestigious national award-recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government popular reports.

To receive an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting, a government must publish a PAFR, whose contents conform to program standards of creativity, presentation, understandability, and reader appeal.

An Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is valid for one year only. Licking Heights Local Schools has received a Popular award for the last six consecutive years (fiscal years ended 2019-2024). We believe our current report continues to conform to the Popular Annual Financial Reporting requirements, and we are submitting it to the GFOA.


Government Finance Officers Association

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

Presented to

Licking Heights Local School District
Ohio

For its Annual Financial Report
For the Fiscal Year Ended

June 30, 2024

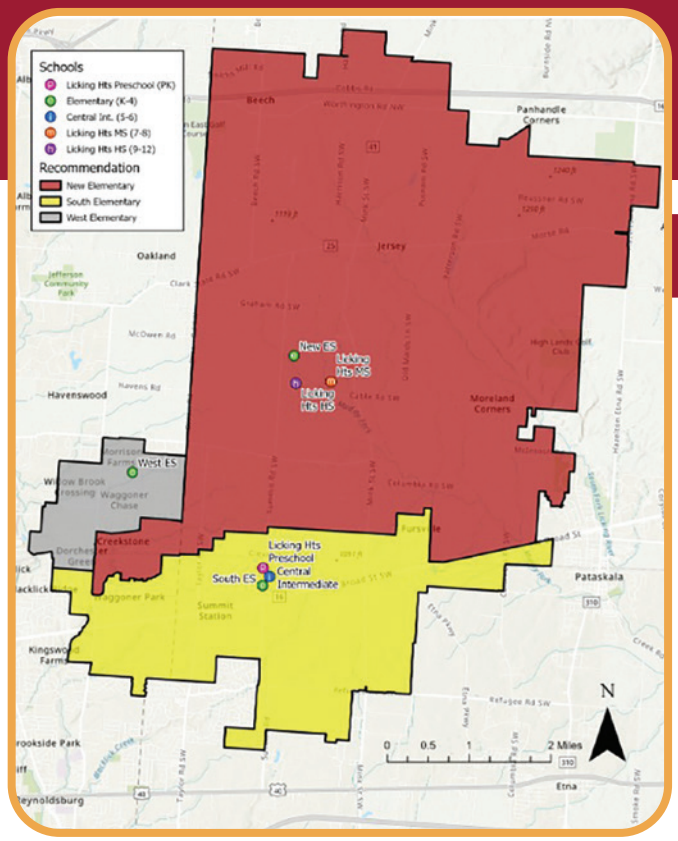
Christopher P. Morrill

Executive Director/CEO

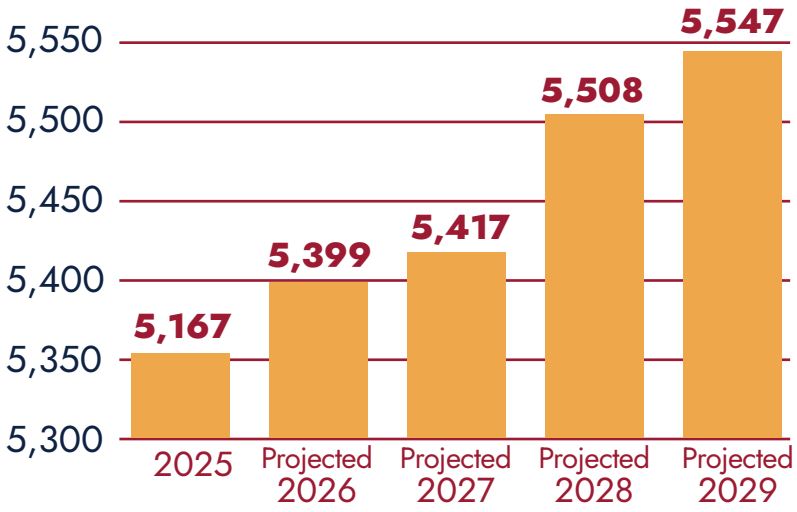
ENROLLMENT AND DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

Licking Heights Local School District served 5,167 students during the 2024-25 school year in grades pre-K through 12. With the addition of our new high school, the District is now able to accommodate growth, through build-out, with a maximum space accommodation of 6,350 students. The reconfiguration of several school buildings for the 2024-2025 school year maximizes learning for all students.

