

Schenectady

May 2007
Committed to
teaching and
learning...
one child at a time

A national award
winning district

City School District 2007-2008 Budget Issue



Budget shows NO tax rate increase Proposed spending plan allows for smaller class sizes, early-childhood center

Under a \$140 million spending plan proposed by the school district for the 2007-08 school year, school tax rates in the city won't be going up.

On May 15 voters within the Schenectady City School District will decide on the proposed budget, which includes several new education initiatives for the upcoming school year.

Unlike previous years, school tax rates will not increase under this plan. This is possible because of a more than \$14 million increase in state aid.

"This is a record-breaking, landmark proposal from the governor and the state legislature," Superintendent of Schools Eric Ely said. "We will be able to better serve the children of Schenectady and not be forced to raise taxes to do so."

Required Spending Under Contract for Excellence

Under the state's Contract for Excellence, the district must spend most of this increase in state aid on reducing class sizes, expanding early childhood educa-

tion and extended school day efforts, and offering more professional development for faculty and staff.

The proposed budget includes an education plan that meets the state requirements and the goals outlined in the district's strategic plan.

Class Size Reduction

Since 2001, district enrollment has grown by 11.5 percent, which means classes are growing. Research has shown that students are better able to succeed in school in smaller classroom settings.

The proposed plan, if approved, will allow for the addition of 15 middle school teachers, which will bring class sizes, in many cases, down from 30 students per class to 24. The plan also calls for adding five special education teachers, eight elementary school teachers and 15 remedial math and reading teachers.

The district will also continue its effort to move all 6th grade students back into the elementary buildings. In the meantime,

6th grades in the middle schools will be in self-contained settings next year, meaning they will have one teacher and will not change classes.

A Focus on the Early Years

The proposed budget also includes funding to open the Fulton Early Childhood Center at the Fulton School on Eleanor Street. The school will serve approximately 300 students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and pre-first grade.

"The focus of this school will be on literacy, because we know that literacy is the key to success in school and in life," Ely said. "We want to teach all kids to read and write to the best of their ability in the early years."

Approximately \$2.15 million has been budgeted for personnel, utilities, transportation, etc., to open the new school.

Extending the School Day

If the budget is approved on May 15, all district students will have the opportunity to participate in extended-day programs. One hour a day will be offered in the elementary schools, and one-and-a-half hours will be offered in the middle and high schools four days a week. These programs will focus on English and math skills, as well as homework help.

"We believe we can accommodate every child who wants to be a part of this program," Ely said.

Budget Proposal at a Glance

Total Proposal:
\$140,047,903

Tax Rate Increase:
\$0

Budget Vote:
May 15,
noon-9 p.m.
turn to page 2
for polling place
information

Budget Hearing:
May 2, 7 p.m.

Mont Pleasant
Middle School

Voter Registration
All voters must be registered
with the Schenectady County
Board of Elections before
5 p.m. on the day of the vote.

Absentee Ballots

Applications for absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed, or on the day before the vote if the ballot is to be picked up. All absentee ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on the day of the vote.

Questions?
Call the district clerk at
370-8100 ext. 150.

Funds Allocated for Land Purchases

The proposed spending plan includes \$430,000 for the purchase of three properties adjacent to two district schools. The acquisition of these properties will help to expand playground space/parking/bus loop space at these schools. As of press time, contract negotiations on the purchase of these properties were ongoing. Once negotiations are complete more information will be available.



