



BUDGET

VOTE

Tuesday, May 16

12 P.M. – 9 P.M.

AT WEEDSPORT

JR.-SR. HIGH SCHOOL

Absentee ballots

may be requested through the District Office

At-a-Glance

PROPOSED BUDGET

\$22,253,678

BUDGET INCREASE

\$981,658

TAX LEVY INCREASE

1.99 percent



District voters to consider \$22.3 million budget with 1.99 percent tax levy increase on May 16

On Tuesday, May 16, Weedsport Central School District residents will vote on a proposed \$22,253,678 budget for the 2023-24 school year. The proposed budget increases spending by \$981,658 and carries a 1.99 percent tax levy increase, which falls below the District’s legal limit as defined by New York’s tax levy cap legislation.

This marks the twelfth year in a row that the District has presented a tax levy below 2 percent. External forces such as escalating health insurance costs, increased mandatory retirement contributions by NYS, and the termination of federal funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic all had a significant impact in the budget development process. The Village of Weedsport will also stop providing its SRO service next school year, resulting in a costlier partnership with the Cayuga County Sheriff’s Department.

“Throughout this process, the focus on ensuring the continuation of Weedsport’s excellent education program has not wavered,” explained Superintendent Shaun O’Connor.

“We believe that the budget provides a balanced approach to meeting the educational needs of our students and the economic pressures on the taxpayers.”

The proposed budget accounts for positions that were once covered by COVID-19 relief monies. That includes funding for Academic Intervention Services teachers at the elementary-level and at the Jr.-Sr. High School. Additionally, funding for a teaching assistant to serve struggling learners in the Jr.-Sr. High School Learning Lab will now be assumed by the District, as will a portion of the funding for a counselor who works at both school buildings in support of

students and their social/emotional well-being.

“It’s important to approach students with sensitivity and respect, and to prioritize their well-being and needs as we express concern and offer support. Building a trusting relationship and creating a supportive environment can make a significant difference in helping students overcome challenges and thrive academically, socially, and emotionally,” emphasized O’Connor.

The 2023-24 spending plan includes increased funding to support student programming; most specifically, the restoration of a full-time music teacher at the high school level, the addition of a special education teacher at the high school level, and student participation in BOCES-provided alternative education and Career and Technical Education programming.

“In its time-honored approach, the Weedsport Board of Education is focused on maintaining fiscal prudence while balancing an excellent academic program through strategic financial planning, cost management, and long-term financial sustainability,” shared O’Connor.

Other Propositions on the Ballot

The District is also asking voters to approve the purchase of a new school bus, not to exceed \$165,000.

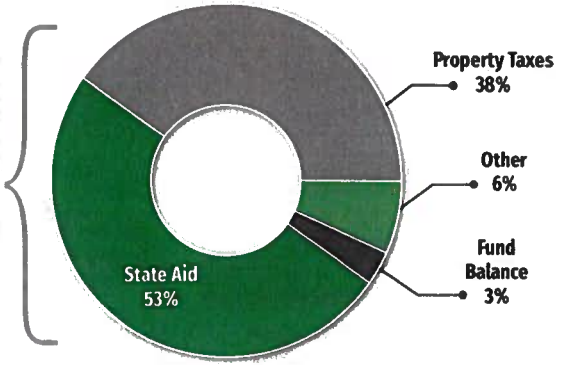
In a second proposition, voters will decide whether or not the Weedsport Public Library can levy and collect a tax in the amount of \$88,058 in 2023-24.

In a third proposition, voters will be asked whether or not the District can establish a Capital Reserve.

Voters will also select one member to join the Board of Education. Incumbent Colleen Borza is running for reelection.

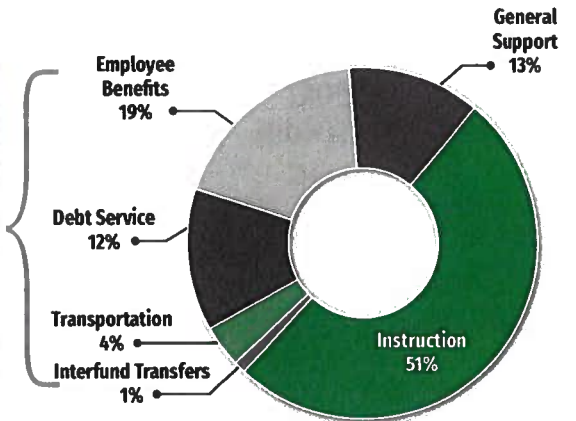
Where the *money comes from...*

PROJECTED REVENUES				
	Approved 2022-23	Proposed 2023-24	\$ Change	% Change
State Aid	\$10,929,956	\$11,841,500	\$911,544	8.34%
Property Tax	\$8,325,206	\$8,490,878	\$165,672	1.99%
Fund Balance	\$564,500	\$564,500	\$0	0%
Other	\$1,452,358	\$1,356,800	(\$95,558)	(6.58%)
Total	\$21,272,020	\$22,253,678	\$981,658	4.61%



...and where the *money is spent*

PROJECTED EXPENDITURES				
	Approved 2022-23	Proposed 2023-24	\$ Change	% Change
General Support	\$2,685,863	\$2,790,513	\$104,650	3.90%
Instruction	\$10,857,332	\$11,359,086	\$501,754	4.62%
Pupil Transportation	\$881,289	\$935,590	\$54,301	7.56%
Debt Service	\$2,628,597	\$2,758,200	\$129,603	4.93%
Employee Benefits	\$4,118,939	\$4,310,289	\$191,350	4.65%
Interfund Transfers	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	0%
Total	\$21,272,020	\$22,253,678	\$981,658	4.61%



Budget Q & A

Q What exactly am I voting on?

