

Novato Unified School District Frequently Asked Questions 2022 NUSD Budget Info

How are our Novato schools performing?

Novato Unified School District (NUSD) is home to award-winning schools that provide an innovative and effective education to meet individual student's needs and prepare them for successful futures. Our excellent teachers and staff are committed to ensuring all students possess the academic and technical knowledge required to succeed in college and future careers.

When does the current parcel tax expire and how much is it?

The current parcel tax was approved by voters in 2014 for 8 years and expires on June 30, 2023. It is \$251 per year and provides NUSD more than \$4.1 million that is not dependent on state funding.

What does the currently parcel tax fund?

The parcel tax is restricted to only being spent on items listed in the 2014 ballot language. The current parcel tax is being used to support library personnel, counselors, teachers, music programs and athletics.

Parcel Tax Allocation 2021-2022



- **Teachers: 34%**
- **Counselors: 20%**
- **Athletics: 19%**
- **Music: 14%**
- **Library Personnel: 13%**

What would happen if local parcel tax funding expires?

If local parcel tax funding expires, our schools would be facing a \$4.1 million deficit. This loss of local funding would mean the District would potentially have to cut all library personnel, layoff teachers, eliminate music programs and athletic programs and decrease counseling services.

How does NUSD plan to address expiring local funding?

The NUSD Board of Education is considering options for renewing this local funding source. If the parcel tax is not renewed, and another source of funding is not available, the District will have to cut an additional \$4.1 million from its annual budget.

What is NUSD doing to be more fiscally responsible?

NUSD has taken many steps to balance the budget and ensure transparency into NUSD's finances:

- Reinstatement of the Budget Advisory Committee which is composed of community members and staff
- Greater transparency in the process to engage in budget cuts through board presentations and discussions
- Oversight by the Marin County Office of Education at monthly board of trustee meetings
- Oversight Committees for both the Parcel Tax and Measure G Bond
- Defining the use of one-time state funding, ongoing state funding, issues with ADA/enrollment funding, and ongoing presentations in the community regarding the budget expenditures based on state and federal guidelines for Local Control Funding Formula
- Budget presentations to school parents & teachers
- Advocacy for reforming school funding and reducing pension costs

What steps and cuts has the District made to balance their budget?

The District has taken many necessary steps to balance the budget, including eliminating the following positions: Assistant Director of Special Education, Instructional Technology Supervisor, Warehouse Manager, Benefits Specialist and Groundskeeper as well as reductions to District department budgets.

What is the District's plan to maintain fiscal sustainability?

NUSD is pursuing a number of initiatives:

- Pursuing long-term teacher housing leases on surplus property
- Seeking full state funding for all enrolled students
- Consolidation of programs are all under consideration
- Zero based budgeting (revenue minus expenses equals zero) to determine priorities and adherence to staffing/enrollment levels are significant steps

Didn't we just pass a bond for local schools? Why does the District need more money?

In 2016, voters approved Measure G, a bond measure for Novato Unified School District to upgrade, modernize and improve its schools. By law, bond money can only be used for facilities and cannot be used for academic programs or retain teachers.

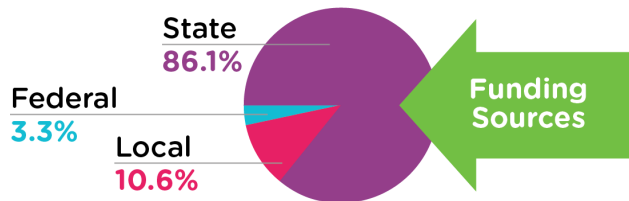
What is the difference between a parcel tax and a bond measure?

A bond measure and parcel tax measure are used for different purposes. A bond measure can *only* fund facility upgrades and improvements and cannot be used for operating costs or programs. A bond requires 55% voter approval to pass. Parcel taxes differ in that funds can be spent on identified school needs, including academic programs and supporting teachers. A parcel tax requires 66.7% voter approval to pass.

How is NUSD funded?

