



Budget 2015

Success for Every Student!

Levittown LEADER



MacArthur High School valedictorian Brianna Abatelli and salutatorian Christopher Simonetti and Division Avenue High School valedictorian Krysten Garcia and salutatorian Christopher Thompson are pictured with (from left) MacArthur High School Principal Kathleen Valentino, Board President Peggy Marengi, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Tonie McDonald and Division Avenue High School Principal Joan Lorelli.

Preserving Educational Quality Within the Tax Levy Cap

- Enhances educational and extracurricular programs.
- Preserves outstanding athletic programs.
- Inclusion in kindergarten and first-grade classrooms.
- Expansion of the Project Lead the Way STEM program.
- Outdoor Learning Center at Levittown Memorial Education Center.
- Use of district reserves.



Salk Middle School students celebrated International Day.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION...

Proposed Budget Enhances Programs Within the Tax Levy Cap

The Levittown Board of Education recognizes the district's ongoing challenge of rising property taxes and remains steadfast in its commitment to limit the burden on the community. Through a collaborative effort with Central Administration, careful and resourceful planning, and the use of \$8.3 million in reserves and fund balance, the Board has proposed a 2015-2016 budget totaling \$201,817,794 that keeps costs as low as possible while preserving key instructional and co-curricular programs for students.

This year, the district has had to again prepare a school budget with limits under New York State's tax levy cap law, commonly referred to as the "2 percent tax cap." Every school district in New York State is provided with the same formula used to calculate the district's highest allowable tax levy, which requires a simple majority of voters (50 percent plus 1) to pass.

In preparing the proposed 2015-2016 budget, the Board elected to adopt a tax levy increase of 1.82 percent, which is at the allowable tax levy cap as per state law. Unlike many districts across Long Island, Levittown is again in the fortunate position of being able to draw from its reserves, thus utilizing \$3.5 million from the Employee Retirement System and \$4.8 million from the fund balance to limit the increase in the tax levy. More importantly, this proposed spending plan preserves and enhances instructional and co-curricular programs, provides inclusion in kindergarten and first-grade classrooms, expands the Project Lead the Way STEM program, and provides a new Outdoor Learning Center at Levittown Memorial Education Center for scientific research and exploration.

Our students continue to excel and bring great pride to our community. Page 2 of this newsletter contains highlights on many of our students' educational and co-curricular accolades and community outreaches. We encourage you to visit the district website at www.levittownschoools.com to read about student achievement and various activities throughout the school year.

We also encourage you to become familiar with the district's proposed budget through careful reading of this newsletter. Information about voting locations and times, qualifications and absentee ballots, as well as budget hearing information, is located on page 4. In addition, we encourage you to take time to review the budget presentations on the district website and to attend the budget hearing on Wednesday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Levittown School District
Levittown NY 11756

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REMEMBER TO VOTE!

TUESDAY, MAY 19
POLLS OPEN • 7 A.M. – 8 P.M.

**(Gardiners Avenue, East Broadway,
Levittown Memorial Education Center
or Division Avenue High School)**

GLOSSARY OF KEY BUDGET TERMS:

To better understand the budget planning process, the district has provided the definitions of several commonly used terms. This glossary of terms is taken from the Nassau County Tax Assessor's website at www.nassaucountyny.gov.

STATE OR FEDERAL MANDATE – The state and federal governments impose directives upon school districts to provide various services. These requirements are often unfunded or underfunded, forcing taxpayers to assume the financial costs associated with the mandate.

TAX LEVY – The total amount of property taxes a school district must collect to balance its budget, after accounting for all other revenue sources, including state aid. The tax levy is the basis for determining the tax rate for each of the cities, towns or villages that make up a school district.

TAX LEVY LIMIT – For school districts, this is the highest allowable tax levy (before exemptions) that a school district can propose as part of its annual budget for which only the approval of a simple majority of voters (more than 50 percent) is required. Any proposed tax levy amount above this limit requires budget approval by a supermajority (60 percent) of voters. This has been commonly referred to as the "2 percent tax cap."

TAX RATE – In Nassau County, there are three factors that determine how a piece of property is taxed: the tax levy, which is set by the school district; the adjusted base proportion for that class or type of property, set by Nassau County; and the assessment of the property, also set by Nassau County. The tax rate is calculated by determining the individual dollar rate per \$1,000 of assessed value. It is only an estimate, since the adjusted base proportion has not been finalized.

TAX CLASSES – State law requires the Department of Assessment to designate each property as belonging to one of four tax classes. In Nassau County, Classes 1 and 2 include residential properties. Class 3 consists of utility company equipment and special franchises. Class 4 consists of commercial, industrial and institutional buildings, and vacant land.