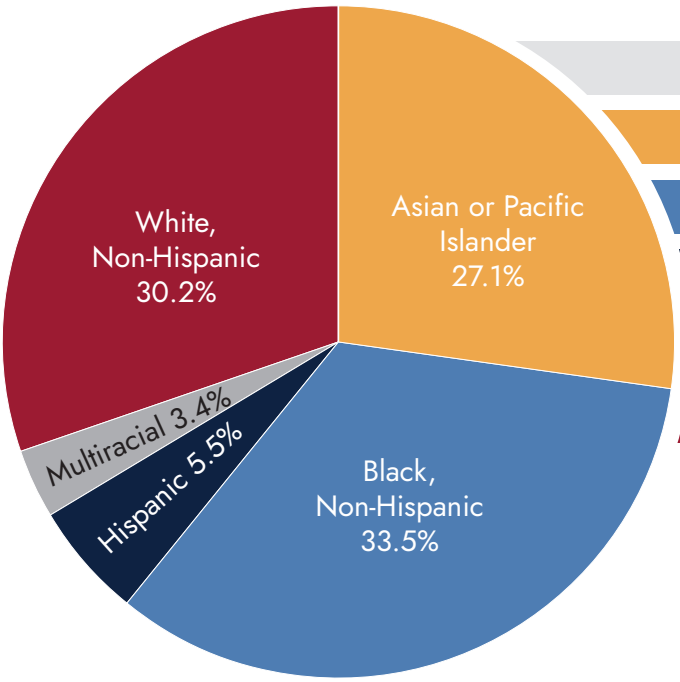
The District's enrollment is based on actual year end enrollment and does not include students living within the District's attendance area who attend charter or private schools.



ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS



FY25 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



All Students 5,167

- American Indian or Alaskan Native: 9 | 0.17%
- Asian or Pacific Islander: 1,406 | 27.1%
- Black, Non-Hispanic: 1,733 | 33.5%
- Hispanic: 284 | 5.5%
- Multiracial: 177 | 3.4%
- White, Non-Hispanic: 1,588 | 30.2%

Licking Heights is one of the fastest-growing school districts in Ohio, with a diverse student population speaking more than 42 languages. The District focuses on student learning and achievement while looking toward the future as it continues to be recognized as a leader in innovative best practices.

Revenues and Resources Over Expenditures and Services

The numbers in Financial Activity Statement (below) and Financial Position Statement (page nine) represent only the General Fund and are taken from the district's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), but presented in a non GAAP format. The ACFR can be obtained from the Treasurer's office or can be found on www.lhschools.org/Financial.aspx

The Financial Activity Statement, known in accounting terms as the income statement, provides a summary of the resources (revenues) and services (expenditures) of the District.