NUSD has multiple funding sources as outlined below:

NUSD Is Dependent on Sacramento for \$9 Out of Every \$10 in Funding

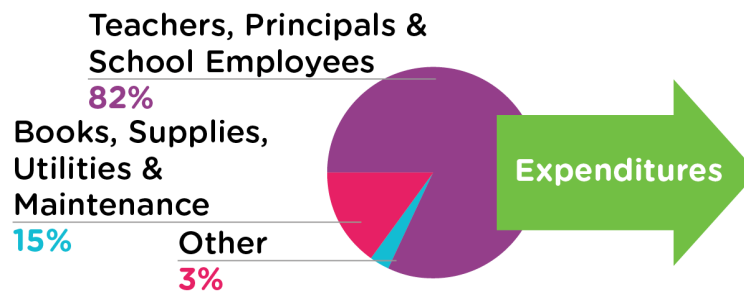


- Only ~11% of NUSD’s funding is from locally controlled sources like the parcel tax and donations
- NUSD will be more dependent on Sacramento if parcel tax funding expires

What is NUSD funding being spent on?

Largely, NUSD’s budget is spent on personnel – teachers, principals, and school employees. The graph below breaks down the District’s expenditures.

Most NUSD Funding Pays for People Like Teachers, Principals, Counselors and Coaches



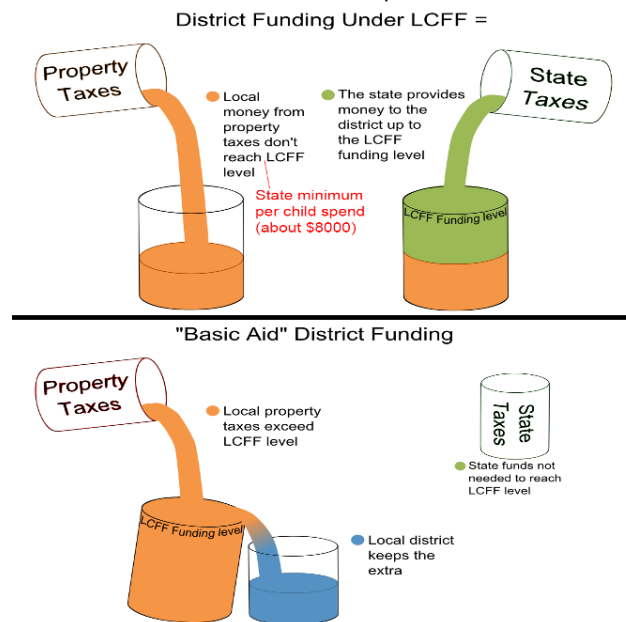
- Budget cuts mean layoffs to people
- NUSD already cut \$4m from the budget last year

How is NUSD funded differently than other districts in Marin?

Currently, most school districts in Marin are Basic Aid. The majority of NUSD’s funding comes from the state of California under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). Districts in California are funded through direct local property taxes or through LCFF when local property taxes do not meet a specific funding threshold.

The majority of the 1,000 school districts in California are funded by average daily attendance and LCFF like the Novato Unified School District. Approximately 150 districts in California are

Basic Aid and 17 of those districts are in Marin County.



What is unique about NUSD that isn't available in other districts?

NUSD offers specialized programs that aren't available to students in other districts. These programs include Marin School of the Arts at Novato High, STEM Program at San Marin, Dual Language Program at Lynwood Elementary School. NUSD is also expanding the Transitional Kindergarten program and the NOVA Independent Study Program. NUSD continues to approve inter-district transfers for students to attend our district which brings in much needed revenue. In addition, NUSD continues to look at longer term solutions including alternative uses of current properties.

Is weekly preparation time for elementary teachers being cut?

No, weekly preparation time for elementary teachers is not being cut. The elementary teachers who provide preparation time for PE and Music align with the same contractual student to teacher ratios for 2022-23: 24:1 Grades TK-3, 28:1 Grades 4-5, 31:1 Grades 6-12.

How is NUSD addressing the increasing need for student services and supports?

NUSD has increased school-based support in so many areas this year and continues to prioritize areas of needs. It is important that we make sure our communities are aware of these impactful services and have the resources necessary to access them. When asked what additional services have been added to our programs and schools this year, please refer to this list. There are certainly more services than in previous years due to one-time funding at each of our schools, but this highlights some of the common enhancements TK-12.

- Data Specialists
- Teachers on Special Assignment for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (extended learning) and Social Emotional Learning
- Increased Counseling Services at all schools

- Increased Community Liaison Hours
- EL Specialists at every school
- Increased School Psychiatrists/Occupational Therapists
- Started a School Psych Intern program
- Increased Para Educators
- Hired Registered Behavior Technicians

How can I receive more information or ask questions?

Please contact Leslie Benjamin, Communications Director, at (415) 897-4259 or lbenjamin@nUSD.org.