

# The Panther Post

## #WithMontiPride

MONTICELLO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT // BUDGET 2025-26 // VOLUME 11

## VOTE

Tuesday, May 20

Polls open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### Budget At-A-Glance

Proposed budget:

**\$103,522,576**Proposed School  
Tax Levy:**\$45,872,100**

Tax Levy Change:

**\$1,162,452  
2.60%**

Proposed budget change:

**\$3,245,140  
3.24%**

### Also on the ballot:

Capital Reserve Fund  
(using existing fund balance)Election of Board of  
Education Members  
(see page 14)

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Budget Proposal

## Monticello residents to vote on budget and capital reserve fund on May 20

### Proposed 2025-26 Budget Prioritizes Stability, Student Support, and Fiscal Responsibility

On Tuesday, May 20, residents of the Monticello Central School District will vote on a \$103,522,576 budget for the 2025–26 school year, elect three members to the Board of Education, and consider the establishment of a \$10 million capital reserve fund that could be used to offset, and potentially reduce, the cost of future facility upgrades or emergency repairs.

#### Proposed budget is below tax cap, percentage of the budget funded by taxpayers decreases

The district's primary goal during the budget planning process is to carefully balance our responsibility to be fiscally accountable to taxpayers with our commitment to supporting student success. We strive to minimize tax levy increases and maintain the portion of the budget funded by the tax levy under 50%. Rising costs in several areas - including out-of-district special education placements and insurance premiums - made it challenging to meet these goals without significant adjustments. As a result, the district made thoughtful decisions on its programs for 2025-26. Thanks to careful planning, the final proposed budget includes a tax levy increase below the allowable tax cap.

#### Supporting Students, Strengthening Operations

The 2025–26 budget proposal includes the addition of several key positions: a special education teacher at the elementary level, a reading teacher, and an athletic trainer. It also maintains essential instructional staffing by replacing multiple retiring teachers in elementary education, English, speech, and special education. As the district transfers all

business operations from Sullivan BOCES to in-house, the budget also includes three new account clerks in the business office who will perform services previously delivered by BOCES – a move expected to reduce costs and increase efficiency.

#### Careful Reductions to Preserve Core Programs

To remain within the tax levy limit, the district will not fill certain vacant or retiring positions, including a science teacher, a driver's education teacher, a nurse, and several custodial and support staff roles. In addition, the proposed budget includes the elimination of two non-instructional positions, and one administrative position. It also includes reductions in non-instructional areas such as substitute coverage, transportation costs, field trips, and BOCES services.

The proposed budget will continue to include all current extracurricular and athletic offerings.

#### Looking Ahead

The proposed budget reflects a long-term commitment to financial stability. Through strategic use of fund balance and careful prioritization, Monticello aims to deliver a budget that supports student achievement and keeps schools on solid footing for the future.

### VOTING LOCATIONS

📍 **Thompson/Monticello - District #1**  
Robert J. Kaiser Middle School  
45 Breakey Avenue • Monticello, NY 12701

📍 **Bethel - District #2**  
Duggan Community Center  
3460 Route 55 • White Lake, NY 12786

📍 **Mamakating - District #3**  
Emma C. Chase School  
28 Pennsylvania Avenue • Wurtsboro, NY 12790

📍 **Rock Hill - District #4**  
Rock Hill Fire Department  
61 Glen Wild Road • Rock Hill, NY 12775

📍 **Forestburgh - District #5**  
Forestburgh Town Hall  
332 King Road • Forestburgh, NY 12777

*If you have a question about where you should vote, call 845-794-7700, ext. 70523, or visit our budget webpage to use the PollFinder tool at [monticelloschools.net](http://monticelloschools.net).*

### Also on the budget: Capital Reserve Fund Responsible Planning. Real Savings. Community Control.

#### ESTABLISHING A CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:

- **Uses Existing Fund Balance**
- **Saves Money:** Cuts down on borrowing and interest costs—protecting your tax dollars.
- **Plans Ahead:** Funds major repairs and upgrades without hurting classroom programs.
- **Puts You in Charge:** Every dollar spent needs voter approval, keeping decisions local.



# Community CORNER

## CALENDAR

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

### MAY

- 20 – Budget Vote & Election, All District Polling Locations, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.
- 21 – Board of Education Meeting, Budget Results Adopted, RJK Middle School, 7:30 p.m.

### JUNE

- 5 – Board of Education Meeting, Retiree Recognition, RJK Middle School, 7:30 p.m.
- 26 – Board of Education Meeting, RJK Middle School, 7:30 p.m.

### JULY

- 3 – Board of Education Meeting, RJK Middle School, Reorganization Meeting at 6 p.m., Followed by Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- 17 – Board of Education Meeting, RJK Middle School, 7:30 p.m.

### AUGUST

- 7 – Board of Education Meeting, RJK Middle School, 7:30 p.m.
- 21 – Board of Education Meeting, RJK Middle School, 7:30 p.m.