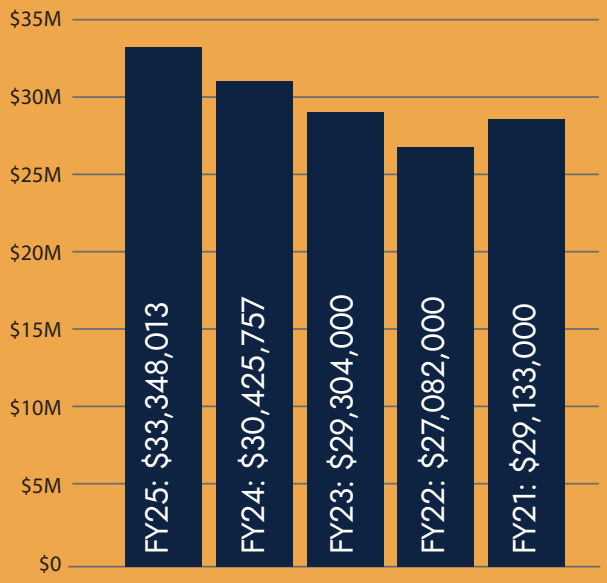
Income statement data for fiscal years 2021 through 2025 are presented below. Property tax collections are the largest single revenue source for the district. The housing market in our district is stable and growing. The increase in local taxes from FY24 to FY25 is 10%. The investment income increased 11% in comparison to the prior fiscal year. The primary reasons are the increased investments held by the district, higher interest rates, and economic changes. The state and federal revenue increased by 13% compared to FY24, mainly due to the continued implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan. Overall, total General Fund Revenues increased by 11 %.

The General Fund Expenditures increased by 21% from FY24 to FY25, alongside student enrollment increases. The increase in Miscellaneous line mainly is due to $2.4 million land purchase for future enrollment growth.

General Fund

	FY25	FY24	FY23	FY22	FY21
RESOURCES TAKEN IN (in thousands of $)					
Local Taxes	33,348	30,426	29,304	27,082	29,133
State and Federal Revenue	31,785	28,080	20,638	17,501	16,444
Investment Income	4,373	3,946	1,111	(581)	42
Tuition & Fees	519	478	610	580	602
Miscellaneous	11,114	10,019	7,653	9,524	9,179
Total Revenues & Resources	$81,139	$72,949	$59,316	$54,106	$55,400
SERVICES PROVIDED					
Instruction	36,080	29,790	27,735	26,392	27,050
Pupil Support	4,182	3,768	3,070	2,841	2,168
Instructional Staff	2,280	1,583	919	974	781
Board/Administration/Fiscal	7,537	6,626	6,050	5,411	4,764
Plant Operation	6,771	5,987	5,115	4,285	3,951
Transportation	4,280	4,596	3,912	3,122	2,260
Central	2,462	2,358	1,997	1,384	1,147
Extracurricular	744	743	870	649	607
Miscellaneous	3,123	147	130	264	183
Total Expenditures & Services	$67,459	$55,598	$49,798	$45,322	$42,911
Revenues & Resources Over Expenditures & Services	$13,680	$17,351	$9,518	$8,784	$12,489

PROPERTY TAXES RECEIVED



The graph to the left depicts the amount of collections received by the District from real and personal property taxes. Property taxes provide a majority of local revenue to operate and maintain our schools. As shown on the graph left taxes paid on homes and businesses (property) represent 41.1% of all FY25 general fund revenues.

UNBUNDLING THE TAX RATE

All tax rates for the School District, except inside millage, are reduced as valuations increase. In accordance with House Bill 920, as property valuations increased during the triennial update and reappraisal, voted millage is reduced generating the same amount of tax revenue for the District, as was received when each levy was initially approved by the voters. The chart below shows the difference in the District's "Gross" or voted tax rates, compared to "Effective" rates or collected.

ASSESSED VALUED OF PROPERTY REAL ESTATE TAXES

COLLECTION YEAR	RESIDENTIAL/ AGRICULTURAL	COMMERCIAL/ INDUSTRIAL	PUBLIC UTILITY	TOTAL
2025	937,807,410.00	163,179,954.00	153,879,930.00	1,254,867,294.00
2024	919,485,570.00	170,873,183.00	121,926,860.00	1,212,285,613.00
2023	627,190,810.00	154,606,004.00	113,131,960.00	894,928,774.00

GROSS AND EFFECTIVE TAX RATES

TYPE	GROSS RATE	EFFECTIVE RATE	YEAR APPROVED	LENGTH APPROVED
INSIDE-OPERATING*	4.800	4.800	N/A	Permanent
VOTED-OPERATING*	34.150	24.450	Various	Permanent
BOND RETIREMENT	10.150	10.150	Various	Various
PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT	1.990	1.001	Permanent	
TOTAL RATES	49.350	38.661		

*Rates are for the 2024 tax year collected in the year 2025.

