

NEWS & VIEWS Chappaqua Schools

PUBLISHED FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT BY THE CHAPPAQUA BOARD OF EDUCATION



Dear Community Member:

Throughout the 2011-12 budget development process, the Board of Education worked with district administration to craft a budget that ensures continuing excellence in academic and extracurricular programs for students while being fiscally responsible to taxpayers. On April 12, the board unanimously adopted a budget proposal of \$111,448,488, an increase of 1.88% over the 2010-11 budget. The board allocated \$4,250,000 from reserve funds to be used as revenue, thereby reducing the potential tax levy increase to \$811,077, or 0.83%. Tax rates are projected to increase by 2.11% for NGerryew Castle and to decrease by 6.85% for Mt. Pleasant.

This budget includes significant spending cuts in all budget areas, including the reduction of 14 non-instructional and 15 instructional staff positions. The Chappaqua Congress of Teachers' agreement to reopen their existing contract results in \$1.1 million in savings next year.

We begin the 2011-12 school year on July 1 with a new superintendent at the helm. Dr. Lyn McKay is a talented and experienced educational leader with a deep belief in the importance of excellence in teaching and learning at all levels. We believe this budget gives her the necessary resources to continue delivering — and even improving — the high quality education that defines the Chappaqua schools.

We urge you to vote on the school budget and board of education candidates on Tuesday, May 17, from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the Horace Greeley High School gym.

Sincerely,

Chappaqua School District Board of Education

Janet Benton, *President*

Gregg Bresner, *Vice President*

Randall Katchis, *Board Member*

Alyson Gardner Kiesel, *Board Member*

Jeffrey Mester, *Board Member*

Highlights of the Proposed 2011-12 Budget:

- ★ Preserves excellence in teaching and learning
- ★ Maintains class sizes at the elementary school level
- ★ Maintains team approach at the middle school level
- ★ Maintains breadth and depth of core course offerings at Greeley
- ★ Maintains breadth and depth of extra-curricular activities at Greeley
- ★ Reduces more than \$1 million in non-instructional expenses
- ★ Saves \$1.1 million in instructional expenses, with voluntary reopening of teachers' contract
- ★ Expenditures increase by 1.88%
- ★ Tax levy increased by less than one percent (0.83%)
- ★ Estimated tax rates:
New Castle..... + 2.11%
Mt. Pleasant - 6.85%

VOTE **Tuesday, May 17, 2011**
7 a.m. - 9 p.m. ★ Greeley Gym

School District Budget Notice

State Law requires that all residents receive this information in the following format.

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2010-11 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2011-12 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2011-12 School Year *
Total budget amount	\$109,391,348	\$111,448,488	\$111,316,248
Increase (decrease) for the 2011-12 school year		\$2,057,140	\$1,924,900
Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget		1.88%	1.76%
Change in the consumer price index		1.60%	
Resulting estimate property tax levy for the 2011-12 school year		\$98,944,582	\$98,812,342
Administrative Component	\$11,148,545	\$10,817,550	\$10,815,050
Program Component	\$80,935,492	\$83,320,828	\$83,206,088
Capital Component	\$17,307,311	\$17,310,110	\$17,295,110

* Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2011-12 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated. The contingency budget would require \$132,240 in cuts from the proposed 2011-12 budget. Reductions would be made across the budget, including staffing, athletics, O&M, library supplies/books, equipment and supplies.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR^{1&2} Exemption Savings:

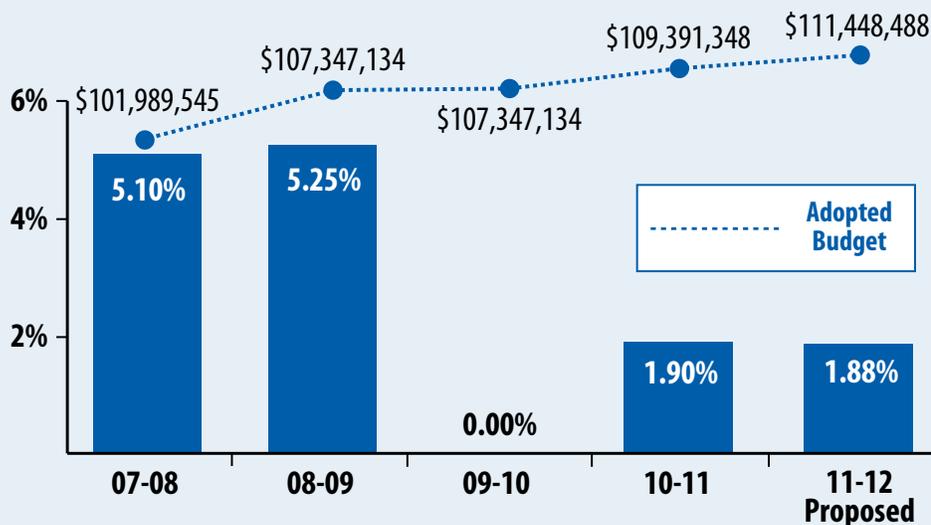
	Budget Proposed for the 2011-12 School Year
Basic STAR tax savings	\$1,688

