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\$8.3 million school budget gets thumbs up at CSD 13 meeting

Spending plan garners near unanimous support from the public
May 28, 2026

BY JACK BEAUDOIN



Voters at the May 26 CSD 13 budget validation meeting show near unanimous support for one of 21 warrant articles that made up the proposed 2026-27 school spending plan. All of the articles passed handsily and the proposed budget now goes before voters on June 9. BY JACK BEAUDOIN

THE ISLAND—Attendees at the May 26 CSD 13 District meeting approved all 21 warrant articles on the ballot, sending the 2026-27 school budget to a June 9 referendum, where voters from Deer Isle and Stonington will have the final say on the \$8.3 million spending plan.

If approved at referendum, the budget would be adopted as-is. But if voters reject it, the CSD 13 School Board would need to move quickly to develop a new spending plan in order to start classes as planned on August 31.

School board members, administrators and teachers said they hoped the results of the 45-minute meeting— where 20 spending articles were approved unanimously by show of hands and the sole secret ballot passed by a 36-6 margin—augured well for the June 9 referendum.

"It seemed like there was a lot of support for this budget," School Board Co-Chair Chelsea Torrey said following the meeting. "We put forward what the children need, within reason, and now it's up to the voters."



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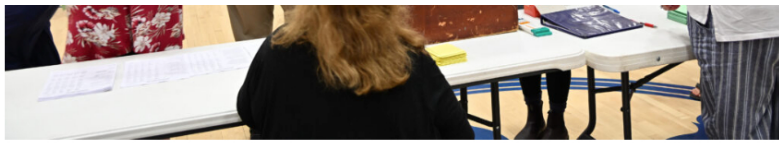
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Deer Isle resident Jo Jacobs casts a secret ballot at the May 26 CSD 13 budget validation meeting at the Deer Isle-Stonington High School gym.

"I'm glad it's passed," said Teachers Union President Jennifer Mayo, noting the difficulties resulting from a large cut in state subsidies. "It's been a real back-and-forth process, and I wish people had participated earlier... But I hope voters will see the value of the schools and the needs of their children (reflected in the budget)."

Overall, the proposed budget is \$261,436 higher than last year's budget, representing an increase of about 3.25 percent. But because of cuts in state funding and a lack of "surplus" (money from prior years), Stonington and Deer Isle are being asked to contribute nearly a million dollars more to the 2026-27 school budget than they did in the current year, or an increase of 15.5 percent.

School Superintendent Tara McKechnie said she was surprised that there were only a few questions raised during the meeting, but attributed that to the long, public process of budgeting that has gone on for the last three months.

"I was glad to see a crowd of people voting for this budget," she said. "It felt really good to see that support and I'm hopeful voters will agree next month."

School calendar

The 2026-2027 school calendar was approved by the CSD 13 board at their May 15 meeting. Teachers and staff have professional development days beginning on August 25, while students start classes on Monday, August 31. There's a full week before the three-day Labor Day weekend, with classes resuming on Tuesday, September 8.

There are ten early-release and parent-teacher conference days—when students are dismissed at 11:30 on Fridays—as well as a half-day on December 23 that leads into the Christmas time winter break (December 24-January 3). Two of the early release days, on February 12 and April 16, also precede week-long school breaks.

Additional professional days for instructors and staff fall on October 9, January 15, March 12 (all Fridays) and June 10, which is the Thursday following the last day of classes on June 10. High school seniors will graduate on Sunday, June 6.

All told, the 2026-27 calendar provides 175 student days, 182 teacher days and 10 holidays falling within the school year.



School board members Darian Gove, Lynn Witham, Genevieve McDonald, Chelsea Torrey and Darrell Williams wait for voters to cast ballots for the proposed 2026-27 CSD 13 School Budget at the district's May 26 budget validation meeting.

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