HAY SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2026-27 PROPERTY TAX & BUDGET AT-A-GLANCE

Understanding the Numbers Behind the "Pink Postcard"

Hawks S.O.A.R.

Show Pride - Own Opportunities
Act Positively - Respect All

WHY IS THE DISTRICT PARTICIPATING IN THE JOINT PUBLIC HEARING?

Nebraska's current process requires participation when the District's proposed non-bond property tax request exceeds its allowable-growth threshold.

2025-26 Non-Bond Property Tax Request	**$2,081,529**
Allowable Growth Percentage	**3.78%**
Property Tax Request Threshold	**$2,160,210.80**
Before Triggering the Hearing	
2026-27 Proposed Property Tax Request	**$2,234,490**
Amount Above the Statutory Hearing Threshold	**$74,279.20**

THE TOTAL REQUEST INCREASES

$152,961 (7.35%)

The District's proposed non-bond property tax request increases from $2,081,529 to $2,234,490. The 7.35% is the District's total property tax request increase; it does not mean every property owner's school taxes increase 7.35%.

WHERE DOES THE $152,961 INCREASE OCCUR?

Fund	2025-26 Request	2026-27 Proposed Request	Increase
General Fund	$1,959,596	$2,048,681	$89,085
Special Building Fund	$50,505	$111,111	$60,606
QCPUF	$71,428	$74,698	$3,270
TOTAL (Non-Bond Property Tax Request)	**$2,081,529**	**$2,234,490**	**$152,961**

10-YEAR HISTORICAL CONTEXT | 2015-16 TO 2025-26

Over the past 10 years, the District's taxable valuation increased 56.85%, while its total property tax asking increased 30.61%. During that same period, the District's total levy decreased 16.73%.

VALUATION	TAX ASKING	TOTAL LEVY
+56.85%	**+30.61%**	**-16.73%**

A 56.85% increase in valuation did not result in a corresponding 56.85% increase in the District's property tax asking.

GENERAL FUND +4.55%

The General Fund property tax request increases from $1,959,596 to $2,048,681, an increase of $89,085. The increase reflects normal inflationary costs, negotiated increases in teacher compensation, and other costs associated with operating the District. The property tax request also accounts for the 1% County Treasurer collection fee.

VALUATION AND TAX RATE CONTEXT

The District's total property valuation increased approximately 4.58%, from $238,089,956 to $248,993,909. Because valuation growth (4.58%) is slightly more than the General Fund request increase (4.55%), the proposed General Fund tax rate remains essentially unchanged, moving slightly from 0.823043 to 0.822784.

SPECIAL BUILDING FUND +$60,606

The Special Building Fund property tax request increases from $50,505 to $111,111, an increase of $60,606. That increase accounts for nearly 40% of the District's entire $152,961 increase in non-bond property tax asking.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Roof rotation - Shop improvements
Windows and doors - Concrete work
HVAC - Bathrooms
Rotating classroom refreshes

Plan ahead. Maintain what we have. Spread costs over time.
Avoid major financial surprises.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYER?

The District's 7.35% overall request increase does NOT mean every property owner's school taxes will increase 7.35%. Individual impacts vary based on property valuation and other applicable factors.

ACTUAL PINK POSTCARD EXAMPLE

	2025	2026
Assessed Value	$124,850	$124,862
Estimated Hay Springs School Tax	$1,091.52	$1,120.52
Estimated Annual Change		**+$29.00**

OUR COMMITMENT

Hay Springs Public Schools recognizes the very real impact property taxes have on our farmers, ranchers, families, homeowners, businesses, and all taxpayers.

Our goal is to balance the needs of today's students, responsible compensation and staffing, maintaining our community's facilities, long-term financial stability, and respect for our taxpayers.

Investing Today. Building Tomorrow.

Questions?
Dr. Sadie Coffey, Superintendent
Hay Springs Public Schools

Hay Springs Public School
Home of the Hawks! | 308.638.4434 | 407 N. Baker St.
Empowering students to SOAR!

MENU

Understanding Your “Pink Postcard”

September 15, 2026 - 3:02 pm | Community, Informational

Understanding Your “Pink Postcard”: Hay Springs Public Schools’ 2026-27 Property Tax Request

Many property owners recently received a pink “Notice of Proposed Tax Increase” that includes Hay Springs Public Schools.

We understand that receiving a bright pink postcard with “PROPOSED TAX INCREASE” printed across the top can immediately cause concern. We believe our taxpayers deserve more than a number on a postcard; they deserve to understand why Hay Springs Public Schools is included, what the numbers actually mean, and how the Board and administration approached the 2026-27 budget.