REVENUE – Revenue is all sources of income, other than property taxes, which include federal and state aid, grants, rental fees, interest fees and previous year carryover funds.

CONTINGENCY BUDGET – According to New York State law, if a proposed budget fails, the Board of Education has the option of seeking voter approval for a second time or immediately adopting a contingency budget. If the proposed budget is defeated a second time, the Board must adopt a contingency budget. State law mandates that if a district is forced to adopt a contingency budget, the tax levy increase over the current school year must be capped at zero percent.

EDUCATIONAL DOLLARS AT WORK

Academics

- 90% of the Class of 2014 attended college.
- 96% of the Class of 2014 received a Regents diploma; 62% received an Advanced Regents diploma.
- Two seniors were named Commended Students in the 2013 National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Four students were selected as National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholars.
- The NAMM Foundation named Levittown as one of the 2015 Best Communities for Music Education.
- 190 students were designated as Advanced Placement Scholars, including seven students who received the top honor of National AP Scholar.
- Middle school and high school students have benefited from instruction in the Project Lead the Way Gateway to Technology STEM program.
- Hundreds of students benefit from an award-winning career and technical education program.
- Hundreds of students participate in the district's musicals and plays.
- High school and middle school students have been recognized for science research at the local and national levels.
- Hundreds of music students were selected to perform in state and county music festivals.
- The Division Avenue High School DECA and Science Olympiad teams competed on the state level.
- MacArthur High School senior Sabrina Chasen was named a Rensselaer Medalist for her outstanding accomplishments in mathematics and science.
- MacArthur and Division Avenue high schools were named GRAMMY Signature School semifinalists for their commitment to music education.

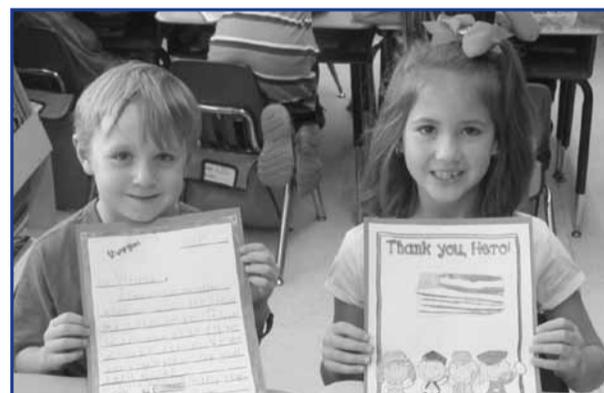
- Jonas E. Salk Middle School was selected as a New York State School of Emerging Character.
- Division Avenue High School seniors Graciela Espin and Krysten Garcia were named semifinalists in the Coca-Cola Scholars Program.

Athletics

- 23 senior athletes signed National Letters of Intent to continue their sports at the collegiate level.
- MacArthur High School's cheerleading team ranks nationally.
- Several district coaches were named Coaches of the Year.
- Student-athletes have been designated as top regional, state and national competitors.
- A dozen athletic teams have been designated as Scholar-Athlete teams.

Community

- 202 individuals benefited from the Holiday Adopt-A-Family Program.
- Students regularly support philanthropic efforts, including the John Theissen Children's Foundation, American Heart Association, St. Jude Math-a-Thon, Holiday Mail for Heroes, United Cerebral Palsy of Nassau County.
- Hundreds of students, staff and community members participate in the annual LEADD walk and fair.
- Several programs cater to the senior citizen population.



Gardiners Avenue Elementary School students Ryan Leek and Madelyn Bogovic wrote thank-you cards to veterans.

Democracy *in Action*

Students have been learning about American freedoms, including the freedom of speech and the right to vote.

On May 19, while community residents are voting on the 2015-2016 proposed school budget, students will have the opportunity to vote on an additional districtwide menu item for the month of June. The choices are pizza bagels, chicken nachos, or a breakfast sandwich (ham, egg and cheese on a roll or egg and cheese on a roll).

Parents are encouraged to bring their children to the voting center after school until 8 p.m. to experience the voting process together. Student votes will be tallied and results will be announced at each building on May 20.

