



# HUDSON Highlights

## VOTE

**TUESDAY  
MAY 15  
12 – 9 P.M.**

**Polling locations  
on page 6**

### What am I voting on?

Voters will decide on the following items:

- A **\$48,769,728** budget for the 2018-19 school year
- Selection of two Board of Education members
- Repair Reserve funds transfer (page 5)

## Budget Enhances Programs, Helps Qualify Homeowners for Tax Rebate

On Tuesday, May 15, the Hudson City School District community will vote on a proposed budget for the 2018-19 school year, as well as one other proposition and the Board of Education election.

The \$48,769,728 proposed spending plan was developed to sustain existing programs and build upon efforts for continuous improvement. The primary goals of the proposed budget are to strengthen academic programs (particularly Math and Science), enhance educational opportunities and support school safety initiatives.

The proposed budget carries a tax levy increase of 3.25%, which is below the District's allowable tax levy limit of 3.85% calculated under New York State's tax cap guidelines (see page 5). As a result of staying within the allowable tax levy increase, qualifying residents would receive a property tax rebate from NYS this fall. The spending plan is an increase of \$2,203,556, or 4.73 percent, from the current year's budget. The District will see savings in pension costs, retirements and electricity costs. However, the District faces rising costs in the areas of health insurance, contractual obligations and debt service.

Part of the budget development process includes ensuring efficient use of taxpayers' dollars while maintaining school improvement efforts. Since the majority of the District's operating costs are staff-related, a careful analysis of staffing and student needs is performed each year. In addition to retiree replacements, the budget would add the following positions:

- A Grade 1 teaching position
- A Grade 6 teaching position (Math-focused)
- A Math Coach to support academic progress in Grades 3-5
- An elementary level STEAM teacher (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math)

To maintain recommended class sizes, a Kindergarten teaching position may be added (based on enrollment). If an additional Kindergarten teacher is not required, those funds would be allocated for a second School Resource Officer. Also, the proposed budget would add a Dean of Students or Associate Principal (TBD) at the elementary level, establishing a new leadership structure now that Pre-K to Grade 5 will be under one roof.

The spending plan also includes improving the educational experience through STEAM and AVID initiatives, as well as the expansion of Camp Invention (see pp. 2-3). The proposed budget aims to keep strengthening the educational, athletic and occupational development opportunities available to Hudson students.

"This budget is designed to maintain our ongoing progress toward Destination Graduation while expanding our focus to be Destination Graduation... to Occupation", said Dr. Maria Lagana Suttmeier, Superintendent of Schools. "Whether a student goes to college, enlists in the military or goes directly into the workforce after high school graduation, all paths ultimately lead to an occupation."

As a result, the budget would continue to support and expand programs focused on STEAM education, college preparation and career readiness throughout the district.



The Transportation Systems class hosted its third annual Cardboard Boat Race in which students must engineer boats using only cardboard, duct tape, glue and plastic bottles. Technology classes from neighboring districts are invited to participate in the competition, seeing which school can paddle across the pool in homemade two-person boats the fastest. The school budget helps to maintain the pool facility, which is also available for community use and activities such as lap swimming, weekend pool parties, SCUBA training and swim lessons.

Need this information in a different language? Get it translated on our website at [www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com/budget](http://www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com/budget)

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# Finding Savings with Solar

HCSD continually takes advantage of available grants and savings opportunities to enhance operations and academic programs without affecting the general budget. This year, one significant cost savings comes from the Board-approved solar project built behind the high school. The solar field is part of the K-Solar Program, which supports NYS school districts in accessing affordable solar energy, and is partially funded by NYSERDA, NYPA, NYSED and Tesla. No money from the school district was used to fund the project, however the District stands to benefit from the cost savings associated with solar energy.

Through a purchase agreement with Tesla and National Grid, the District can receive a credit for all solar-generated electricity at a set price per kilowatt hour for the next 18 years. The use of solar power will provide the District with significant savings on its electricity bill, which will be most noticeable at Hudson Junior/Senior High School. This campus uses the most energy of all our buildings as it is used on evenings, weekends and special occasions to host many school and community events.



*In 2017, the Board of Education approved the construction of a solar array (left) as part of the state-sponsored K-Solar Program. Situated behind the new state-of-the-art Bluehawk Sports Complex at Hudson Junior/Senior High School, the solar installation is estimated to save the District approximately 60% on its electricity bill through 2035. (Photo courtesy of the Wheeler Drone)*

Furthermore, the new solar array positions the District as a leader in “green” and renewable energy solutions. The solar installation also provides potential learning opportunities for high school science classes, including the newly introduced Alternative Energy course.