Why did Hay Springs Public Schools receive a “Pink Postcard”?

Under Nebraska’s current Property Tax Request Act, counties, cities, and school districts proposing to increase their property tax request by more than their statutory allowable growth percentage must participate in a Joint Public Hearing. The allowable growth percentage is calculated as a 2% base plus the political subdivision’s percentage of “real growth.”

For Hay Springs Public Schools, the 2026-27 calculation is:

Prior-Year Non-Bond Property Tax Request	$2,081,529.00
Base Limitation Percentage	2.00%
Real Growth Percentage	1.78%
Total Allowable Growth Percentage	3.78%
Allowable Dollar Increase	$78,681.80
Property Tax Request Threshold Before Triggering Joint Hearing	$2,160,210.80
Proposed 2026-27 Non-Bond Property Tax Request	$2,234,490.00

Amount Above Joint-Hearing Threshold	$74,279.20

Because the District's proposed property tax request is approximately $74,279 above the statutory threshold, Hay Springs Public Schools is required to participate in the Joint Public Hearing process this year.

Yes, our total request is increasing, but the reason matters.

Our total proposed non-bond property tax request is increasing from $2,081,529 to $2,234,490, an increase of $152,961, or approximately 7.35%.

We want to be transparent about that number.

However, that 7.35% does not mean that the operating costs of the District simply increased 7.35%, nor does it mean every individual's school property taxes will increase 7.35%.

There are three funds that make up this year's non-bond property tax request, and understanding where the increase occurs provides important context.

Fund	2025-26 Tax Request	2026-27 Tax Request	Increase
General Fund	$1,959,596	$2,048,681	+$89,085
Special Building Fund	$50,505	$111,111	+$60,606
QCPUF	$71,428	$74,698	+$3,270
TOTAL	$2,081,529	$2,234,490	+$152,961

1. Our General Fund

The proposed General Fund property tax request increased from $1,959,596 to $2,048,681: an increase of $89,085, or approximately 4.55%.

The property tax request also accounts for the 1% County Treasurer collection fee that Nebraska school districts must include when calculating their property tax levy. The General Fund increase reflects normal inflationary costs, negotiated increases in teacher compensation, and other costs associated with operating the District.

There is another important number for context. Hay Springs Public Schools' total property valuation increased from $238,089,956 to $248,993,909, an increase of approximately 4.58%.

In comparison, the General Fund property tax request increased approximately 4.55%: slightly less than the percentage increase in the District's overall valuation.

As a result, the proposed General Fund tax rate remains essentially unchanged, moving slightly from 0.823043 to 0.822784.

2. Our Special Building Fund

This is an especially important part of the story and helps explain why the District’s total property tax request exceeded the pink-postcard threshold.

The District’s 2025-26 Special Building Fund property tax request was $50,505. For 2026-27, the proposed request is $111,111, an increase of $60,606.

That $60,606 represents approximately 40% of the District’s entire $152,961 increase in non-bond property tax asking.

Because Nebraska’s current pink-postcard calculation is based on the District’s prior-year property tax request and its allowable growth percentage, last year’s lower Building Fund request is part of the starting point for this year’s calculation. This year, the District is intentionally rebuilding the amount budgeted for facility needs identified through our long-term Capital Improvement Plan.

Those needs include projects such as:

- Roof rotation and replacement
- Improvements to the shop
- Window and door replacement/improvements
- Concrete work
- HVAC improvements
- Bathroom improvements
- Rotating classroom refreshes and improvements

These are not intended to be one-time cosmetic expenditures. They represent an effort to establish a planned, sustainable cycle of maintaining the facilities our community already owns.

Why budget for these projects annually?

Our Board and administration believe there are two ways to approach aging facilities.

We can postpone maintenance until roofs, HVAC systems, windows, doors, bathrooms, classrooms, and other infrastructure reach the point where major work must be completed immediately.

Or, we can identify those needs ahead of time and intentionally budget for them over multiple years.

We believe the second approach is more responsible.

By incorporating capital improvements into our annual financial planning, our goal is to avoid a situation in which numerous major projects become necessary simultaneously and create a much larger financial burden for taxpayers.

Plan ahead. Maintain what we have. Spread costs over time. Avoid major financial surprises.

That is the philosophy behind our Capital Improvement Plan.

