

Wynantskill

Union Free School District

MAY 2012

THE 2012-2013 PROPOSED DISTRICT BUDGET

VOTE: Tuesday, May 15, 2012 • 12 – 9 p.m. • Gardner Dickinson School

The Wynantskill Union Free School District's Board of Education and Administration, after careful cost analysis and planning are proposing a 2012-13 budget which allows class sizes to stay at current levels and does not result in loss of programming for students or require teacher layoffs.

The proposed budget, which results in a 1.52% increase in the tax levy, streamlines expenses and maximizing revenues, thus allowing the District to continue to offer a high quality educational program while confronting the ongoing fiscal challenges faced at the State and Federal levels.

Following two years of reduced spending, the proposed 2012-13 budget totaling \$8,037,093, enables the school district to maintain the educational program currently offered to students and allows for the funding necessary to facilitate the mandated changes necessary to meet the challenges of the Regents Reform Agenda. As such, the following contribute to the increased spending in the budget:

- The loss of the Federal Education Jobs money, which was used last year to avoid several teacher layoffs. These positions are still needed to teach required courses.
- State-mandated contributions to New York's pension systems continue to increase at significant rates.
- New State and Federal mandates requiring the district to: expand data systems to align curriculum with Common Core State Standards, implement NYS Teaching Standards, and Annual Professional Performance Review regulations.
- Reserving \$100,000 in the capital budget to provide for needed technology infrastructure upgrades.

On Tuesday, May 15, Wynantskill voters will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed budget. Residents can vote on the school budget between Noon and 9:00 p.m. at the Gardner-Dickinson School. Voters will also have the opportunity to elect two school board members (see page 5) and vote on two propositions (see page 5).



What Will I Be Voting on May 15?

A \$8,037,093 budget for the 2012-13 school year

- The budget requires a 1.52% tax levy increase, which is lower than the allowable increase of 2.3%

There are 2 Board of Education seats open this year.

- Incumbent **Ann Marsh** is running unopposed for one seat.
- Incumbent **Christina Curran** and **Phyllis Razzanno** are running for the other seat.

Two Propositions (see page 5):

- Purchase of one 66-passenger bus (using current appropriation)
- Change to majority vote for BOE election

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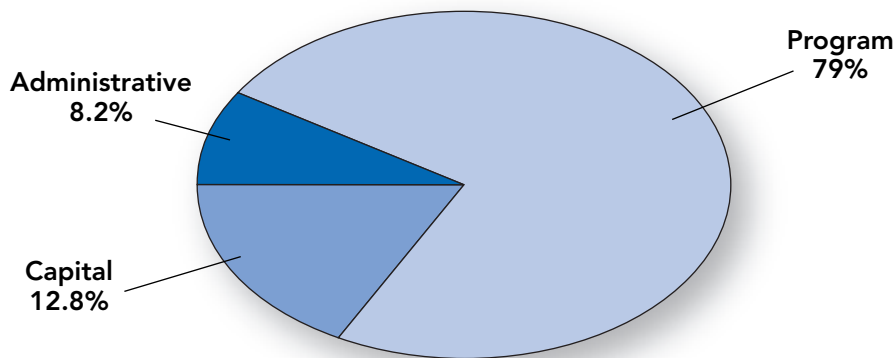
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BUDGET COMPARISON

	2011-2012	2012-2013	Change	% of Budget
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$ 786,959	\$ 662,226	-\$ 124,733	8.2%
Board of Education: Clerk, Legal, Census, Treasurer, Tax Collection Superintendent: Business Administration, Purchasing, Payroll, Insurance, BOCES Administration Principal: Supervision, Staff Development & Training, Curriculum Auditing Services: External, Internal & Claims				
PROGRAM	\$5,905,312	\$6,343,935	\$ 438,623	79%
Teaching & Instruction, Instructional Media, Computer Services, Guidance/Health Services, Co-Curricular/Athletics, Special Education, Student Transportation, Bus Repairs/Maintenance				
CAPITAL	\$1,130,418	\$1,030,932	-\$ 100,325	12.8%
Operation of Plant, Maintenance of Plant, Construction Principal/Interest, Purchase of Buses				
BUDGET TOTAL	\$7,992,012	\$8,037,093	\$214,404	100.0%

EXPENSES:



- Administrative budget decreased for third year in a row
- Capital budget decreased for third year in a row
- Program budget increased for first time in three years, largely due to preserving faculty and staff positions and increasing costs for health insurance and state-mandated contributions to New York State retirement system