## CAMP INVENTION

The nationally acclaimed “Camp Invention” summer program, which is coming to Hudson for the first time this July, is partially supported by the general budget. The week-long summer camp is for children interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math). It allows children to sharpen their 21st century learning skills and experience real-world problem solving, creative thinking, invention and teamwork through several modules inspired by the Inductees of the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

The budget helps to offset the cost for district families, reducing the total registration fee by more than \$100 per child. Camp Invention is currently open to 40 students in Grades 3-5. However, if the budget is approved, the program could be opened to other elementary grades and the number of slots could be increased. For more information about Camp Invention, visit [www.hudsoncityschoolsdistrict.com/ms](http://www.hudsoncityschoolsdistrict.com/ms)

## Gaining STE(A)M

Building on the concept of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math), the STEAM movement includes Art by adding aspects of creativity and innovation. Many teachers are bringing more STEAM lessons to the classroom through budget-funded professional development activities such as Code U, an event that helps teachers implement computer coding in curricula. For example, sixth graders participated in an Hour of Code event during which they were shown how to follow code steps, problem solve and create interactive computer games. They also completed more complex coding challenges to modify the games and use different functions to build or change the characters.

To further increase STEAM learning opportunities, particularly for younger students, the District aims to continue investing in programs such as the nationally acclaimed “Camp Invention” summer program. Also, the proposed budget would add a full-time STEAM teacher at the elementary level to engage students in various STEAM activities (utilizing lab space that was renovated as part of the voter-approved capital improvement project). All students in K-5 would have opportunities for collaborative STEAM instruction with their classroom teachers.

“We need to inspire passion for STEAM in our young students and allow them to see the real-world applications of Math, Science and Art,” said M.C. Smith Principal Mark Brenneman. “Students would get to experience new skills like coding and apply them in problem solving activities.”



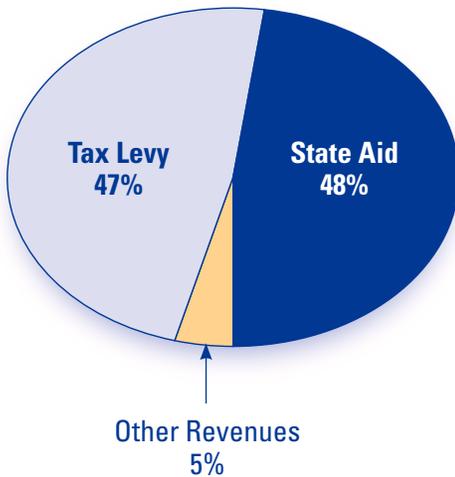
## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

College and career readiness are the focus of several initiatives at Hudson Senior High School. One example is Scrub Club, which provides unique educational opportunities for students interested in the health and medical fields. Members learn about current topics, trends and career possibilities directly from healthcare professionals. Students can also learn about different career paths in industries such as design, marketing, welding and acupuncture as part of the Creative Career Luncheon Series.

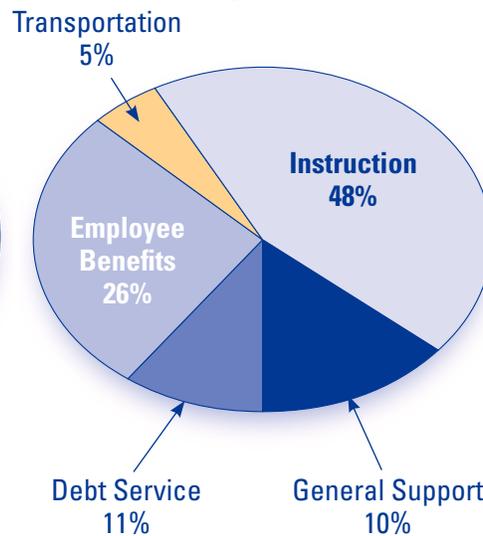
## REVENUES: Where money comes from to pay for Hudson City Schools

Revenue Source	2017-18	2018-19 Proposed	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Tax Levy	\$22,411,833	\$23,140,218	\$728,385	3.25%
Projected State Aid	22,314,339	23,195,010	880,671	3.95%
Other: Rents, Tuitions, Misc.	1,840,000	2,434,500	217,080	11.80%
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>\$46,566,172</b>	<b>\$48,769,728</b>	<b>\$2,203,556</b>	<b>4.73%</b>

