

FUNDING

At the beginning of the regular 88th legislative session in January 2023, State Comptroller Glenn Hegar reported to legislators that there was a \$32.7 billion-dollar surplus in the state's coffers (this is in addition to the nearly \$20 billion in the state's Rainy Day Fund.) His most recent report in October 2023 tells of a projected surplus of more than \$18 billion by the end of this current two-year budget.

Conclusion: the state of Texas has funds to invest in public education. Glenn Hegar agrees saying, "We need to take advantage [and] invest in public education," Hegar said in his [Sept. 22 interview](#) about the revenue increase. "We need to invest in our teachers. We need to invest in those that are front line, that are educating the future workforce." Texas students deserve better.

IN RISD

Richardson ISD has a **\$14.8 million budget deficit for 2023-2024**. (Without using \$26,000,000 in remaining ESSER funds, the deficit would have been \$40,848,654 for 2023-24.) Additionally, \$14,388,452 in budget cuts were made this year to reduce the deficit that included reductions in staff allocations and not budgeting for historically vacant positions.

RISD projected budget deficits under current law:

- **2024-2025 is \$47.5 million* deficit**
- **2025-2026 is \$77.7 million* deficit**

* This deficit includes a 3% pay increase in for staff and a 5% increase for expenses.

The RISD Board of Trustees commissioned a community Budget Steering Committee to examine and recommend ways to reduce expenditures. The committee will advise the board later this year on further expense reductions that may include school consolidations, a VATRE (voter approved tax rate election), education of non-resident students, and reductions in staffing.

NOTE: If current funding levels remain, cost reductions will only reduce the budget deficit, but RISD will still be forced to incur budget deficits in the future to operate.

- **For 2023-2024, RISD needs an increase of \$308* in the current basic allotment to \$6,468 to eliminate the deficit.** (ESSER funds reduced the deficit amount by \$28 million.)
- **For 2024-2025, RISD needs an increase of \$983* in the current basic allotment to \$7,143 to eliminate the deficit.** (No ESSER funds are left to reduce the deficit.)
- **For 2024-2025, RISD needs an increase of \$1,608* in the current basic allotment to \$7,768 to eliminate the deficit.**

**Calculations based on 2023-2024 budgets, 24-25 and 25-26 projections, and the current basic allotment of \$6,160.*

During the next special legislative sessions, RISD is calling on the legislature to invest in public schools and fully fund public education that serves more than 5 million students.