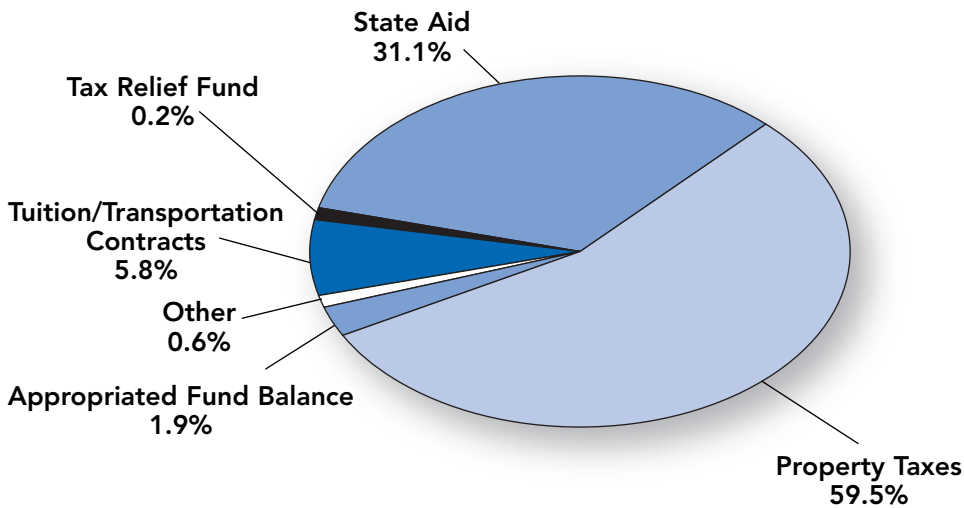
FUTURE EXPENSE CHALLENGES:

- Escalation in (TRS/ERS/Health Insurance) benefits
- Continual pressure of "unfunded mandates" including RTI and AIS
- Tuition costs for high school students

REVENUE ESTIMATES

	2011-2012	2012-2013	Change	% of Revenues
Property Taxes	\$ 4,715,857	\$ 4,787,717	71,860	59.5%
State Aid	2,350,019	2,440,476	90,457	30.4%
Transportation Contracts	282,179	287,283	5,104	3.6%
Day School Tuition	195,000	175,000	-20,000	2.2%
Appropriated Fund Balance	150,000	205,117	55,117	2.6%
Health Services/DOR Billing	73,744	75,000	1,256	0.9%
Other Unclassified Revenues	9,890	50,000	40,110	0.6%
Tax Relief Fund	46,000	16,500	-29,500	0.2%
TOTAL REVENUES	7,822,689	8,037,093	214,404	100.0%

REVENUES:



- Tax levy increase of 1.54%
- First state aid increase in three years
- State Aid five years ago accounted for 42% of district revenues

Future revenue challenges

- Decreasing enrollment (which affects state aid)
- Ongoing economic difficulties both at state and federal levels
- Property tax levy cap

EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL

According to the latest New York State School Report Card Fiscal Accountability Report, Wynantskill Union Free School District's Expenditures Per Pupil in 2009-10 was less than both the state average and in comparison to similar districts.

Expenditures Per Pupil	Wynantskill UFSD	Similar Districts	All NYS Schools
General Education	\$8,921	\$9,695	\$11,105
Special Education	\$13,795	\$26,949	\$26,888

SCHOOL BUDGET QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: How does the state's Property Tax Cap affect the budget?

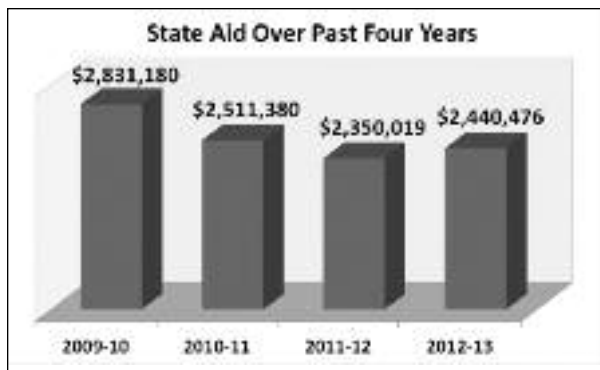
A: New York's Property Tax Cap Law, which state legislators enacted last year, restricts the amount of property taxes a school district can collect.

