

Wynantskill

Union Free School District

MAY 2017

THE 2017-2018 PROPOSED DISTRICT BUDGET

VOTE: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 • 12 – 9 p.m. • Gardner-Dickinson School

Continuing programs for students and investing in library, technology, and other support is the main focus of the 2017-18 school budget.

No cuts to programs or staff are required in the \$9,037,839 budget, which reduces spending over last year. The estimated 2.45% tax levy increase is within the Property Tax Cap.

“I’m proud of the programs we’ll have for students next year,” said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon. “Our faculty and staff find creative ways to offer opportunities for our students and we’re investing in programs that are sustainable.”

For the second year in a row, the Administrative and Capital portions of the budget have decreased while the Program portion has increased. Program is nearly 80% of the 2017-18 budget.

Administrative is down largely due to a curriculum position restructuring (see page 2). Capital is down due to a decrease in debt service payments.

State aid decreased by \$221,717 over the past year but Dr. Reardon noted that was due to a loss in building aid for the last Capital Project.

“We planned for that because we knew it was coming so we adjusted our debt service so the loss in aid didn’t require cutting programs,” explained Dr. Reardon.

The budget would increase the Library Media Specialist position from 0.6 to 0.8 full-time equivalency. The additional support would provide students increased library access and more opportunities to build critical researching skills (see page 2).

A teaching assistant position would continue for the 2nd grade class, moving to 3rd grade next year. “Amanda Barrett has done a great job this year working collaboratively with teachers to help support that grade,” said Principal Dr. Mary Yodis.

The district continues to invest in technology but will start a new 5-year replacement plan that began this year with a detailed inventorying of current equipment (see page 3).

Reading and math resources also continue to be a focus of the budget which supports an ELA and Math textbook series and helps fill the school’s book room.



Every year, Gardner-Dickinson honors our community's veterans with a Veterans Day Celebration where students read tributes about why they are proud of those who served.

Budget Within NYS Property Tax Cap

Most homeowners should receive a property tax relief check from New York State in the fall due to the school’s 2017-18 budget staying within the Property Tax Cap.

Wynantskill UFSD’s Property Tax Cap for next year is 2.45%. While state elected officials often call the law a “2% tax cap” the figure actually changes each year due to a formula schools are required to use. Last year, Wynantskill UFSD’s Property Tax Cap was 0.73%.

Because the district’s budget is within the Tax Cap, the community qualifies for New York’s Property Tax Relief Credit Program. That program provides a credit to

homeowners who receive Basic or Enhanced STAR property tax relief, have an income of \$275,000 or less, and paid school property taxes in 2016.

While last year’s tax relief checks totaled \$185, this year New York is providing a credit based on a percentage of a homeowner’s STAR benefit, with lower incomes receiving a higher percentage benefit.

The tax credit is calculated by New York State who also mails the checks to homeowners. For questions about the tax credit or the STAR program, please contact the state Department of Taxation and Finance or your local assessor.

Increase Provides More Access to Library

Students will have more opportunities to try collaborative research projects and take out books next year due to a 0.2 full-time equivalence (FTE) increase in the school's Library Media Specialist position.

Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon explained investing in the position will help all students as school librarians have increasingly become important partners in education.

"Ms. Fecura has done a wonderful job working collaboratively with teachers to create research projects that engage students and teach them critical researching skills," said Dr. Reardon. "Increasing her time to 0.8 FTE will create more of these opportunities."

This year, for example, 6th graders researched Greek mythology to go with their reading of "Percy Jackson & the Olympians" in English Language Arts class. The research project deepened students' understanding of the novel while teaching them how to find reliable sources of information and proper ways to cite sources.

"School libraries have become much more than a quiet place for students to read," said Dr. Reardon. "They're collaborating, using technology and conducting real research."

Encouraging students to read will continue to be a key focus for the library as well, assured Dr. Reardon, who noted all the author visits Ms. Fecura has organized to help excite students about reading.



Students learn critical inquiry skills through library research projects.

"With Ms. Fecura in the library more, students will have more access to books and we can further instill in them a lifelong love of reading," said Dr. Reardon.