### Revenues



### Expenses



## EXPENSES: How money is spent at Hudson City Schools

Expense Category	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Proposed	Change (\$)	Change (%)
General Support	\$4,935,564	\$5,040,198	\$104,634	2.12%
Instruction	22,620,446	23,197,290	576,844	2.55%
Transportation	2,452,846	2,526,431	73,585	3.00%
Employee Benefits	12,370,192	12,537,823	167,631	1.36%
Debt Service	4,187,124	5,467,985	1,280,861	30.59%
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>\$46,566,172</b>	<b>\$48,769,728</b>	<b>\$2,203,556</b>	<b>4.73%</b>

## WHAT IS AVID?

AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a non-profit organization that provides supports for school districts in their efforts to foster college and career readiness across all grade levels. The program aligns with the District's commitment to placing students on a pathway toward a rewarding occupation.

The student-centered approach provides relevant professional development as well as classroom resources that align with state learning standards. AVID trains thousands of educators each year to close the opportunity gap so they can effectively prepare all students for college, career and life beyond school.

## THREE-PART BUDGET

By law, school districts must divide their budget into three components—program, administrative and capital—and compare them to amounts from the previous year. Hudson City School District's three-part budget breaks down as follows:

Program	2017-18	2018-19
Amount	33,771,196	34,715,382
% of total	72.52%	71.18%

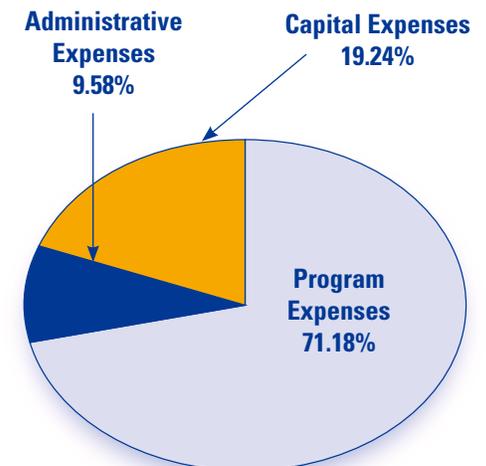
Program costs include the salaries and benefits of all teachers and staff delivering pupil services (such as library, guidance, health, social work, speech therapy and athletics); also textbooks, instructional materials, equipment, extracurricular student activities, BOCES program costs, and transportation costs.

Administrative	2017-18	2018-19
Amount	4,343,903	4,670,612
% of total	9.33%	9.58%

Administrative costs include the salaries and benefits of administrators, supervisors and administrative clerical staff; public information and printing; insurance costs; legal and auditing expenses; and Board of Education expenses.

Capital	2017-18	2018-19
Amount	8,451,073	9,383,734
% of total	18.15%	19.24%

Capital costs include the salaries and benefits of maintenance and custodial staff; plus debt service, tax certiorari and court-ordered costs, operation and maintenance costs, and utilities.



# HUDSON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2017-18 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2018-19 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2018- 2019 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 46,566,172	\$ 48,769,728	\$ 48,041,343
Increase/Decrease for the 2018-19 School Year		\$ 2,203,556	\$ 1,475,171
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		4.73%	3.17%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.13%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 22,411,833	\$ 23,140,218	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	N/A	N/A	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	N/A	N/A	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	N/A	N/A	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 22,411,833	\$ 23,140,218	\$ 22,411,833
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 565,434	\$ 572,101	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 21,981,399	\$ 22,702,567	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$ 21,981,399	\$ 22,568,117	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ 135,000	\$ 134,450	
Administrative Component	\$ 4,343,903	\$ 4,670,612	\$ 4,670,612
Program Component	\$ 3,771,196	\$ 34,715,382	\$ 33,986,997
Capital Component	\$ 8,451,074	\$ 9,383,734	\$ 9,383,734

\* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2018-19 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

Under a contingent budget, community use of District facilities would not be allowed. Athletic programs, extracurricular activities and field trips would not be funded by the District. The proposed enrichment opportunities for the 2018-19 school year would need to be postponed. Finally, each program and department would be under review to eliminate non-mandated expenses for the 2018-19 school year. If a budget gap still existed due to contractual and state-mandated expenses, then unassigned fund balance would be needed to balance the budget.

