



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
APRIL 15, 2025

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Education Tops Priorities in Proposed FY26 Budget

County Executive Fitzwater's Plan Invests in Schools, Essential Services Without Raising Taxes

FREDERICK, Md. – Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater today unveiled her proposed FY26 budget for Frederick County, emphasizing a record investment in public education and delivery of essential services without raising taxes.

“One of my most important tasks is to prepare a balanced budget that delivers results, provides essential services, keeps the core functions of government on track, and reflects our community’s priorities,” County Executive Fitzwater said. “In a year with great uncertainty, this budget puts students first with record investments in public education and protects core services that our residents rely on. It achieves all of these goals without raising taxes.”

Watch the County Executive’s full [video message](#):



Key Highlights of the Proposed FY26 Budget:

- Education: Over \$508 million allocated to public education, marking a \$118 million – or 30% – increase in three years.
- School Construction: \$175 million dedicated to school construction, representing an \$80 million – or 86% – increase over last year.
- Employee Compensation: New base rate of \$21 per hour for County employees, and a 2% across-the-board salary increase for all employees beginning January 1, 2026.
- Senior Services: Expanded services at the Middletown 50+ Community Center and planning for new senior centers in other parts of the County.

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- Affordable Housing: Funding to oversee affordable housing development, primarily on County-owned land.
- Public Safety: Funding for the Sheriff's Office's training space, and additional resources for the State's Attorney's Office to address a growing caseload.
- Fiscal Responsibility: Sets aside reserve funds, meets long-term pension obligations, and makes strategic investments to protect the County's AAA bond rating.

The proposed FY26 budget can be viewed at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Budget. The County Council will hold a public hearing on the budget on Tuesday, April 22, at 7 p.m. in Winchester Hall.

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