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2011-12 by the qualified voters of the Chappaqua Central School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at the Horace Greeley High School in said district on Tuesday, May 17, 2011 between the hours of 7:00 am and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in the Horace Greeley High School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting machine ballot or machine.

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

² Beginning 2011-12, legislation requires that taxpayers who earn more than \$500,000 will no longer receive the Basic STAR exemption.

Recent Budget Increases



Projected Tax Rate per \$1,000 of Assessed Value

	Rate	% Increase
Town of New Castle	\$97.64	2.11%
Town of Mt. Pleasant	\$1,186.45	-6.85%

School Administrators Comment On How the Proposed Budget Will Affect Their Programs

Q **For Andrew Selesnick:** *As high school principal, you spent considerable time in budget meetings addressing questions of class size, course requests for Advanced Placement and/or doubling up in math, science or world languages. In the board's adopted budget, what is your comfort level on these concerns?*

A This year, we had to look more closely than ever before at recent trends in student course requests to make the most accurate section and staffing projections for next year. We examined statistics of the past five years to understand the many shifts that occur following initial course requests. As a result, I am confident that, in September, we'll be able to offer a program comparable to that of previous years. Students seeking to take double courses in a particular department will be able to do so at rates comparable to prior years. Class size will largely remain unchanged; there will be fewer very small sections, and there may be a slight increase in the number of larger sections.

Every fall there are students who cannot be enrolled in a particular course, and this year will be no different. It would be a mistake, however, for anyone to assume that any such disappointment is the result of a tighter budget. Far more likely factors are the competing interests within a particular student's slate of course requests and our need to place courses in the schedule where they will be accessible to the greatest number of (but rarely to all) students. Such competing interests necessitate further decisions for some of our students, (which is not a bad thing), and we can be sure, as we are every year, that each student will have ample opportunities for a rich and varied experience.

Q **For Martha Zornow:** *As Seven Bridges Middle School principal, you were asked to address concerns over the proposal to reduce a team for the 2011-2012 school year. Is this issue resolved to your satisfaction in the proposed budget?*

A The restructuring of 7th and 8th grade here is a response to a projected

enrollment decline of 34 students in those two grades. Obviously, even in the current economic climate, I am committed to maintaining the rich student experience at Seven Bridges. In order to become comfortable that we could provide the same range of courses and services with one fewer core team, we looked carefully at the schedule, class sizes, levels of student need and personnel. By actually building the schedule, we assured ourselves that 7th and 8th grade students grouped into three teams, rather than four, will experience the grade offerings and team environment as fully as their predecessors. Class sizes will be larger – now comparable to Bell Middle School – but every secondary student will attend classes only with students on his or her grade, taught by content-certified teachers.

I was gratified but not surprised that several teachers expressed a positive interest in teaching on the 7/8 team. Most of those selected to teach two grades have already done so successfully.

Q **For Mike Kirsch:** *As principal at Grafflin Elementary School, you (like your counterparts at the other two elementary schools) will find your assistant principal spending a portion of her time next year on a new responsibility – chairing Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of this change, which is a result of the reduction of a current CSE chair's position?*

A We are in an era of downsizing and this new task for elementary assistant principals is a responsible way for the district to save money while continuing to provide an excellent program for special needs students. It is an opportunity for our assistant principals to enhance their own experience while providing a valuable service to the district.

They have received a significant amount of training, learning what they need to know to perform their new duties as CSE chairs. It is an exciting and complicated task and I am confident that our capable and hard-

working assistants will be ready for this new responsibility.