Expenditures

	2006-07 BUDGET	2007-08 BUDGET	\$\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
Program Total	\$95,483,790	\$109,562,212	\$14,078,422	+14.7%
In-service training	137,612	175,297		
Teaching- regular school	50,507,638*	58,767,843		
Teaching - students w/disabilities	16,148,961	19,843,699		
Occupational education	74,288	78,666		
Special schools	181,896	178,828		
School libraries	652,364	500,558		
Computer instruction	701,919	850,461		
Attendance	205,150	217,848		
Guidance	1,154,889	1,100,122		
Health Services	799,684	869,023		
Psychological services	34,771	36,275		
Social work services	56,758	60,163		
Pupil Personnel services	87,098	87,098		
Co-curricular activities	12,151	12,820		
Interscholastic athletics	496,540	518,133		
District transportation	341,241	314,793		
Contract transportation	5,750,000	6,670,500		
Census salaries	41,140	46,467		
Transfer to other accounts	400,000	450,000		
Allocated fringe benefits	17,699,690	18,783,618		
Administration Total	\$9,915,190	\$11,064,086	\$1,148,896	+11.6%
Board of Education	6,353	6,353		
District Clerk	69,364	75,862		
District meetings	21,740	21,740		
Superintendent's office	380,026	409,183		
Business administration	402,370	439,205		
Auditing	118,691	181,052		
Treasurer	60,620	63,718		
Tax collection	70,000	70,000		
Purchasing	105,314	111,110		
Fiscal agent fee	3,430	3,430		
Legal	144,028	169,506		
Personnel	264,042	295,321		
Public information	9,545	9,545		
Central storeroom	124,613	129,227		
Central printing and mailing	360,969	366,803		
Central data processing	280,827	313,269		
Unallocated insurance	874,575	910,575		
School Association dues	17,628	27,628		
BOCES administrative cost	696,805	890,274		
Curriculum development supervision	310,904	325,004		
Supervision - regular school	3,234,885	3,753,525		
Research planning/evaluation	142,911	147,911		
Allocated fringe benefits	2,215,550	2,343,845		
Capital Total	\$17,629,519	\$19,421,605	\$1,792,086	+10.2%
Operation of plant	2,883,163	3,186,172		
Maintenance of plant	4,691,196	5,285,961		
Judgements and claims	235,000	235,000		
Refund of real property taxes	20,000	20,000		
Interest and principal bonds	8,000,000	8,221,219		
Allocated fringe benefits	1,800,160	1,893,253		
Transfer to capital	0	580,000		
Expenditures Total	\$123,028,499	\$140,047,903		+13.8%

PLEASE VOTE ON TUESDAY,
MAY 15, NOON TO 9 P.M.

**2007 School
Election Districts**

- District 1 City Hall**
Jay Street
Districts 1, 2, 3, 4
- District 2 Yates Magnet ES**
Salina Street
Districts 5,6,7,12
- District 3 Zoller ES**
Lancaster Street
Districts 8,9,10
- District 4 Schenectady HS**
entrance at student
parking lot near gym
Districts 11, 17, 18
- District 5 Elmer Avenue ES**
Eastern Avenue
entrance
Districts 13,15,16,28
- District 6 Faith Methodist Church**
Corner of N. Brandywine
& Eastern Avenue
Districts 19, 27
- District 7 Central Park MS**
Elm Street
Districts 22, 23, 24, 25
- District 8 Paige ES**
Elliott Avenue
Districts 20, 46
- District 9 Woodlawn ES**
Wells Avenue
Districts 14, 21, 47, 48
- District 10 MLK Magnet ES**
Stanley Street
Districts 26, 29, 30, 31, 32
- District 11 Mont Pleasant MS**
Forest Road
Districts 33, 34, 35, 36,
37, 38, 39, 40; Rotterdam
District #10
- District 12 Van Corlear ES**
Guilderland Avenue
Districts 41, 42, 43, 44, 45

*Amended to reflect state grants in aid that were in the budget.

What are the major changes in the 2007-08 budget?

Charter School (transportation, tuition)	+\$1,262,850
Contractual Salary Obligations (8 union contracts representing about 1,200 employees)	+\$3,446,738
Employee Benefits (health insurance, retirement contributions, social security)	+\$1,305,316
BOCES	+\$1,950,000
Special Education	+\$1,500,000
Debt Service	+\$400,000
Class size reduction	+\$2,500,000
Fulton Early Childhood Center	+\$2,147,000
After School Programs	+\$681,450
Transportation	+\$385,000
Land acquisition	+\$430,000
Furniture and equipment	+\$195,000
Maintenance Costs	+\$250,000
New Math Curriculum	+\$175,000
Audit Costs	+\$60,000
Other - Supplies, programming, software	+\$331,050
Total Changes	+\$17,019,404