3. Qualified Capital Purpose Undertaking Fund (QCPUF)

The remaining portion of the increase is relatively small. The District’s QCPUF property tax request increases from $71,428 to $74,698, an increase of $3,270.

We understand who pays the bill.

Hay Springs Public Schools is proud to serve a rural Nebraska community where farming and ranching remain central to our local economy and way of life.

The Board of Education and District administration recognize that property taxes represent a very real expense for our farmers and ranchers, homeowners, families, businesses, and other property owners.

We do not take that responsibility lightly.

The same fundamental costs of operating a PK-12 school: educators, transportation, utilities, insurance, curriculum, technology, facilities, special education, maintenance, and other services, must be supported across that valuation.

That makes careful financial planning especially important for our District.

Our goal is not simply to collect the maximum amount available. Our goal is to balance: *the needs of today’s students + responsible compensation and staffing + maintaining our community’s facilities + long-term financial stability + respect for our taxpayers.*

What does the postcard mean for MY taxes?

The pink postcard provides an estimate based on the assessed value of an individual property and the proposed tax requests of the political subdivisions listed.

It does not mean that every property owner’s taxes will increase by the District’s overall percentage increase.

The postcards themselves state that “the actual tax on your property may increase or decrease.”

For example, one of the actual postcards pictured with this information shows:

- 2025 Assessed Value: $124,850
- 2026 Assessed Value: $124,862

Estimated Hay Springs Public Schools taxes:

- 2025: $1,091.52
- 2026: $1,120.52
- Estimated annual change: +$29.00

A second example shows:

- 2025 Assessed Value: $2,850
- 2026 Assessed Value: $2,910

Estimated Hay Springs Public Schools taxes:

- 2025: $24.92

- 2026: $26.11
- Estimated annual change: +$1.19

These are simply examples. The impact on an individual taxpayer depends upon that property’s valuation and other applicable factors.

The “Pink Postcard” system is changing next year.

There is another important piece of context this year.

2026 is the final year of Nebraska’s current joint-hearing/pink-postcard structure.

The Legislature passed LB 803 in 2026, which repeals the current allowable-growth-triggered joint-hearing statute effective January 1, 2027.

Beginning in 2027, Nebraska law requires each county and each city or school district levying a property tax within the county to participate in a Joint Public Hearing. The hearing will occur between July 1 and July 15 and will focus on the participating subdivisions’ budget processes and preliminary information affecting their budgets.

This is an important distinction.

- This year: Hay Springs is participating because our proposed request crossed the current allowable-growth threshold.
- Beginning next year: participation in the Joint Public Hearing will be required of counties, cities, and school districts that levy property taxes; not merely those that cross this type of threshold.

Transparency matters.

We understand that a taxpayer may open a pink postcard, see “NOTICE OF PROPOSED TAX INCREASE,” and understandably wonder:

“Why is the school raising my taxes?”

That is exactly why we want to provide the complete picture.

Our proposed budget does include an increased property tax request. We are not trying to hide or minimize that fact.

But the story behind that increase matters.

- The proposed General Fund property tax request increased from $1,959,596 to $2,048,681—an increase of $89,085, or approximately 4.55%.
- The property tax request also accounts for the 1% County Treasurer collection fee that Nebraska school districts must include when calculating their property tax levy. The General Fund increase reflects normal inflationary costs, negotiated increases in teacher compensation, and other costs associated with operating the District.
- There is another important number for context. Hay Springs Public Schools’ total property valuation increased from $238,089,956 to $248,993,909, an increase of approximately 4.58%.

- In comparison, the General Fund property tax request increased approximately 4.55%: slightly less than the percentage increase in the District's overall valuation.
- Another significant component of the overall increase is the Special Building Fund. Its property tax request increased $60,606, accounting for nearly 40% of the District's total $152,961 increase, as the District intentionally budgets for known facility needs through its long-term Capital Improvement Plan.

The Board and administration are working to maintain the school facilities our taxpayers have already invested in without waiting until numerous expensive projects become emergencies and without unnecessarily placing a large financial burden on taxpayers all at once.

Please join us or reach out with questions.