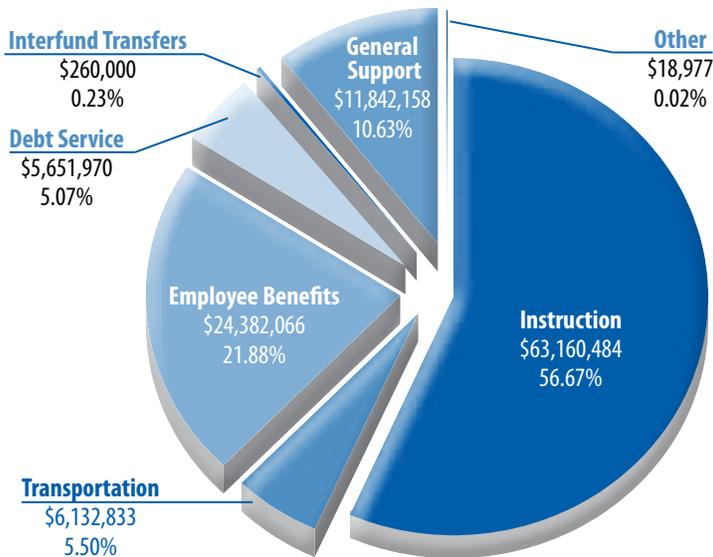
I am, of course, concerned about how the rest of the assistant principals' job responsibilities will get accomplished; they, like the principals, are already working very long hours to get their jobs done. Undoubtedly, principals will have to take over some of the responsibilities that have been handled by the assistants. Additional tasks may be able to be assigned to other staff members. Somehow all of the work will get done in the professional manner that is expected in Chappaqua.

Q **For Heidi McCarthy:** *As the district's Director of Special Education and Related Services, you have already said that the 2011-2012 budget, as adopted by the board, "ensures, in a fiscally responsible manner, that our students with disabilities receive an appropriate education to meet their individual needs." Yet you have also said that some parts of the special education budget are especially hard to predict this far in advance. Where are you most confident in the budget, and where is your concern about an unpredictable element?*

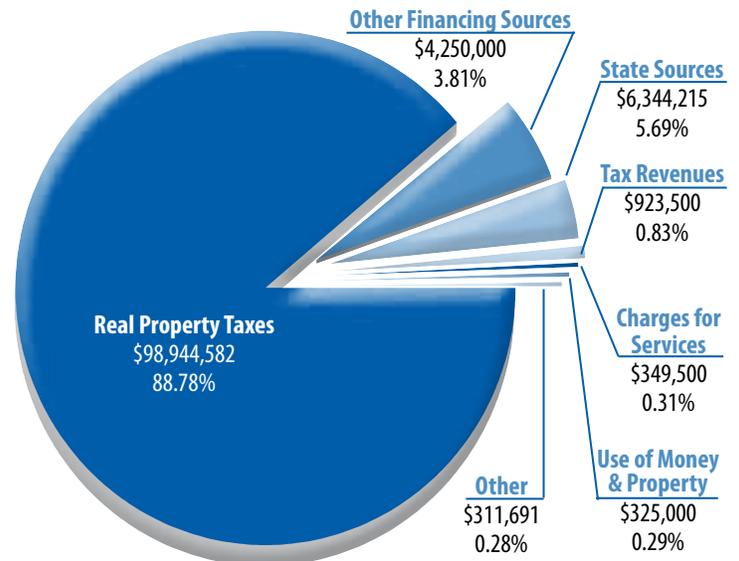
A The special education budget provides for the public education of students with disabilities through programs, services and supports. The appropriateness of recommended programs and progress of students with disabilities are monitored closely and adjustments are made accordingly. With thorough knowledge of current staffing, contracted services and tuition costs and close monitoring of students' needs, we are confident in the projections made for budget planning. However, unexpected changes in any student's functioning may affect needed programs and services. In addition, changes in enrollment, specifically new entrants to the district already identified as students with disabilities requiring high levels of services, can have an impact on amounts budgeted. If such unpredictable changes do occur, we still have the responsibility to provide appropriate programs, even if that means adjusting the budget.