While state elected officials touted the law as a "2% cap", the law they passed instead requires school districts to use an eight-step formula to determine how much they can increase their tax levy by. As a result, most school districts can raise their tax levies by more than 2% and still be within the tax cap.

The reason is the state's formula allows exemptions for certain school expenditures that are outside a district's control – such as contributions to the state retirement system – as well as allowances for growth in a community's tax base.

In Wynantskill, the state allows the district to increase its tax levy by as much as 2.3% without needing a supermajority of voters (60 percent) to approve the budget. The district, however, agreed to limit the tax levy increase to 1.52% to preserve programs while still being mindful of our community's taxpayers.

As a result, the district's community budget vote will not be impacted by the tax cap law as it still requires a majority vote to pass the school budget.



Q: What is the Gap Elimination Adjustment?

A: As part of his 2010-11 state budget, former Governor David Paterson proposed a one-time funding mechanism called a Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) to reduce billions of dollars in education aid to help reduce the state's budget deficit.

While it was proposed as a one-time fix, the state has used the Gap Elimination Adjustment in each of the past three years to reduce the amount of aid school districts would otherwise receive.

Below is how much state aid Wynantskill Union Free School District has lost through the Gap Elimination Adjustment, according to the state's own budget figures.

- 2010-11 — \$441,473
- 2011-12 — \$448,727
- 2012-13 — \$390,704

Q: Has the district implemented any cost-saving measures?

A: Wynantskill purchases products/services through state contracts and cooperative arrangements with BOCES whenever possible to obtain the best price. The district also participates in a health insurance trust with 22 other districts to significantly reduce the cost of premiums and reconfigured its bus routes for efficiency. Additionally, the district is investigating joining a consortium of 170 school/municipalities to obtain reduced rates for natural gas and electricity.

Q: Did New York State increase state aid this year?

A: For the first time in three years, the district will receive more state aid in 2012-13 than it did the previous year.

New York State has informed the district it will receive \$2,440,476 in state aid in 2012-13, an increase of \$90,457.

However, while state aid will increase in 2012-13, the district will still receive \$390,704 less than the district received two years ago.

Q: What is a fund balance? How is it used?

A: A fund balance is a reserve much like a homeowner's savings account.

When a district's expenses are less than what was expected or revenues are higher than expected, the money contributes to the fund balance.

Districts may use fund balance each year as revenue in the budget to minimize spending cuts and stabilize tax rates. The money is also used for unforeseen expenses throughout the school year. By law, a school district's unrestricted fund balance may not exceed 4% of the next year's budget.

Just as homeowners are careful not to use up their savings accounts, school districts also must plan carefully how they use their fund balance to ensure it does not run out. A number of area school districts this year no longer have these reserves and therefore have to cut further into programs to reduce their budgets.

Q: What happens if this budget is defeated by residents?

A: If the proposed budget is defeated, the district may resubmit the original budget or submit a revised budget to the voters on June 19 or adopt a contingency budget that levies a tax no greater than that of the prior year (0% increase in tax levy).

If the resubmitted/revised budget proposal is defeated, the Board must adopt a budget that levies a tax no greater than that of the prior year (0% increase in tax levy). This budget would be subject to contingent budget requirements.

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATE

There are 2 Board of Education seats open this year. Incumbent Ann Marsh is running unopposed for one seat. Incumbent Christina Curran and Phyllis Razzanno are running for the other seat.

CHRISTINA CURRAN

After serving two terms on the Board of Education for the Wynantskill UFSD, I have decided to run again for another term. With new leadership in Gardner Dickinson, I want to continue to be part of the positive direction the school is headed in and continue to support program and instructional improvements. I feel my experience on the Board and having had two children graduate from Gardner Dickinson will be helpful to our new Superintendent/Principal,

Dr. Lisa Henkel and our new Assistant Principal, Mary Yodis. Working for the New York State Senate also helps me to keep the Board and the Administration up-to-date of legislative changes and policy decisions which may affect school districts.

Although our State is experiencing fiscal challenges and has put forth some major educational policy changes, decisions the BOE has made in the past with my support, has put our school in a strong position going forward.

I am grateful to have this chance to serve another term.

ANN MARSH

My husband Chris and I along with our three children Matt, Brian and Jessica have enjoyed living in Wynantskill for the last 18 years.

I have been involved in the district as a parent, a PTO Member/Officer or a School Board Member/Vice President for the last 16 years. I am very supportive of our new leadership (Dr. Lisa Henkel) and would like to continue to be involved in the positive direction our district is heading. We have seen increases in achievement while maintaining a fiscally sound budget.