Residents will vote on a proposed \$22,253,678 budget for the 2023-24 school year, which calls for a 1.99 percent tax levy increase. There will also be three separate propositions on the ballot. The first asks voters to approve the purchase of a new school bus, not to exceed \$165,000. The second will ask voters to approve the Weedspport Public Library's levy collection. The third will ask voters whether or not the District can establish a Capital Reserve.

Q Why do salaries comprise so much of the budget?

It takes many people to create and maintain a safe and productive learning environment for the approximately 600 students in our two schools. The District has nearly 150

employees who teach, transport, coach, and care for the community's children. They clean buildings, mow fields, order supplies, and make decisions so that schools run effectively and efficiently. Every year, approximately 60-percent of the district's budget goes to pay for salaries and benefits.

Q What if the budget were defeated on May 16?

If voters reject the initial budget proposal on May 16, the Board of Education has the option of putting the same or a revised budget up for a revote. If the budget were defeated twice, the BOE would adopt a contingent budget – meaning the tax levy would be the same as the current year's tax levy.

Q Why is library funding included on the ballot?

The \$88,058 proposition is stand-alone and will require a yes or no vote. As a courtesy to our local libraries, the District provides

voting day services and library-provided information in this newsletter. The school district has no role in the creation of the library budgets or services.

Q What is the Capital Reserve Proposition?

To explain in simplest terms, the proposition establishes a savings account for future project costs. The proposition does not raise your taxes. Any money that may remain unused at the end of a school year would be used to fund this account. By law, a school district must ask its voters to establish a Capital Reserve Fund. The establishment of the Capital Reserve Fund (or "savings account") allows the school district to maintain, repair, and enhance our facilities for future building projects. Again, we will fund the account with any leftover money from each school year. If passed by the voters, we anticipate this Capital Reserve Fund to last 10 years. In review, the establishment of this savings account has no impact on a resident's taxes.

School District Budget Notice

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL

	Budget Adopted for the 2022-23 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2023-24 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$21,272,020	\$22,253,678	\$21,819,998
Increase/Decrease for the 2022-23 School Year		\$981,658	\$547,978
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		4.61%	2.57%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$8,325,206	8,490,878	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$8,325,206	\$8,490,878	\$8,325,206
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$0	\$0	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$8,370,361	\$8,521,076	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$8,325,206	\$8,490,878	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$45,155	\$30,198	
Administrative Component	\$2,337,142	\$2,411,419	\$2,384,276
Program Component	\$14,715,145	\$15,424,442	\$15,250,905
Capital Component	\$4,219,733	\$4,417,817	\$4,184,817

*If voters do not approve the proposed 2023-24 budget within two votes, the Board must adopt a contingent budget. With New York's tax levy cap law in effect, the rules for contingent budgets have changed. No longer is there a spending cap on contingent budgets. Instead, there is now a zero percent cap on the tax levy increase. In other words, a district would have to levy the same amount of taxes as in the current year or less without any adjustment for state pension rate increases, contractual obligations, or any other costs, mandates or not. Other aspects of the contingent budget rules have stayed the same.

**List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
School Bus Proposition	\$165,000
Library Proposition	\$88,058
Establish Capital Reserve Proposition (New)	\$0

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2022-23 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$605.00
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the qualified voters of the Weedsport Central School District, Cayuga County, New York, will be held at the Weedsport Jr.-Sr. High School in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot.

¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

Looking for more Budget Information?

This newsletter offers an overview of the proposed 2023-24 school budget. More details are in the district office and online at: www.weedsport.org.

For the latest news, information, announcements and schedules, please visit us at www.weedsport.org



Weedsport

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Board of Education

Colleen Borza, *President*

Chad Mitchell, *Vice President*

Wendy Bannister

Norman Chirco

Renee Munn

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POSTAL PATRON

NEWS 2023 BUDGET Notes

Voters to elect one to serve on Board of Education

The school board is made up of five non-paid residents elected to serve overlapping terms of five years each. Collectively, the school board members: establish District policies; set the priorities and adopt an annual budget for public approval; determine which courses are offered and which textbooks are purchased; set goals for student achievement and evaluate progress toward those goals; vote on the superintendent's recommendations on personnel matters and contracts; and serve as a critical link between the community and the school with regards to communication.

Incumbent Colleen Borza is running for the one open seat.

More budget information can be found on the Weedsport Central School District website:
www.weedsport.org

BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 16
12 P.M. – 9 P.M. AT WEEDSPORT JR.-SR. HIGH SCHOOL

Absentee ballots may be requested through the District Office

WHO CAN VOTE?

- must be a U.S. citizen
- and 18 years or older
- and a district resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote

WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

Personal identification/proof of residency is required (e.g., driver's license or utility bill, both with name and current address).

Capital Project Work Timeline

The Weedsport Central School District is continuously working to improve its facilities and ensure the healthiest, safest environment possible for our students.

Happening now through summer of 2023:

The track and field area at the Jr.-Sr. High School will be upgraded. Crews will replace the track, put in a new turf field, and add a concession stand and bathroom area that will be open to all during home events. A new fitness room will also be built. At Weedsport Elementary school, the Tope Gymnasium will be renovated, along with the foyer area outside of the gymnasium.

Happening fall of 2023:

The Jr.-Sr. High School gymnasium will be updated, including new bleachers, wall pads, and flooring. This will have minimal impact on students' provision of physical education. During PE classes, students will make use of the new track and field, head to the fitness center, or use our new fitness room.

Happening spring/summer of 2024:

The flooring in the Jr.-Sr. High School conference room, counseling office suite, and room 101 will be updated. In the summer, window replacement will occur at Weedsport Elementary School.