\*\* 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
Transfer of funds from Fund Balance to Repair Reserve	\$715,000

NOTE: Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of this completed form to: [emscmgts@nysed.gov](mailto:emscmgts@nysed.gov)

Under the Budget Proposed  
for the 2018-19 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$505
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2018-19 by the qualified voters of the Hudson City School District, Columbia County, New York, will be held at John L. Edwards School, Greenport Community Center and A.B. Shaw Fire House (Claverack) in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2018 between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., prevailing time in the Hudson City School(s), 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.

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

## Why is a 3.25% increase within the tax cap?

The New York State (NYS) property tax cap law requires schools to use an eight-step formula to determine how much they can increase their tax levy each year. Although it was often described as a “2% tax cap,” the calculation does not always work out to be an even 2 percent. Very few school districts actually have a 2% tax cap because the formula causes the cap to vary from district to district. This year, districts in Columbia County have maximum allowable tax levy increases ranging from 1.85 to 3.89 percent.

The maximum tax levy increase calculated for the Hudson City School District is 3.85 percent. Inflation had a greater influence on tax cap calculations this year than it did last year. However, the Board of Education decided to reduce the tax levy for taxpayers and propose a budget with a smaller increase of 3.25 percent. This is within the maximum allowable tax levy increase, or “tax cap.”

## Is there a property tax rebate this year?

Yes, the NYS Property Tax Rebate applies to the years 2016 through 2019 and is for homeowners who receive the STAR exemption, make less than \$200,000 a year and live in school districts that pass budgets at or below the tax

levy cap. Hudson’s budgets have stayed within the calculated tax cap and will do so again for 2018-19. Therefore, taxpayers who meet the eligibility requirements should receive a rebate check from the state. For more information, please visit the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance’s website ([www.tax.ny.gov](http://www.tax.ny.gov)).

## What is the Repair Reserve, and what exactly am I voting on?

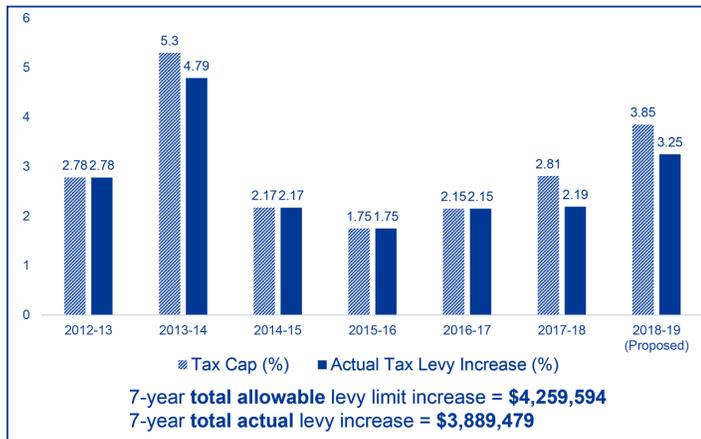
The Repair Reserve is an existing “savings account” that is not part of the general budget. Its purpose is to hold funds to be used for various repairs to District infrastructure and equipment. Examples include building repairs (such as broken heaters) and equipment replacement (such as lawnmowers). Also, the District must be prepared for routine maintenance and any unexpected or emergency repairs needed at the new Bluehawk Sports Complex. While the District does not anticipate needed repairs at the new complex any time soon, the Repair Reserve allows the District to prepare for these future expenses without reducing funding for programs or asking taxpayers for additional funds.

Money for the Repair Reserve is already set aside in a Fund Balance account, however voter

approval is required to transfer funds from the Fund Balance to the Repair Reserve. Again, the reserve is not part of the 2018-19 budget. Additionally, a public hearing must be held before the District can use money from the Repair Reserve for non-emergency expenses. Therefore, residents will be voting to grant permission for the District to transfer funds from an existing fund balance to the Repair Reserve.

## What happens if the budget is defeated?

If the budget is not approved on May 15, the District may submit the original budget or submit a revised budget to the voters on June 19. If the resubmitted/revised budget proposal is not approved by the required margin, the Board of Education must adopt a contingency budget with a 0% increase in tax levy. Under a contingent budget, the District is only allowed to expend funds for specific mandates. For example, community use of District facilities would not be allowed; athletic programs, extracurricular activities and field trips would not be funded by the District; and the proposed enrichment opportunities for the 2018-19 school year would need to be postponed. Finally, each program and department would be under review to eliminate non-mandated expenses for the 2018-19 school year.