Continuing Opportunities for Students

Here are some examples of the education Gardner-Dickinson School students receive:

Kindergarten to Grade 5

- Two sections for each grade
- Students study English Language Arts (ELA) two hours every day
- Students study math for an hour every day
- Students study social studies, on average, 30 minutes each day
- Students study science, on average, 30 minutes each day
- Students receive music, library research skills, physical education and art instruction throughout the school year

Grades 6 to 8

- 6th graders study ELA, math, social studies and science every day
- 6th graders have physical education every day
- 6th graders study art, music, library research skills, family and consumer science throughout the school year
- 6th graders begin learning foreign language by taking Spanish every other day
- 7th and 8th graders are taught core classes in ELA, math, science and social studies every day
- 7th and 8th graders continue their foreign language study by taking Spanish every day
- Art, music, technology, and physical education are taught to 7th graders every other day
- 6th, 7th and 8th graders have the option of taking band or chorus
- 8th graders have the option of taking the following accelerated classes: Algebra, Earth Science, Honors English and Studio Art
- Afterschool opportunities include Odyssey of the Mind, modified sports, Builder's Club, Homework Center and Drama Club

Data Support Teacher Reduces Administration

Next year, the district will continue its Instructional Data Support Teacher, a move that supports teachers and reduces administration.

Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon explained that when the district's Curriculum Coordinator took a new position last year, the district decided to reorganize the coordinator's responsibilities.

"Instead of just replacing an administrator, Principal Yodis and I decided to take on the curriculum work and offer a 0.4 FTE data support position to our faculty," said Dr. Reardon. "Mrs. Carbone has done a fantastic job and relates well to her fellow teachers. This provides us a new model for providing teachers access to usable data for instruction without adding an administrative position."

BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

Two candidates are running for two open seats on the Board of Education.

ERIC STRANG

Eric Strang has been a full-time resident of the Wynantskill community since 1998. A major goal of his is to provide children an opportunity to build and grow life skills through experiences at school and enrichment programs. A well-balanced diet of science, arts, and social education is a strong foundation to be a positive contributor in society. For school year 2017-2018, Eric will have three children in Kindergarten, 3rd, and 7th grades attending Gardner Dickinson. Eric is also a volunteer at Brunswick Soccer (Coach), St. Jude's Basketball (Coach), and Classie Lassies Softball (Board Member & Coach).

KEITH HIROKAWA

Keith Hirokawa teaches law at the Albany Law School. He teaches courses involving property and environmental and land use law. He has published articles exploring teaching theory, ecology, ethics, economics, and law. Professor Hirokawa has taught at Albany Law School, Texas Wesleyan University School of Law (presently Texas A&M) and the University of Oregon School of Law. He holds an MA in philosophy and a JD from the University of Connecticut and an LLM from Lewis & Clark Law School. He attributes the success of his two boys (Owen and Ethan) to their experiences at Gardner-Dickinson.

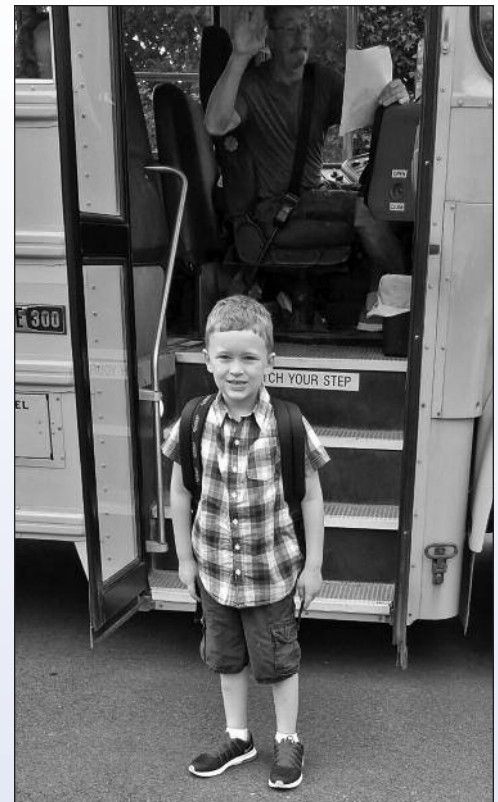
Technology Plan Helps Long-Term Budgeting

Next year, Wynantskill UFSD will be able to start a new long-term technology replacement plan thanks to a comprehensive review of all the district's computers and technology this year.