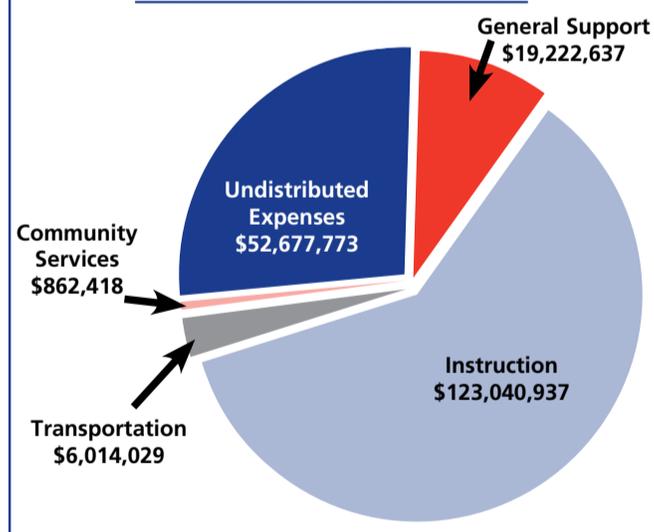
THREE-PART BUDGET SUMMARY

	2014-2015 Adopted Budget	2015-2016 Proposed Budget	Change	% Increase/Decrease
Administrative Budget				
Board of Education	\$123,194	\$147,328	\$24,134	19.59%
Central Administration	\$3,694,286	\$3,771,913	\$77,627	2.10%
Special Items	\$2,226,081	\$2,385,368	\$159,287	7.16%
Supervision	\$5,999,335	\$6,673,690	\$674,355	11.24%
Planned Fund Balance	\$707,595	\$284,895	(422,700)	(59.74%)
Total Administrative	\$12,750,491	\$13,263,194	\$512,703	4.02%
Program Budget				
Teaching	\$62,645,278	\$63,813,412	\$1,168,134	1.86%
Special Education	\$32,464,418	\$33,795,762	\$1,331,344	4.10%
Special Schools	\$2,412,666	\$2,300,636	(\$112,030)	(4.64%)
Instructional Media	\$4,950,214	\$4,942,314	(\$7,900)	(0.16%)
Student Services	\$8,588,906	\$8,643,652	\$54,746	0.64%
Activities & Athletics	\$2,585,318	\$2,750,876	\$165,558	6.40%
Transportation	\$5,084,452	\$5,538,029	\$453,577	8.92%
Employee Benefits	\$50,585,969	\$47,941,439	(\$2,644,530)	(5.23%)
Community Service	\$816,213	\$862,418	\$46,205	5.66%
Total Program	\$170,133,434	\$170,588,538	\$455,104	0.26%
Capital Budget				
Facilities & Operations	\$12,371,334	\$13,042,728	\$671,394	5.43%
Debt Service	\$3,061,509	\$3,032,334	(\$29,175)	(0.95%)
Equipment Expenses - Including Buses	\$442,000	\$476,000	\$34,000	7.69%
Transfer to Capital	\$0	\$1,415,000	\$1,415,000	
Total Capital	\$15,874,843	\$17,966,062	\$2,091,219	13.17%
Budget Appropriation	\$198,758,768	\$201,817,794	\$3,059,026	1.54%

COMPUTATION OF ESTIMATED TAX LEVY

2015-2016 Proposed Budget	\$201,817,794
Less Estimated Revenue	\$57,807,843
Subtotal	\$144,009,951
Less Appropriated Fund Balance/Reserves	\$8,307,646
Estimated 2015-2016 Tax Levy	\$135,702,305

BUDGET EXPENDITURES

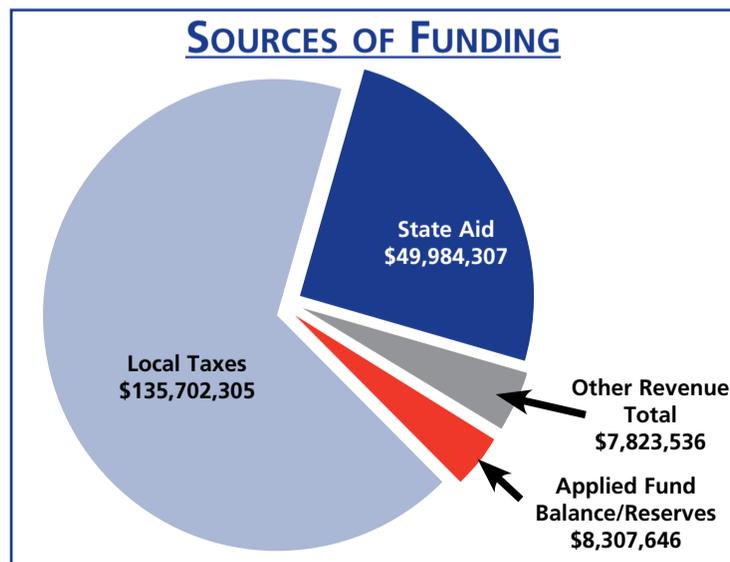


PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY

2015-16 PROPOSED BUDGET	
EXPENDITURES	
General Support	\$19,222,637
Instruction	\$123,040,937
Transportation	\$6,014,029
Community Services	\$862,418
Undistributed Expenses	\$52,677,773
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$201,817,794