Sheridan County Joint Public Hearing
Friday, September 18, 2026
7:00 p.m.
Sheridan County Commissioner's Room
301 E. 2nd Street
Rushville, NE 69360

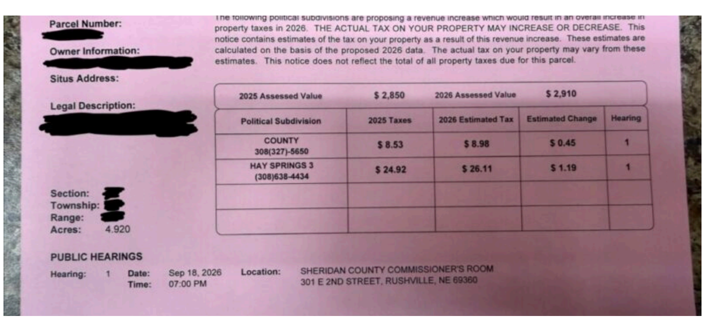
Under current law, members of the public must be provided an opportunity to speak for a reasonable amount of time at the Joint Public Hearing.

Hay Springs Public Schools 2026-27 Budget Hearing
Monday, September 21, 2026
7:00 p.m.
Hay Springs Public School Cafeteria

The Regular Board of Education Meeting will be held immediately following the conclusion of the Budget Hearing. The agenda for the regular meeting is kept continually current and is available for public inspection at the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

We welcome questions about the District's budget, tax request, Capital Improvement Plan, and the pink-postcard process.

Hay Springs Public Schools remains committed to providing an excellent education for our students, maintaining the facilities our community has invested in, planning responsibly for the future, and being good stewards of every taxpayer dollar entrusted to our District.



Parcel Number: [redacted]
Owner Information: [redacted]
Situs Address:
Legal Description: [redacted]

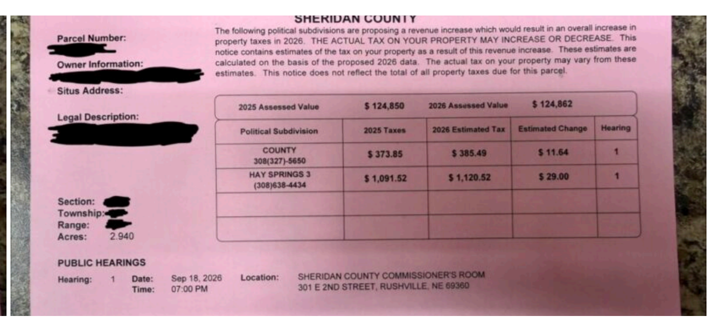
The following political subdivisions are proposing a revenue increase which would result in an overall increase in property taxes in 2026. THE ACTUAL TAX ON YOUR PROPERTY MAY INCREASE OR DECREASE. This notice contains estimates of the tax on your property as a result of this revenue increase. These estimates are calculated on the basis of the proposed 2026 data. The actual tax on your property may vary from these estimates. This notice does not reflect the total of all property taxes due for this parcel.

2025 Assessed Value $ 2,850 2026 Assessed Value $ 2,910

Political Subdivision	2025 Taxes	2026 Estimated Tax	Estimated Change	Hearing
COUNTY 308(327)-5650	$ 8.53	$ 8.98	$ 0.45	1
HAY SPRINGS 3 (308)638-4434	$ 24.92	$ 26.11	$ 1.19	1

Section: [redacted]
Township: [redacted]
Range: [redacted]
Acres: 4.920

PUBLIC HEARINGS
Hearing: 1 Date: Sep 18, 2026 Time: 07:00 PM Location: SHERIDAN COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S ROOM 301 E 2ND STREET, RUSHVILLE, NE 69360



SHERIDAN COUNTY

Parcel Number: [redacted]
Owner Information: [redacted]
Situs Address:
Legal Description: [redacted]

The following political subdivisions are proposing a revenue increase which would result in an overall increase in property taxes in 2026. THE ACTUAL TAX ON YOUR PROPERTY MAY INCREASE OR DECREASE. This notice contains estimates of the tax on your property as a result of this revenue increase. These estimates are calculated on the basis of the proposed 2026 data. The actual tax on your property may vary from these estimates. This notice does not reflect the total of all property taxes due for this parcel.

2025 Assessed Value $ 124,850 2026 Assessed Value $ 124,862

Political Subdivision	2025 Taxes	2026 Estimated Tax	Estimated Change	Hearing
COUNTY 308(327)-5650	$ 373.85	$ 385.49	$ 11.64	1
HAY SPRINGS 3 (308)638-4434	$ 1,091.52	$ 1,120.52	$ 29.00	1

Section: [redacted]
Township: [redacted]
Range: [redacted]
Acres: 2.940

PUBLIC HEARINGS
Hearing: 1 Date: Sep 18, 2026 Time: 07:00 PM Location: SHERIDAN COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S ROOM 301 E 2ND STREET, RUSHVILLE, NE 69360