



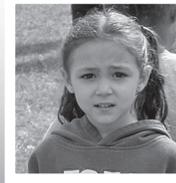
Public Budget Hearing

Tuesday, May 13,
7 p.m., WJSHS
Conference Room



Remember to Vote on May 20

The 2014-15 School Budget Vote & Board of Education Election is Tuesday, May 20, noon to 9 p.m.



Grandparents Night

WES hosts its annual Grandparents/Special Persons Night on May 20

Watervliet

CITY SCHOOLS

News and information from our schools

Residents to vote on \$24.95 million school budget May 20

Plan maintains academic programs, meets state tax levy cap

On Tuesday, May 20, residents of the Watervliet City School District will vote on a proposed \$24,954,000 budget for the 2014-15 school year, and elect two candidates to the Board of Education.

The proposed budget increases overall spending 6.1 percent more than the current budget. It is important to note that the majority of the spending increase, \$1,078,000, is for debt service payments to finance the Phase IV facilities project, approved by voters in December 2011. This expenditure will be primarily offset by state building aid.

Of the new spending, \$374,000 or 1.7 percent, is for actual operating costs, such as utilities, instructional and support staff salaries and classroom supplies.

The budget proposal carries a tax levy increase of 2.6 percent—slightly less than the maximum amount the district could levy in taxes, as determined by a formula set by the state—and will require a simple

majority (50 percent plus one vote) for approval. School tax rates for individual property owners will be determined over the summer after the district receives the 2014 final tax assessment roll from the city assessor's office.

Earlier in the budget development process, district officials had projected an \$860,000 gap between expenses and revenues based on Gov. Cuomo's budget proposal. With the final state budget, however, Watervliet is slated to receive a 5.1 percent increase in state funding next year, of which \$523,641 is operating aid. This includes the restoration of \$345,833 tied to the state's Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA)—legislation introduced in 2010 as a "temporary" measure to close the state's budget deficit. Still, the district has endured a cumulative loss of approximately \$4 million over the past five years, including \$355,703 in 2014-15, because of the GEA.

Continued on page 3



Voting Information

On May 20, polls will be open from noon to 9 p.m. for the 2014-15 school budget vote. Please note the polling location changes this year—voting will take place at the following locations (for more information, see page 3):

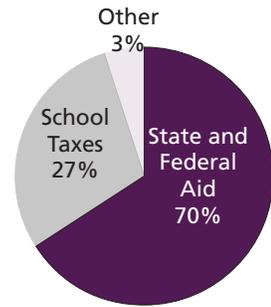
- ▶ **District 1: The Watervliet Elks Club**
4th Avenue & 5th Street
- ▶ **District 2: Watervliet Elementary School**
10th Avenue & 25th Street

⇒ You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old, a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote, and have not been convicted of a felony.

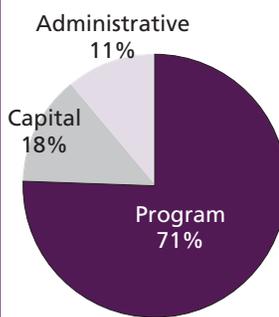
⇒ You must be pre-registered to vote. Bring proof of identity with you to the polls, such as a driver's license or non-driver's ID card.

⇒ Absentee ballots. Residents interested in voting by absentee ballot may pick up an application at the district office. Details about absentee ballots can be found on the district website: www.watervlietcityschools.org

2014-15 Revenue Sources



2014-15 Projected Expenses



Where Watervliet's education dollars come from

Source of Revenue	Actual 2013-14 Budget	Proposed 2014-15 Budget	\$ Change
Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$137,000	\$137,000	—
Interest and Penalties on Taxes	25,000	30,000	5,000
Consumer Utility Tax	400,000	400,000	—
Charges for Services	188,000	43,000	(145,000)
Interest and Earnings	3,000	15,000	12,000
Miscellaneous	145,000	190,000	45,000
Total State Aid	15,910,000	17,053,000	1,143,000
Total Federal Sources	189,000	443,000	254,000
Interfund Transfers	30,000	—	(30,000)
School Taxes	6,475,000	6,643,000	168,000
Appropriated Fund Balance	—	—	—
Total	\$23,502,000	\$24,954,000	1,452,000

Visit watervlietcityschools.org for a glossary of budget terms, as well as more information about the proposed 2014-15 school budget.