2015-16 PROPOSED BUDGET	
ESTIMATED REVENUE & FUNDING	
State Aid	\$49,984,307
Local Revenue	
Drivers Ed. Tuition	\$100,000
Tuition – Adult Ed.	\$45,000
After-School Program	\$650,000
Before-School Program	\$345,000
Tuition – Voc. Ed. – Other Districts	\$2,400,000
Tuition – Special Ed. – Other Districts	\$2,000,000
Rental of Real Property – Laurel Lane	\$174,460
Rental of Real Property – Individuals	\$115,000
BOCES Rental of Property	\$692,418
Miscellaneous	\$1,301,658
Local Revenue Total	\$7,823,536
Applied Fund Balance/Reserves	\$8,307,646
Local Taxes	\$135,702,305
TOTAL ESTIMATED FUNDING	\$201,817,794

SOURCES OF FUNDING



2015-16 Proposed Budget	
LOCAL TAX LEVY	\$135,702,305

Budget-to-Budget Change **1.54%**

Questions & Answers

Q: What propositions will the community vote on at the polls?

A: This year, the community will vote on two propositions, as well as the individual Board member elections for the school district and library:
Proposition 1 – Levittown UFSD 2015-2016 Budget
Proposition 2 – Levittown Public Library Budget

Q: Why does the increase in the tax levy cap vary from district to district and is not a consistent limit for all levels of government?

A: Each district must complete a tax levy worksheet based upon a formula provided by New York State to calculate its individual tax levy cap. Factors that impact the cap calculation include the tax base growth factor, received PILOT payments, debt service for capital projects and other exemptions, which vary among districts.

Q: What happens if the 2015-2016 proposed budget is defeated at the polls?

A: If defeated, school districts have the option of putting the same or a revised budget up for a revote, or adopting a **contingency budget**. If a proposed budget is defeated twice, a contingency budget must be adopted. State law mandates that if a district is forced to adopt a contingency budget, the tax levy increase over the current year is capped at zero percent.

Q: Where can I acquire more information about the district's proposed budget?

A: Complete copies of the 2015-2016 proposed budget are available in the district office and can be downloaded on the district's website, www.levittownschoools.com.



REMEMBER TO VOTE!
Tuesday, May 19, 2015
2015-2016 School Budget Vote
and Trustee Election

Budget Hearing
Wednesday, May 6, 2015
7:30 p.m.

Levittown Memorial Education Center

For comprehensive information on the budget, please visit the district's website at www.levittownschoools.com.

Voting Locations and Times

Please vote at your designated polling location between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m.
(Gardiners Avenue, East Broadway, Levittown Memorial Education Center or Division Avenue High School)

VOTER INFORMATION

Qualifications for Voting

A voter will be entitled to vote for the election of school district trustees and the school budget, who has the following qualifications: a citizen of the United States, 18 years or older, a resident of the district for a period of 30 days or more before the election, and anyone who voted in a school, state or national election during the four years prior to the pending election. Those not registered or who have not voted in four years must register to vote before Thursday, May 14, 2015.

Registration forms for school elections may be obtained from the district clerk's office at Levittown Memorial Education Center.

Absentee Ballots

You must be a registered voter in order to vote by absentee ballot. Absentee ballot applications are available in the office of the district clerk on any school day between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Completed applications must be received by the district clerk by mail (Tuesday, May 12) or in person (Monday, May 18). Applicants can download an application from the school district website at www.levittownschoools.com. Applications may not be submitted electronically because an original signature is required.

Upon receipt, your application will be reviewed, pursuant to the provisions of the education law, to establish your entitlement to vote by absentee ballot. A ballot will then be issued to you. For more information, contact the district clerk at 516-424-7002.

Dr. Tonie McDonald, Superintendent of Schools
Darlene Rhatigan, Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Personnel
Debbie Rifkin, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
William Pastore, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Peggy Marengi, President
Ed Powers, Vice President
Frank Ward, Secretary

Trustees: **James Moran**, **Michael Pappas**, **Kevin Regan**, **Karen Smith**
Elizabeth Appelbaum, District Clerk