

Monticello

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Keeping academic excellence a priority

Cutting costs and tightening spending

How has the school district managed to keep costs down and limit excess spending?

Like any business, we are constantly looking to cut and contain costs. This year, we have conducted a comprehensive review of our Food Service and Athletic programs to scrutinize how money is spent. We are focusing on a plan that should maintain costs in our Food Service program and leverage more programs out of the Athletic budget without increasing taxes. This summer and next school year, we will be implementing our Energy Performance Contract. We intend to upgrade and improve our energy systems which will result in savings in this area. There are decisive plans to install a wind turbine to generate power for our high school. Savings in our transportation department are also being explored. We instituted a no-idling policy for all district vehicles that limits buses from idling for more than five minutes and requires that they be turned off when students are loading or unloading.

Are there any new academic programs included in the budget?

No, due to budget constraints, we have not added new academic programs. Instead, we chose to expand programs that we started during the past two years. The programs we're enhancing are only the ones covered by our Foundation Aid or by grant monies. One program we are very proud of is our College Pathways. Through a greater partnership with Sullivan County Community College and Syracuse University, we will be able to offer our students many more college level courses. This program is part of our Smaller Learning Community Project which we began three years ago. In the long run, families could save a considerable amount of money on college tuition costs. This program is also designed to help us prepare students for college and the Global Economy.

What happens if the budget doesn't pass?

The Board of Education has three choices. They can put the same budget up for another vote, put a revised budget up for vote or adopt the contingency budget. This year, we created a budget that is below the contingency budget because we are sensitive to the strain people are feeling due to high fuel costs and the shaky economy.

What is a contingency budget and how will it affect my taxes?

The State requires a school district to have a contingency budget prepared in case the community does not pass the proposed school budget. This will mean that certain equipment will not be purchased, and the community will not be able to use the school facilities without paying a fee. Since we created a budget that is already below the contingency budget, these cost reductions will have very little impact on your tax bill. The difference in the tax levy increase between the proposed budget and the contingency budget is only about 1%.

If we get more State aid than we expected, will it be used to lower the tax increase?

With the new State aid projections now released, we anticipate that we will receive an increase in State aid from the amount we originally estimated. Since the State budget was late, the Board of Education did not have the exact figures at the time they approved the proposed budget. At this point, our overall budget figure cannot be changed. However, since we were very cautious in our budget calculation, when we adjusted our numbers to include the projected aid, we were able to lower our proposed tax levy increase for 2008-09.

Will there be anything else to vote for on the May 20 ballot besides the budget?

Yes, three of the nine seats on our Board of Education are up for election, in addition to a proposition to purchase three replacement buses. Many of our buses are old and have considerable mileage. This proposal represents a continuation of our on-going bus replacement program, which is part of our safety initiative. This purchase would qualify us to receive 65% of the cost of these buses (estimated at \$330,000) back from the State - that would mean we'd get up to \$214,500.

If you need further clarification on any of these subjects, or if you have any questions, please call Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patrick Michel at 794-7700, ext. 70910 or e-mail him at pmichel@k12mcsd.net.



Budget Vote
Tuesday, May 20

Monticello Central School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2007-08 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2008-09 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2008-09 School Year*
Total budgeted amount	\$69,812,716	\$73,806,760	\$73,086,258
Increase/decrease for the 2008-09 school year		\$3,994,044	\$3,273,542
Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget		5.72%	4.69%
Change in the consumer price index		2.80%	
Resulting property tax levy for the 2008-09 school year		\$38,340,217	\$37,619,715
Administrative component	\$8,589,545	\$8,280,800	\$8,262,050
Program component	\$51,593,128	\$55,678,773	\$55,481,185
Capital component	\$9,630,043	\$9,847,187	\$9,343,023

*Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2008-09 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated.¹ In addition to the mandated cuts including equipment and school bus purchases, the District will consider all areas of the budget to meet the necessary reductions, including: administration, instruction, athletics, extra-curricular and transportation services.
 **All budget calculations include Contract for Excellence funds.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR² Exemption Savings based on a hypothetical home within the School District with a full value of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).

Budget Proposed for the 2008-09 School Year

Basic STAR Tax Savings

\$640



The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2008-09 by the qualified voters of the Monticello Central School District, Sullivan County, New York, will be held in said district at the RJK Middle School, Duggan Elementary School, Chase Elementary School, Rock Hill Fire House and Forestburgh Town Hall on Tuesday, May 20, 2008, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., prevailing time in the five locations, at which time the polls will be open to vote by voting ballot or machine.

¹ Provide a statement of assumptions made in estimating the contingency budget pursuant to section 2023 of the Education Law.

² The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

On the May 20 ballot

there will be a proposition to purchase three replacement buses. The cost of the buses, \$330,000, is eligible for a 65 percent State aid reimbursement (which means the district will get \$214,500 back from the State). The proposition will appear on the ballot as follows:

PROPOSITION 2: Resolved that the Board of Education of the Monticello Central School District be authorized to purchase three (3) 72-passenger replacement buses at an aggregate cost not to exceed \$330,000. YES NO

Superintendent of Schools
 Dr. Patrick Michel
Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning
 Ms. Kathleen Pagano-Fuller
Assistant Superintendent for Business & Support Services
 Gladys P. Baxter
Board of Education
 Robert Stewart, *President*
 Alyce Van Etten, *Vice President*
 Jacob Billig
 Tara Buckstad-Russo
 Richard Feller
 Vivian Gambino Liff
 Liza Glick
 Yvonne Housman
 Eugene Nesin
 Taylor Fasce, *Student Representative*



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