Budget Information

2011-12 General Fund Expenditures



2011-12 General Fund Revenues



Budget Summary

		2011-12 Proposed Budget	2010-11 Approved Budget	% Change
General Support	Board of Education	\$54,701	\$57,802	-5.36%
	Central Administration	\$353,904	\$378,985	-6.62%
	Finance/Audit/Legal	\$1,304,816	\$1,353,905	-3.63%
	Human Resources/Public Information	\$416,267	\$442,767	-5.99%
	Operations & Maintenance	\$8,011,970	\$8,248,122	-2.86%
	Special Items	\$1,700,500	\$1,720,500	-1.16%
	Total	\$11,842,158	\$12,202,081	-2.95%
Instruction	Supervision	\$5,290,688	\$5,697,394	-7.14%
	Regular School	\$37,146,431	\$37,169,090	-0.06%
	Special Schools	\$239,500	\$250,000	-4.20%
	Special Education	\$11,784,408	\$10,950,699	7.61%
	Instructional Media	\$3,240,319	\$3,470,275	-6.63%
	Pupil Services	\$4,116,086	\$3,985,228	3.28%
	Pupil Activities	\$1,343,052	\$1,408,953	-4.68%
	Total	\$63,160,484	\$62,931,639	0.36%
Transportation	\$6,132,833	\$6,127,565	0.09%	
Undistributed	Employee Benefits	\$24,382,066	\$22,159,821	10.03%
	Debt Service	\$5,651,970	\$5,711,265	-1.04%
	Community Services	\$18,977	\$18,977	0.00%
	Interfund Transfers	\$260,000	\$240,000	8.33%
	Total	\$30,313,013	\$28,130,063	7.76%
General Fund Appropriations	\$111,448,488	\$109,391,348	1.88%	

District Administrators Comment on the Proposed Budget

John Chambers, Interim Superintendent

“This was obviously a challenging year for budget development, but I was pleased to witness some encouraging signs in the process. The cooperative effort of administrators and other staff was remarkable, most notably the teachers’ voluntary reopening of their contract to save the district money. This gesture alone allowed us to cut \$1.1 million dollars in instructional expenses. Parent and community involvement was also very helpful, aiding both the transparency of the process and the board’s confidence in striking the right balance at the bottom line. Most encouraging of all was the consistent interest in creating a budget that will be good for students K-12. I am also hopeful that the next few years’ budgets – barring any unforeseen developments – will be a little less difficult than those of the last three years.”

Lyn McKay, Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and Superintendent-Designate

“We have a strong academic program in place, and by working with one another and the Chappaqua community, we are confident that we can continue the excellence that defines the Chappaqua schools, even with this year’s reductions.”

Heidi McCarthy, Director of Special Education & Related Services

“The primary components of the special education budget for the 2011-2012 school year are: salaries, contractual services and tuition for students who require placement in special education programs outside of the district. This budget ensures, in a fiscally responsible manner, that our students with disabilities receive an appropriate education to meet their individual needs, as per their Individual Education Programs (IEP).”

Darleen Nicolosi, Technology Director

“Despite program cuts, the technology program remains strong and focused on providing learning experiences that maximize the potential of technology to ensure that our students develop the 21st century competencies needed to live and work in our global society.”

Steve Young, Athletic Director

“In spite of the cutbacks, the goal of the Athletic Department is to keep the breadth of programs at Greeley, while maintaining the excellent quality of coaching that the athletes receive.”

John Chow, Assistant Superintendent for Business

“This is a responsible budget for the community, including students and all residents. This budget is also responsive to the board’s two strategic questions, because it addresses teaching and learning as well as fiscal responsibility.”

Joe Gramando, Facilities Director

“Over the past few years, the facilities department has greatly enhanced its efficiency. In spite of lower operating costs and reduced staffing levels, our schools today are cleaner than ever before.”

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Board of Education

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 Randall Katchis, *Board Member*
 Alyson Gardner Kiesel, *Board Member*
 Jeffrey Mester, *Board Member*

Interim Superintendent of Schools

John Chambers

District Clerk

Theresa Markley

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Chappaqua Central School District - May 17, 2011

<p>YES NO</p> <p>SCHOOL BUDGET RESOLUTION</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of the Chappaqua Central School District be and hereby is authorized to expend the sum of \$111,448,488 set forth in the School District Budget for the School Year 2011-2012, and that the necessary tax be levied therefor.</p>	<p>YES NO</p> <p>LIBRARY BUDGET RESOLUTION</p> <p>RESOLVED: That there is hereby appropriated the sum of \$2,766,724 for the Chappaqua Central School District Public Library for the School Year 2011-2012, and that the necessary tax be levied therefor.</p>
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<p>TO elect TWO Members of THE BOARD OF EDUCATION For a Term of Three Years (Vote for TWO)</p>	<p>TO elect ONE Trustee of THE SCHOOL DISTRICT LIBRARY For a Term of Five Years (Vote for ONE)</p>
<p>1A Victoria Bayard Tipp</p>	<p>2A Thomas Payne</p>
<p>1B Karen Visser</p>	<p>2B Vincent Travagliato</p>
<p>1C Robert Fleisher</p>	<p>2C Ellen Smithberg</p>
<p>2D Gerry Golub</p>	