How Watervliet's education dollars are spent

Budget Expense Category	Proposed Administrative 14-15 Budget	Proposed Program 14-15 Budget	Proposed Capital 14-15 Budget	Proposed Total 14-15 Budget	Total Actual 2013-14	\$ Change
Board of Education	\$8,000	—	—	\$8,000	\$9,000	(\$1,000)
Central Administration	185,000	—	—	185,000	183,000	2,000
Finance	198,000	—	—	198,000	193,000	5,000
Staff	144,000	—	—	144,000	150,000	(6,000)
Central Services	527,000	—	756,000	1,283,000	1,170,000	113,000
Special Items	253,000	—	—	253,000	241,000	12,000
Administration & Improvement	664,000	139,000	—	803,000	789,000	14,000
Teaching-Regular School	—	5,833,000	—	5,833,000	5,508,000	325,000
Special/Occ. Ed Programs	—	3,712,000	—	3,712,000	3,816,000	(104,000)
Teaching-Summer School	—	47,000	—	47,000	32,000	15,000
Instructional Media	—	321,000	—	321,000	327,000	(6,000)
Pupil Services	—	1,238,000	—	1,238,000	1,023,000	215,000
Pupil Transportation	—	1,070,000	—	1,070,000	1,244,000	(174,000)
Employee Benefits	663,000	5,362,000	179,000	6,204,000	6,245,000	(41,000)
Debt Service	—	—	3,610,000	3,610,000	2,532,000	1,078,000
Interfund Transfers	—	—	45,000	45,000	40,000	5,000
Total	2,642,000	17,722,000	4,590,000	\$24,954,000	\$23,502,000	1,452,000

Maintaining academic programs, from page 1

The significant loss of aid from the GEA coupled with the district's limited ability to raise revenues through property taxes because of the state's tax levy cap have led to the loss of 25 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions district-wide since both measures were enacted. In 2013-14, the district also eliminated summer school, nearly all extracurricular opportunities, most modified sports and advanced placement courses.

Watervliet was able to restore some extracurricular programs after receiving a donation from the Arsenal Technology Partnership. In addition, the high school began offering a virtual advanced placement program this year as part of a consortium with the Capital Region BOCES and several other local school districts.

The district also cut costs by ending its contractual nighttime janitorial service. Watervliet instead employs its own part-time staff for evening maintenance and cleaning. Additional savings also have been realized in recent years through negotiated changes to the district's health insurance plan, bus run consolidation and reductions in BOCES services.

As a result of these measures and the modest increase in aid, Watervliet will be able to preserve current academic programs next year and will not need to make further reductions in faculty and staff.

"The good news is that we are proposing no cuts," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Lori Caplan, "however, the increase in funding is not enough to allow us to restore any programs or instructional staff."

The only addition proposed in the 2014-15 budget is for a limited summer school program to help high school students stay on track to graduate. The program will be possible through a shared service agreement between the Watervliet and Cohoes city school districts.

Exit survey: Your opinion matters

District officials want to hear from the community. This year, the district will offer an exit survey for voters. The survey is voluntary and anonymous, and will help school leaders gather feedback to consider when making decisions about future budgets.

Also on the ballot:

- **Board of Education election:** Voters will elect two candidates to three-year terms on the Board of Education.

Visit www.watervlietcityschools.org for more information

Why not use state funding to restore programs, staff rather than build an artificial turf field?



