

# West York Area School District

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**What is causing the 2016 – 2017 budget deficit?** There are many reasons why the West York Area School District, like so many districts across York County and the State of Pennsylvania, cannot balance their budgets. It is a bit of a “perfect storm.” Listed below are the major issues negatively affecting West York’s budget and the proactive things the District has already done to save money.

## ISSUES NEGATIVELY AFFECTING WEST YORK’S BUDGET:

- Pennsylvania ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the percentage of money it uses to fund public education. On average, Pennsylvania funds districts at a rate of approximately 36%. **The state is funding West York only 23%.**
- **Only 1.9% of West York’s budget is funded by the Federal Government.**
- **Only 3% of West York’s budget is non-discretionary.** In other words, 97% of the budget is either mandated by state or federal laws or contractually obligated.
- Over the course of the last seven (7) years, **West York lost \$4.1 million of recurring revenue due to commercial property tax assessment appeals.**
- **Last year West York received a medical insurance increase of 35%.**

## PROACTIVE EFFORTS TO SAVE MONEY:

- **All employees have taken 0% increases.**
- **Thirty-six (36) professional employees** (e.g., teachers and counselors) **were eliminated.**
- **Ten (10) support employees were eliminated** and **full-time employees are being replaced with part-time employees** to reduce the cost of insurance benefits.
- **An educational foundation was created** to raise money (\$130,770 to date) to purchase technology for classrooms.
- **Austerity was practiced in budget planning processes and cost savings were routinely negotiated in service provider contracts.**
- **A high school cyber education program was implemented to keep students enrolled at West York** instead of paying tuition for students to attend more costly out-of-district cyber options.
- **A cost savings program was implemented to service some special education students** in the district instead of paying more costly out-of-district providers.

## CONSTRUCTION FUNDING NOTATION:

The Board of Directors has received questions about spending money on construction projects rather than using those funds to balance the budget. Having desirable schools and a well-rounded education program helps to maintain home and property values which is a service to the entire community. The Board waited until it had paid off its previous construction debt to issue new bonds to pay for the existing projects that provided sufficient space for future students in safe and well-maintained buildings. By doing this, there was **no tax increase to pay for construction projects. Bond money can only be spent on construction projects** and cannot be used toward general operating expenses.