"Our Network Systems Engineer Anthony Vescio did a fantastic job this year inventorying all our computers so we know what exactly we have and how old it is," said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon.

After cataloging every computer, tablet, SmartBoard and other piece of technology, Mr. Vescio created a 5-year technology replacement plan that the district will begin to fund in the 2017-18 budget.

"We believe in investing in technology but we want to do so in a thoughtful way," said Dr. Reardon. "The technology plan will allow us to maintain and even increase our technology with a responsible, long-term budget approach."



BUS PURCHASES PART OF LONG-TERM PLAN

A proposition on the May 16 ballot would allow the district to purchase one 66-passenger and one 24-passenger bus as part of the district's long-term bus replacement plan.

The total cost would not exceed \$175,727. The district pays approximately one-third of the total cost because New York State reimburses the district for 65% of bus purchases. The local cost for both buses would be \$61,505.

The district purchases school buses as part of its long-term bus replacement plan to keep the district's fleet in safe, working order. New buses replace old buses based on the vehicle's mileage, age, repair history and condition.

As buses age they become more costly to maintain and less efficient to run. Older buses can average only six miles per gallon while new buses should average closer to 10 miles per gallon. That difference can add up to considerable savings given the number of miles our school buses travel each year.

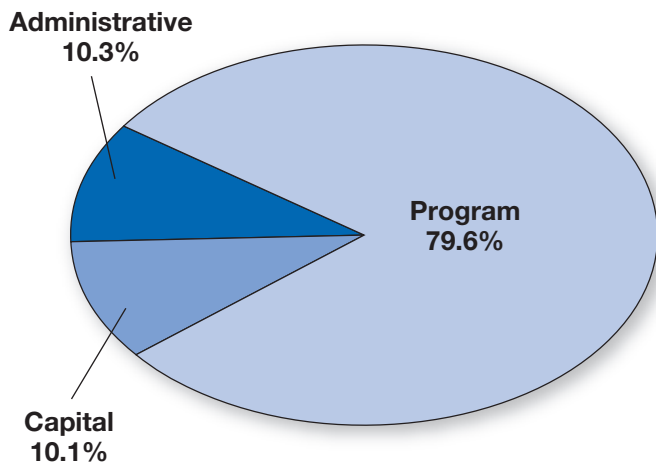
BUDGET COMPARISON

	2016-2017	2017-2018	Change	% of Budget
PROGRAM	\$6,994,367	\$7,197,703	\$203,336	79.6%
Teaching & Instruction, Instructional Media, Computer Services, Guidance/Health Services, Co-Curricular/Athletics, Special Education, Student Transportation, Bus Repairs/Maintenance				
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$969,152	\$929,227	-\$39,925	10.3%
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				
CAPITAL	\$1,132,626	\$910,909	-\$221,717	10.1%
Operation of Plant, Maintenance of Plant, Construction Principal/Interest, Purchase of Buses				
BUDGET TOTAL	\$9,096,145	\$9,037,839	-\$58,306	100%