TAX BILL ON AN AVERAGE HOME:

Taxable Value
Market Value x 35%

$242,000
x 0.35
$84,700

Tax Bill
Taxable Value x School District Effective Tax rate

$87,400
x 38.661/1000
$3,378.97

DISTRICT REVENUES & RESOURCES

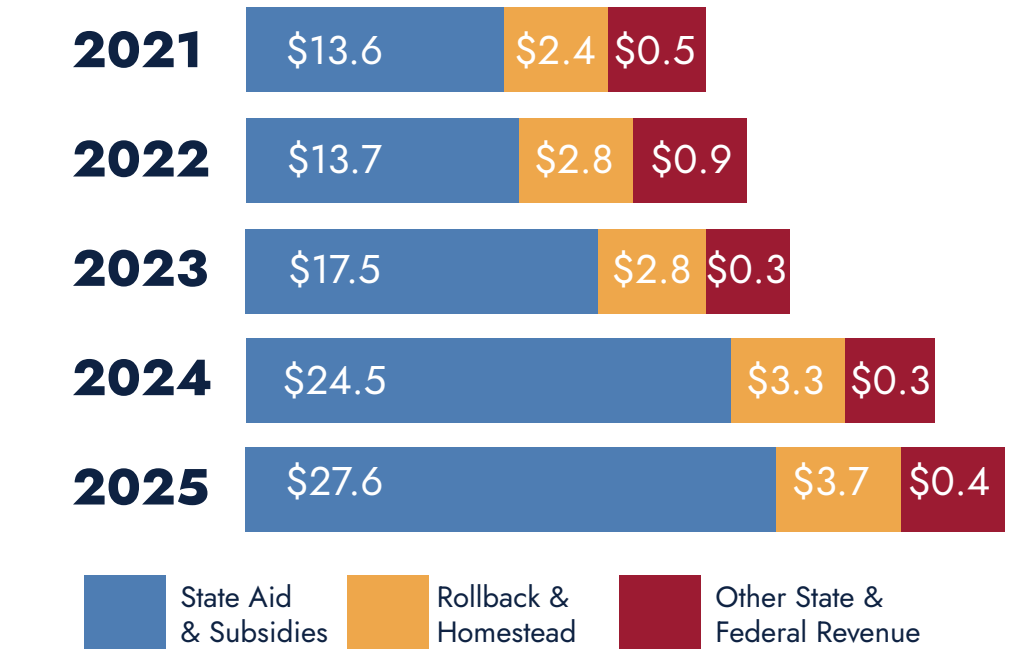
STATE & FEDERAL RESOURCES

State and Federal sources of revenue generated $31.8 million or 39% of all General Fund revenue for the District.

The majority of State Aid & Subsidies includes School Foundation aid, which is a formula calculation based upon student enrollment. The State of Ohio has implemented a new school funding model (Fair School Funding Plan) starting from FY22. The Fair School Funding Plan formula represents a move toward the equitable and adequate funding of Ohio's schools. This plan includes a base cost of education a typical Ohio student, additional costs to serve the needs of students with unique needs (special needs, ELL, gifted, etc.), and an objective formula for determining state and local shares of school funding based on local property values and income level. Significant changes to the new formula include the elimination of the District's accounting for the revenues and expenditures attributable to district students attending community schools or those on autism or other special education scholarships. In addition to Foundation revenue, the District also receives Poverty Based Assistance and Career Tech funding from the State.