As with all other schools in NYS, we have fiscal challenges ahead of us. I look forward to working with fellow board members and the strong leadership to overcome those challenges. There are many state mandates we need to provide without additional revenue. Our school board, with my support and involvement has been very diligent in looking for new, creative ways to accomplish this without putting a heavy burden on our taxpayers. I look forward to the opportunity to serve another term on the Wynantskill School Board.

PHYLLIS RAZZANNO

My husband, Joe and I have lived in Wynantskill for 30 years. Our three children Tara, Dana and Joe attended Gardner Dickinson School. My Goddaughter, Ella, who lives with us, attends first grade there. As in the past with our three children, we are very involved in Ella's education. My re-involvement over the past year and a half made me aware of the many issues our small district faces in the years to come. Most importantly is how to provide the quality education we have come to expect from our District, while making our school tax dollars stretch further than ever before. For example, how to implement existing and new State Education mandates without additional funding sources. Going forward, we will need to be creative and prudent with our revenue. I believe, as a School Board member, I will be able to balance the needs of the children, parents, taxpayers and school community as a whole.

VOTER INFORMATION

What am I voting on?

A \$8,037,093 budget for the 2012-13 school year, a proposition to purchase a 66-passenger bus, a proposition to change how school BOE members are elected, and three candidates for the Board of Education.

When and where is the vote?

Tuesday, May 15, 12 – 9:00 p.m.
Gardner-Dickinson School

Who is eligible to vote?

Anyone who is a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older, and a resident of the Wynantskill Union Free School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

How can I vote by absentee ballot?

Qualified district residents who are unable to go to the polls on May 15 can cast their votes by absentee ballot. For an application, call the district office at 283-4679 by 3:00 p.m. on May 8. All completed ballots must be received at the District Office no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 15.

What if I have questions?

For further information, please call the district office at 283-4679 or visit our school website, www.wynantskillufsd.org.

PROPOSITIONS ON MAY 15 BALLOT

In addition to the budget vote, community members will also be asked to vote on two propositions when they vote on May 15.

Proposition 1:

Shall the District be authorized to expend an amount not to exceed \$8,037,093.00 for the 2012-2013 school year to be raised by a levy of a tax upon the taxable property within the district, after deducting the monies available from State Aid and other sources of revenue as provided by law?

Proposition 2:

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the Wynantskill Union Free School District, Rensselaer County, New York, is hereby authorized to purchase one bus, at a maximum estimated cost of \$103,500, and that such sum, or so much thereof as shall be necessary, shall be paid from the current appropriation?

Proposition 3:

Resolved, in all subsequent elections, vacancies upon the board of education shall not be considered separate specific offices and that the nominating petitions shall not describe any specific vacancy upon the Board of Education for which the candidate is nominated. Vacancies in all subsequent elections on the Board of Education shall be filled by a majority vote.

POSTAL CUSTOMER
Wynantskill, NY 12198

Superintendent/Principal
Dr. Lisa Henkel

Board of Education
Andrea Paone, *President*
Ann Marsh, *Vice President*
Christina Curran
Matthew Hug
Andrew Lanese

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Wynantskill Union Free School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2012 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2013 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2013 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount	\$7,822,609	\$8,037,093	\$7,930,903
Increase/decrease for the 2013 school year		\$214,404	\$108,214
Percentage increase(decrease) in each proposed budget		2.74%	1.38%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		3.2%	
School Tax Levy Limit		\$4,819,791	
Proposed School Year Tax Levy (without permissible exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit)		\$4,784,536	\$4,715,857
Total Permissible Exclusions		\$3,181	
Proposed School Year Tax Levy (including permissible exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit)	\$4,715,857	\$4,787,717	\$4,715,857
Administrative component	\$786,959	\$892,226	\$658,226
Program component	\$5,905,312	\$6,343,935	\$6,318,745
Capital component	\$1,130,418	\$1,030,933	\$953,932
* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2013 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.			
Assumptions: Under contingency, the bus purchase would be eliminated and staff development would be decreased.			

	Budget Proposed for the 2013 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ³	\$ 598

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2012-2013 by the qualified voters of the Wynantskill Union Free School District, Rensselaer County, New York, will be held at Gardner-Dickinson School in said district on Tuesday, May 15, 2012 between the hours of 12:00pm and 09:00pm, prevailing time in the Gardner-Dickinson School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

³ The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.