That is one question district officials were asked most often during budget development workshops this spring.

The answer is the district is not allowed to use state building aid on anything other than construction and renovations. The new field and track are one part—and the most visible renovation—of the Phase IV facilities project, approved by voters in 2011. The project is being funded through a combination of state building aid and Qualified Construction Bonds that Watervliet was eligible to receive—and therefore, has no additional impact on city taxpayers.

State building aid is prescriptive—meaning it can be used only to pay for “brick and mortar” projects; it cannot be used for operational costs, such as staffing or instructional programs.

Polling site changes for district elections

A reminder: the Watervliet City School District has consolidated its polling locations from four to two this year. The Board of Education unanimously voted on the change in August 2013.

Beginning with the May 20 school budget vote and Board of Education elections, eligible voters will cast their ballots at one of two sites:

- District 1 – the Watervliet Elks Lodge, 501 4th Avenue
All locations in the district south of the northernmost wall of the Arsenal and the entire area of Mannsville.
- District 2 – Watervliet Elementary School, 2557 Tenth Avenue
All locations in the district north of the northernmost wall of the Arsenal.

After reviewing the data for each location, district officials decided to make the change to streamline the voting process and reduce some costs. In 2013, only 280 residents voted on the Watervliet school budget.

"After careful consideration, the board concluded that two sites would be sufficient to accommodate the number of voters who typically participate in our annual budget vote," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Lori Caplan.

Board of Education

Mark Scully, *President*
Jennifer Donovan, *Vice President*
Jeffrey Clermont
Matthew Ethier
Sheri Senecal

Administration

Dr. Lori S. Caplan
Superintendent of Schools

Keith Heid
Business Manager

Janelle O. Yanni
Director of Programs
& Pupil Services

Kirsten DeMento
Director of Curriculum &
Instruction

Postal Customer

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Produced by the Watervliet City School District
in cooperation with the Capital Region BOCES
Communications Service.

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2013-14 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2014-15 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2014-15 School Year
Total Budgeted Amount, Not including Separate Propositions	\$23,502,000	\$24,954,000	\$24,786,000
Increase/Decrease for the 2014-2015 School Year		\$1,452,000	\$1,284,000
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		6.18%	5.18%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.46%	
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, including Levy to Support Library Debt, if applicable	\$6,475,000	\$6,643,000	\$6,475,000
Total Permissible Exclusions	\$208,200	\$71,832	
A. Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Not Including Levy for Permissible Exclusions or Levy to Support Library Debt	\$6,266,800	\$6,571,168	
B. School Tax Levy Limit, Not Including Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$6,270,351	\$6,574,979	
Difference: A - B (Positive Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval –See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)	(\$3,557)	(\$3,811)	
Administrative Component	\$2,977,000	\$2,642,000	\$2,642,000
Program Component	\$17,158,000	\$17,722,000	\$17,554,000
Capital Component	\$3,367,000	\$4,590,000	\$4,590,000

*If the proposed budget is defeated on May 20, the Board of Education will have three options: present the same budget to voters a second time; present a revised budget to voters; or adopt a contingency budget. If the budget is defeated a second time, the board must adopt a contingent budget. Under the tax levy limit law, school districts can levy a tax no greater than that of the prior budget year, or a 0 percent increase. The Watervliet City School District would be required to eliminate an additional \$168,000 in proposed spending for the 2014-15 school year. This would include a reduction of another two full-time equivalent positions, no use of school facilities and grounds by the public, and additional reductions in student supplies, field trips, and athletic programs.

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2014-15 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$428
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Estimated Basic STAR Exemption savings based on a hypothetical home within the school district with a full value of \$100,000 based on 2013-14 assessed values.

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2014-15 by the qualified voters of the Watervliet City School District, Albany County, New York, will be held at two polling locations: Watervliet Elementary School and the Watervliet Elks Club, in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2014, between the hours of noon and 9 p.m., prevailing time, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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