The District also receives Rollback and Homestead payments, which represents the portion of the local tax bill paid by the State instead of the local taxpayer. Currently, the State pays 10% of the taxes due on all property and an additional 2.5% on residential and agricultural owner-occupied property. An additional exemption is provided to senior and disabled citizens, regardless of income.

Other State/Federal Revenue includes the public utility reimbursement, Medicaid reimbursement, catastrophic cost reimbursement, and casino revenue. Federal sources in this category include E-rate reimbursements for telecommunications services, internet access, and internal connections. The District receives these reimbursements based on its percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunches and other socio-economic factors.



INSTRUCTION
is the largest expenditure category. Students are directly impacted by expenditures from this category, which relate to the direct instruction of our students.

PUPIL SUPPORT
areas comprise all guidance services, nurses, speech, hearing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and psychological services.

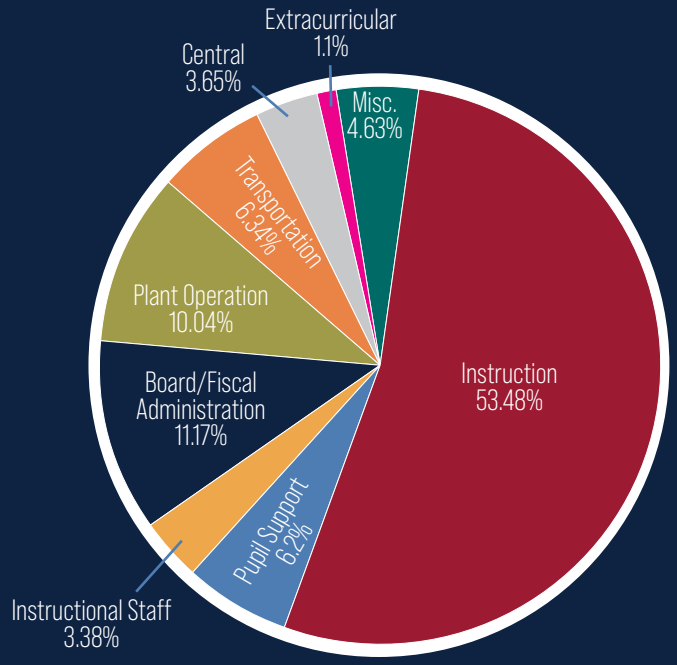
STAFF SUPPORT
costs include library services, technology integration support, and literacy collaborative support.

BOARD/ADMINISTRATION/ FISCAL
costs represent those of the administration and Board of Education's operation of the District. Also included in this category is school building secretarial support and financial services, such as payroll, accounts payable and receivable, auditing, budgeting and reporting, and fringe benefits administration.

PLANT OPERATION
expenditures relate to the safe and efficient environment of the school including building maintenance, grounds and custodial services.

TRANSPORTATION
expenditures relate to providing transportation (mostly by bus) to all students who live in the Licking Heights Local School District, consistent with Board of Education policies and the laws of the State of Ohio.

EXPENDITURES GENERAL FUND



Total Expenditures & Services
$67,458,813

CENTRAL SUPPORT
expenditures include community relations and technology maintenance staff, computer network maintenance contracts, district wide postage costs, and strategic planning type activities.

EXTRACURRICULAR
expenditures account for the salaries and benefits of club advisors and athletic coaches.

DISTRICT'S DEBT

Our District had $127.3 million in debt outstanding as of June 30, 2025, the majority of which is related to 2022 school facilities bonds. The 2022 bonds were issued to build an elementary school, an athletic complex, a transportation center, and an addition to the current high school to accommodate another 350 students.