STAR program helps reduce school tax bill

Schenectady City School District taxpayers who applied for the New York State School Tax Relief (STAR) program will again receive a reduction in their school tax bill. Under the Basic STAR program property owners are entitled to have their assessed property value reduced by \$27,080 (\$51,260 under Enhanced STAR). As a result, a homeowner with an assessed value of \$75,000 would pay taxes on \$47,920 (\$23,740 under Enhanced STAR) of assessed value. All Schenectady home-owners who applied for the Basic STAR or Enhanced STAR exemptions will save on their school taxes.

For more information on the state's Tax Relief Plan, visit www.budget.state.ny.us/localities/star/star.html.

Tax Collection Different this Year

In the past, school taxes have been collected by the City of Schenectady. This process will no longer occur and beginning July 1, 2007, taxes for the Schenectady City School District will be collected by the school district. Taxes will be mailed to: Schenectady City Schools, PO Box 13150, Albany, NY 12212.

Anyone with questions about this new process should call 881-3988.

Look for more information on this in the coming months. Information will also be available online at www.schenectady.k12.ny.us.

Revenues

	2006-07 Final	2007-08 Proposed	\$ Change
State Aid	\$65,709,544*	\$79,999,531	+\$14,289,987
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$600,000	\$600,000	
Penalties on Taxes	\$600,000	\$600,000	
Utility Tax	\$2,773,907	\$2,773,907	
Services for BOCES	\$200,000	\$200,000	
Interest and Earnings	\$900,000	\$900,000	
E-rate reimbursement	\$500,000	\$500,000	
Federal Aid	\$850,000	\$850,000	
Other	\$1,246,093	\$1,246,093	
Fund Balance and Reserves	\$1,675,000	\$4,200,350	+2,525,350
Tax Levy	\$47,973,955	\$48,178,022	+\$204,067
Revenue Total	\$123,028,499	\$140,047,903	+\$17,019,404

*Amended to reflect state grants in aid that were in the budget.





BUDGET
2007-2008

State-Required School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget adopted for the 2006-07 school year	Budget proposed for the 2007-08 school year	Contingency budget for the 2007-08 school year
Total budget amount	\$123,028,499	\$140,047,903	\$137,931,868
Increase/decrease for the 07-08 school year		\$17,019,404	\$14,903,368
Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget		13.8%	12.1%
Change in the consumer price index		3.20%	
Resulting est. property tax levy for the 07-08 school year		\$48,178,022	\$48,178,022
Administrative component	\$9,915,190	\$11,064,086	\$10,794,086
Program component	\$95,483,790	\$109,562,212	\$109,093,677
Capital Component	\$17,629,519	\$19,421,605	\$18,044,105

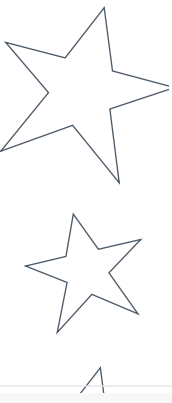
*Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2007-08 school year should the proposed budget be defeated. Reductions in various programs; use of reserves; enrollment increases.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR exemption savings based on a hypothetical home within the school district with a full value of one-hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).

	Budget adopted for the 2006-07 school year	Budget proposed for the 2007-08 school year
Basic STAR Tax Savings	\$748	\$642
School Tax Increase (Decrease)	\$(125)	\$(253)
Net basic STAR savings	\$873	\$895

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2007-08 by the qualified voters of the Schenectady City School District, Schenectady County, New York, will be held at various locations (see page 2) in said district on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, between the hours of Noon and 9 p.m., prevailing time in the various locations at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.



Board of Education

- Jeff Janiszewski, President**
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- James R. Casino
- John Mitchell
- Lisa Russo

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- Michael San Angelo, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent for Business
- William Roberts, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent for Operations
- Arnold A. Spadafora, Associate Superintendent

Editor: Adrienne Leon

Schenectady City School District

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