



Frequently Asked Questions: Funding

The FSSD is supplying the following information in an effort to provide clarity to frequently asked questions by the FSSD community.

Q: What is a “special” school district?

A: Unlike other states across the country, Tennessee does not give taxing authority to local school boards to fund schools unless the local school board requests to become a “special” school district. The status “special” comes from a Special Act of the state legislature that allows the local Board of Education to tax property, thus enabling the local schools to be funded appropriately. The Franklin Special School District was granted this status in 1949.

Q: What is the size and boundary configuration of the Franklin Special School District?

A: The FSSD is a prekindergarten through eighth-grade school system with approximately 3,700 students enrolled. It was created in 1906 by the Franklin Board of Mayor and Aldermen. In the Private Acts of 1925, the state legislature officially set the district’s boundaries to those of the Ninth Civil District, which, at that time, included parts of Williamson County and all of the city of Franklin.

Franklin maintained a steady growth rate until the mid 1980s when the city’s population exploded. In order for both school systems to plan for the massive influx of new students, the existing FSSD boundaries were frozen as they existed on September 1, 1986 (*House Bill 1236 of the Private Acts of 1987, Chapter 53*).

Property that was once farm land has since been parceled, sold and developed into subdivisions, sometimes cutting right down the middle of the FSSD boundary line, splitting some neighborhoods into two different school systems. This accounts for the uneven boundary lines between the FSSD and WCS. It would take another act of the legislature to redraw the FSSD boundaries.

Q: How is the school district rated both academically and financially?

A: All schools and the Central Office are accredited by AdvancEd, one of the most esteemed school accreditation agencies in the country. The FSSD received excellent reviews from the AdvancEd Review Team in 2013. The AdvancED Accreditation Process is a clear and comprehensive program of evaluation and external review, supported by research-based standards, and dedicated to helping schools, districts and education providers continuously improve. According to AdvancED’s web site, “System accreditation has the power to nurture and support individual school improvement, and at the same time unify school improvement and align it with overall system improvement goals so that the system’s schools are moving in one direction together, on the same page.”

The district’s achievement on the 2015 State Report Card places it among the top 8 of all public school systems in Tennessee. Out of 146 public school systems, the FSSD ranked 7th in reading/language arts and 8th in science and math.

Financially, the FSSD meets and exceeds the financial standards set by both the State Department of Education and our lenders with respect to the fund balances maintained at all times. The district has an excellent Moody’s bond rating of Aa1.



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Q: What funding sources make up the FSSD budget?

	FSSD	STATE
Local Funding	68.80%	40.96%
State Funding	26.07%	47.32%
Federal Funding	05.11%	11.72%

****based on 2015-2016 State Report Card***

The FSSD receives the least amount of state funding as compared to **all other** school districts. This puts a greater burden on the local tax base. Local funding includes the SSD property tax collections as well as our share (8%) of WC property and sales tax collections.

Q: I am retired and live on a limited income. Are there any tax relief programs for seniors?

A: Yes! The FSSD participates in the Williamson County Broad-Based Tax Relief program for the elderly, administered by the Williamson County Trustee's Office. This program is an additive to the State of Tennessee Relief for the Elderly Property Tax Program. To be eligible, you must be 65 years or older by December 31 of the current tax year. Income limits vary by program. To receive more information, contact the Trustee's Office at 615-790-5709.