## TAX LEVY HISTORY

This graph illustrates the district’s calculated tax caps compared to the actual tax levy increases since 2012. Over the past two years, the District has saved taxpayers nearly \$270,000 by proposing tax levy increases below the tax cap.

# WHAT YOU’LL SEE ON THE BALLOT

## PROPOSITION 1: Budget

Shall the Board of Education of the Hudson City School District, Columbia County, New York be authorized to expend the total amount of \$48,769,728 during the school year 2018-2019 and to levy the necessary tax therefore?

## PROPOSITION 2: Fund Repair Reserve

Shall the Board of Education of the Hudson City School District be authorized to fund the Repair Reserve Fund in the amount of \$715,000 in order to defray the cost of the repair of school district facilities, including but not limited to the Bluehawk Sports Complex, the source of which funds shall be transferred from an Assigned Fund Balance as of the end of the 2016-2017 school year?

## BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION

Voters will be asked to elect candidates to fill two (2) open seats on the Hudson City School District Board of Education. One seat is a full three-year term, effective July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021. The second seat is the remaining term of Board member David Kisselburgh, who resigned for personal reasons prior to the end of his term. This is a one-year term, effective July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. Each seat is a non-paid term.

Running for these seats are Willette Jones and Lucinda Segar. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will fill the three-year term, and the candidate with the next highest number of votes will fill the one-year term. To learn more about the candidates, visit: <http://www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com/budget>



**Hudson City School District**  
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### Board of Education

Carrie Otty, *President*  
 Maria McLaughlin, *Vice President*  
 Sage Carter  
 Linda Hopkins  
 Willette Jones  
 Lucinda Segar  
 Sumayyah Shabazz

Maria Lagana Suttmeier, *Superintendent*

[www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com](http://www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com)

*Produced by Questar III's Communications Service*

## AVERAGE TAX IMPACT (NO STAR EXEMPTION)

Town	Assessed Home Value	Tax Paid (2017-18)	3.25% Levy Increase*	Annual Difference
Hudson	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,755.57	\$ 1,812.63	\$ 57.06
Claverack	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,772.47	\$ 1,830.07	\$ 57.60
Ghent	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,772.45	\$ 1,830.06	\$ 57.61
Greenport	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,772.45	\$ 1,830.06	\$ 57.61
Livingston	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,905.86	\$ 1,967.80	\$ 61.94
Stockport	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,969.40	\$ 2,033.40	\$ 64.00
Taghkanic	\$ 100,000	\$ 1,579.02	\$ 1,630.34	\$ 51.32

*NOTE: to determine the annual tax difference based on a home value of \$150,000, multiply the amount in the "Difference" column by 1.5. For an assessed home value of \$200,000, multiply the amount in the "Difference" column by 2, and so on.*

*\*Based on the NYS Property Tax Cap formula, HCSD is considered "tax cap compliant." See page 5 for further explanation and details about the property tax rebate.*

### POLLING LOCATIONS

**District 1:** City of Hudson –  
**JLE Primary School** (360 State Street, Hudson)

**District 2:** Greenport, Stottville/Stockport, Ghent –  
**Greenport Community Center**  
 (500 Town Hall Dr., Hudson)

**District 3:** Claverack, Livingston, Taghkanic –  
**A.B. Shaw Fire House** (67 NY-23, Claverack)

*Please note there is a new polling location for School Election District 2. Visit [www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com](http://www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com) for information about voter eligibility and absentee ballots.*

### VOTER INFORMATION

**VOTER QUALIFICATIONS:** All voters must be U.S. citizens, and age 18 or older on Election Day. Voters must be residents of Hudson CSD for at least 30 days immediately prior to Election Day, and registered to vote.

**VOTER REGISTRATION:** Voter registration is required. Voters can register to vote with the Columbia County Board of Elections. You are registered to vote if you have voted in the Hudson CSD election in the past four years.

**ABSENTEE BALLOTS:** Residents who will be unable to vote in person can vote by absentee ballot. You can obtain an absentee ballot by completing an absentee ballot application in the Board Clerk's office from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The application deadline is May 8 if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or May 14 if the ballot is to be picked up in person. Call the Board Clerk at 518-828-4360, extension 2100 for more information.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?** Additional information about the budget is posted on the District's website, [www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com](http://www.hudsoncityschooldistrict.com). For further information, please call the District Office at 518-828-4360, ext. 2100.