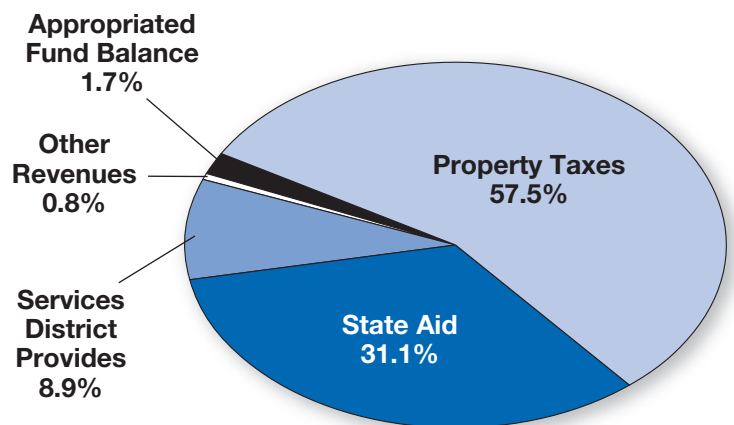
REVENUE ESTIMATES

	2016-2017	2017-2018	Change	% of Revenues
Property Taxes	\$ 5,069,721	\$ 5,194,661	\$ 124,940	57.5%
State Aid	3,006,494	2,808,638	-197,856	31.1%
Services District Provides	802,930	808,940	6,010	8.9%
Other Revenues	61,000	69,600	8,600	0.8%
Appropriated Fund Balance	156,000	156,000	0	1.7%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 9,096,145	\$ 9,037,839	-\$58,306	100.0%

EXPENSES:



REVENUES:



Wynantskill Union Free School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2016-17 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2017-18 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2017- 18 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 9,096,145	\$ 9,037,839	\$ 9,001,709
Increase/Decrease for the 2017-18 School Year		(\$ 58,306)	(\$ 94,436)
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		(.64%)	(1.03%)
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.26%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 5,069,721	\$5,194,661	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable			
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **			
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy			
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 5,069,721	\$ 5,194,661	\$ 5,069,721
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 0	\$	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 5,103,574	\$ 5,194,661	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$ 5,069,721	\$ 5,194,661	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ 33,853	\$ 0	
Administrative Component	\$ 969,152	\$ 929,227	\$ 924,178
Program Component	\$ 6,994,367	\$ 7,197,703	\$ 7,181,595
Capital Component	\$ 1,132,626	\$ 910,909	\$ 895,936

*To reach contingency budget amount, the District would reduce or eliminate certain expenses including equipment purchases, technology and supply increases, non-union increases and other contractual services.

** 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

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

Under the Budget Proposed
for the 2017-18 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings¹

\$ 647

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2017-18 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 16, 2017 between the hours of 12:00 noon and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Gardner-Dickinson school (Band Room), 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.

POSTAL CUSTOMER
Wynantskill, NY 12198

Superintendent

Dr. Thomas Reardon

Principal

Dr. Mary Yodis

Board of Education

Andrew Lanesey, *President*
Darcy Mack, *Vice President*
Cathleen Castle
Keith Hirokawa
Eric Strang

Produced by Questar III Communications Service

www.wynantskillufsd.org

VOTER INFORMATION

When and where is the vote?

Tuesday, May 16, 12 – 9:00 p.m.

Gardner-Dickinson School Band Room

Who is eligible to vote?

Anyone who is a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older, and is 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?

District residents who are unable to go to the polls on May 16 can cast their votes by absentee ballot. To request an application for an absentee ballot, please call the District Office at 283-4600 ext. 14. All completed ballots must be received by the District Office no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 16.

What if I have questions?

The district website, www.wynantskillufsd.org, has additional budget resources including budget presentations from Board meetings. You can also call the District Office at 283-4600 ext. 14.

What Will I Be Voting on May 16?

A \$9,037,839 budget for the 2017-18 school year

- The budget requires a 2.45% tax levy increase.
- Budget is within NYS Property Tax Cap.

Two seats on the Board of Education

- Eric Strang and Keith Hirokawa are running for two seats on the Board of Education (see page 3).

Proposition to purchase 24- and 66-passenger school buses

- Cost not to exceed \$175,727.
- State reimburses district for 65% of cost (see page 3).

Follow District on Facebook and Twitter

As part of the district's efforts to continue to improve communication with our community, Wynantskill UFSD now has a Facebook and Twitter page. Please note, these social media accounts are at no cost to the district.



Follow us at www.facebook.com/WynantskillUFSD or www.twitter.com/WynantskillUFSD to receive regular updates about upcoming school events and stories about Gardner-Dickinson students.