PURPOSE	MATURES	INTEREST RATE	OUTSTANDING BALANCE
2000 School Improvement Bonds	12/1/28	6.4%	610,000
2016 Advance Refunding Bonds	12/1/24	1.73%	-
2017A School Facilities Improvement Bonds	10/1/37	3-5%	39,320,000
2017B School Facilities Improvement Bonds	10/1/38	3-5%	6,810,000
2017C Refunding Bonds	10/1/29	4-5%	4,750,000
2020 Advance Refunding Bonds	12/1/28	0.59-1.43%	4,620,000
2021 Refunding Bonds	12/1/32	3-4%	4,620,000
2022 School Facilities Bonds	10/1/59	4.5-5.5%	64,900,000
Total Outstanding			127,275,000

Debt per Capita for the district is $4,498.94 (total debt of the school district divided by the population of the school district). It represents the debt the district carries in relation to its population.

FIVE-YEAR FORECAST

	FISCAL YEAR **2025** ACTUAL	FISCAL YEAR **2026** PROJECTED	FISCAL YEAR **2027** PROJECTED	FISCAL YEAR **2028** PROJECTED	FISCAL YEAR **2029** PROJECTED	FISCAL YEAR **2030** PROJECTED
Beginning Balance:	$40,554,635	$41,589,116	$50,322,906	$56,055,685	$56,111,100	$49,774,974
Revenue	80,901,453	81,604,830	83,564,827	83,724,158	83,743,861	77,539,012
Expenditures	(79,866,972)	(72,871,040)	(77,832,048)	(83,668,743)	(90,079,987)	(97,035,362)
Revenue Surplus or (Deficit)	1,034,481	8,733,790	5,732,779	55,415	(6,336,126)	(19,496,350)
Ending Balance	$41,589,116	$50,322,906	$56,055,685	$56,111,100	$49,774,974	$30,278,624

Our current five-year forecast (September 2025) projects that Licking Heights Schools remains in a stable financial position, supported by steady growth in local property values and continued state funding, which together make up the district's primary revenue sources . The forecast shows revenues keeping pace with expenses through 2028, allowing the district to maintain healthy cash balances and plan proactively for future needs. However, beginning in 2029–2030, rising costs—especially salaries, benefits, and services—combined with legislative uncertainties around school funding and property tax laws may begin to outpace revenue growth, causing projected declines in year-end balances.

The district will continue closely monitoring state budget decisions, property tax reforms, and enrollment trends to ensure long-term stability and responsible stewardship of community resources.

CAPITAL ASSETS AT JUNE 30

	FY25	**FY24**	**FY23**
Land	5,737,303	3,418,055	3,418,055
Construction in Progress	1,898,617.00	47,660,582	4,498,812
Land Improvement	1,187,670	1,044,989	1,131,441
Building and Improvements	170,037,595.00	99,634,937	102,201,137
Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment	2,304,062.00	1,417,275	904,817
Vehicles	2,301,302.00	2,010,499	1,754,067
Intangible right to use asset	412,667.00	98,249	237,584
Total Capital Assets	183,851,565	155,427,267	114,059,461

A District's inventory of capital assets often represents its most significant investment of resources. As of June 30, 2025, our District had $170 million invested in net capital assets acquired and constructed to help provide essential services (directly or indirectly) to our District's students. Construction in Progress decreased by $46 million from FY24 to FY25 by the completion of construction of a new bus garage, an athletic complex, an elementary school, and a high school addition.

ASSETS OVER LIABILITIES

The Financial Position Statement, known in accounting terms as the balance sheet, reports the assets available to provide services. Liabilities are the amounts for which the district is obligated to pay in the future. The amount below represents the difference between the assets of the district and the liabilities which it must pay. This amount provides the "net worth" of the district. The district as a whole is financially improving. Information is provided for the district's General Fund.

	FY25	FY24	FY23	FY22
ASSETS				
Cash and investments	$43,387,731	$40,439,545	$27,473,160	$29,544,282
Receivables	$45,080,080	$41,027,723	$36,503,346	$29,689,931
Total Assets	$88,467,811	$81,467,268	$63,976,506	$59,234,213
LIABILITIES				
Accounts Payable	$295,335	$703,111	$564,087	$153,426
Due to Other Govt's/ Employees	$7,081,152	$6,059,565	$5,138,433	$4,939,057
Total Liabilities	$7,376,487	$6,762,676	$5,702,520	$5,092,483
DEFERRED INFLOWS				
Property Taxes	$26,640,372	$22,718,241	$20,321,801	$22,454,550
Other Revenues	$10,303,763	$9,543,299	$6,863,214	$141,538
Total Deferred Inflows	$36,944,135	$32,261,540	$27,185,015	$22,596,088
Total Liabilities & Deferred Inflows	$44,320,622	$39,024,216	$32,887,535	$27,688,571
Assets over Liabilities & Deferred Inflows	$44,147,189	$42,443,052	$31,088,971	$31,545,642

ASSETS

Cash and Investments represent the amount of physical cash held by the District in checking accounts and on hand for purposes of paying expenses, as well as interim funds invested by the Treasurer in a variety of accounts. The investment of those interim funds allows the District to earn interest on its cash. The Cash and Investments are up by 7% from FY24 to FY25. Total assets grew by nearly 9% from FY24 to FY25 reflecting stronger financial positioning going into FY25. Receivables represent the amounts that are owed to the District at June 30, 2025. It increased by approximately 9.9% that includes property taxes, payment in lieu of taxes, state and federal fundings.

LIABILITIES

Liabilities are those amounts the District owed to employees, other governments or vendors for items or services that have been provided to the District, for which payment is expected to be made within twelve months.

DEFERRED INFLOWS/DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES

Deferred Inflows of Resources and Deferred Outflows of Resources are neither assets nor liabilities as they relate to the current fiscal year. Unlike current assets and liabilities, amounts classified as "deferred inflows" or "deferred outflows" are amounts which will not be recognized as a revenue or an expense until the future period to which the inflows or outflows are related. For FY25 the District's General Fund reported deferred inflows related to tax revenue received but not available for use until a future period, and no deferred outflows.

EMPLOYERS AND TAXPAYERS

TOP 5 PRINCIPAL TAXPAYERS
JUNE 30, 2025 (PUBLIC UTILITIES TAX)

	Total Assessed Valuation	% of Total Valuation
1	AEP Ohio Transmission Co, Inc.	$65,380,370 42.50%
2	Ohio Power Company	42,488,130 27.61%
3	National Gas & Oil Corp	1,348,200 0.88%
4	Columbia Gas of Ohio	961,520 0.62%
5	Licking Rural Electric Co.	850,280 0.55%

TOP 5 PRINCIPAL TAXPAYERS
JUNE 30, 2025 (REAL ESTATE TAX)

	Total Assessed Valuation	% of Total Valuation
1	Distribution Center 456 LLC	$17,983,950 1.63%
2	Amgen Inc.	4,834,720 0.44%
3	MBJ Holdings LLC	3,611,130 0.33%
4	Village Gate Apt Ltd	2,945,780 0.27%
5	AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc.	2,588,550 0.24%

TOP 5 EMPLOYERS IN LICKING COUNTY
2024

	Employer	Percentage of Total Employment
1	Licking Heights Local School District	5.59%
2	Thayer Power Co. LLC	3.34%
3	State of Ohio ODOT Payroll Deductions	2.38%
4	American Electric Power Service Corp.	1.57%
5	Defense Finance	1.53%

* Information on principal employers for 2025 was not available

LICKING HEIGHTS STATISTICS

BREAKFAST SERVED
329,814

LUNCH SERVED
575,042

OPERATING SPENDING PER PUPIL
10,273

BUSES IN FLEET
57

SQUARE FOOTAGE MAINTAINED BY THE DISTRICT
836,625

EMPLOYEES
600

STUDENTS
5,167

2025 GRADUATES
346

HOME LANGUAGES SPOKEN
42

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
14.4%

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS
56.6%

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
16.9%

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS
10.3%

Licking Heights Local School District
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