FIRST DAY OF  
2025-26  
SCHOOL YEAR:  
**SEPT. 4**



## ★ Hall of Distinction ★

The Monticello Central School District Hall of Distinction honors highly successful alumni, former Board of Education members and former employees who have achieved distinction, outstanding accomplishments or made significant contributions within their school, family, career, community and/or personal lives. The 2024-25 inductees were: Emma C. Chase, Former Superintendent of Schools (Posthumously), John Conway, Class of 1970, and Blake Washington, Class of 1994.

The committee is currently accepting nominations for the induction class of 2025-26. A ceremony will then be held in the fall of this year to celebrate the newest inductees. More information and a nomination packet are available on the Hall of Distinction webpage located on [monticelloschools.net](http://monticelloschools.net) under "About Us".

## ST. JOHN STREET PRESCHOOL

A free, full day pre-K program for 3 and 4 year old\* Monticello School District residents

**SPOTS STILL AVAILABLE!!**

**CALL (845) 794-7700, X78905  
TO RESERVE YOUR  
APPOINTMENT NOW!**

- ✓ Free transportation to and from school
- ✓ Academic and social skill development
- ✓ Free breakfast and lunch
- ✓ Extended day care available

\* Student must turn 3 years old (for UPK3) or 4 years old (for UPK4) by Dec. 1, 2025



## Looking to Give Back?

We are fortunate to be surrounded by a community that cares! We are frequently asked by many generous community organizations and individuals how they can contribute to support our students. Here are some current needs in our buildings:

### ➤ Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School/Robert J. Kaiser Middle School/George L. Cooke Elementary School:

The Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School, George L. Cooke Elementary School and Robert J. Kaiser Middle School are accepting donations for their programs that support students at risk for hunger. All three schools are in need of non-perishable food items.

KLR and Cooke are also accepting donations of toiletries to stock their community closets, which provide hygiene products or a change of clothes for students in need.

Donations may be dropped off during regular business hours at any school. For more information, please contact the school's main office.

### ➤ Emma C. Chase Elementary School:

The Emma C. Chase Elementary School recently took over the Cans for Kids program. Started several years ago by the Woods family, Cans for Kids enables community members to drop off refundable cans and bottles to collection bins placed around town. All proceeds from these collections support the Chase school. Bins are located on Sneed Street, Pine Street and First Street in the village of Wurtsboro, and there is also a bin at the Chase school. The school is also accepting donations of non-perishable food for its backpack program.

## CONNECT WITH US!

Are you a community member who wants to stay in touch with the most up-to-date news and events from the district? Use the QR code, or visit our website to sign up to receive district news via email.





# Superintendent's Message

Dear Monticello community:

I hope this newsletter finds you well. This year, the Board of Education is asking resident voters to consider two propositions at its annual vote on May 20: a \$103,552,576 proposed budget for the 2025-26 school year that continues to support student learning and achievement, and the creation of a \$10 million capital reserve fund, using excess fund balance, that could enable the district to address future facility repairs and improvements at a reduced cost to taxpayers.

## Proposition 1: Annual School Budget

Inflationary pressures have led to increased costs in many areas, particularly in insurance premiums and special education services. The cost of providing special education services continues to rise due to several converging factors. We are seeing an increase in both the number of students requiring services and the complexity of their individual needs, which often necessitate more intensive support than we can provide within our school buildings. For some students to fully realize their potential, they are placed in out-of-district programs or receive other out-of-district services. While the number of these placements is increasing, the number of available seats in the region is decreasing, due to a combination of staffing shortages, and increased demand for these services at the local level. This results in students being transported long distances to their placements.

Rising costs in healthcare, transportation, and specialized equipment also contribute to the overall increase. Despite these financial challenges, our district remains firmly committed to meeting the needs of all students and ensuring they have access to the resources and support necessary to thrive.

We also remain committed to our responsibility to our taxpayers. The administrative team worked diligently this budget planning season to carefully examine all our current expenses, programs and staffing needs to identify areas where we could responsibly reduce spending, without compromising the quality of our educational program.

As a result, we have made the difficult decision to eliminate two non-instructional positions and one administrative position. In addition, several positions vacated due to retirement will not be filled.

At the same time, we remain focused on building an educational foundation that prepares our students for success in the future. This proposed budget adds key positions that directly support academic achievement and student well-being, including a special education teacher, a reading teacher, and an athletic trainer. It also replaces essential retiring staff in critical instructional areas such as elementary education, English, speech, and special education. The proposed budget also maintains all current extracurricular and athletic programs.



## Proposition 2: Capital Reserve Fund

Voters will also consider the creation of a \$10 million capital reserve fund, using excess fund balance. If approved, voters would be authorizing the Board of Education to allocate existing fund balance over a period of ten years into a fund exclusively used for voter-approved capital projects or emergency repairs.

By saving over time, capital funds help districts reduce or avoid borrowing, lower interest costs, and decrease the cost of facility needs to the taxpayers. For example, the district used existing capital reserve funds to offset \$14 million of the \$31.8 million capital improvement project approved by voters in 2024. Another \$10,460,000 of that same project was funded by state aid, leaving \$7,340,000 of the project to be funded by the tax levy. If the district did not have capital reserve funds at its disposal in 2024, \$21,340,000 would have been funded by the tax levy. (See chart p. 11)

## Polls open May 20

Both of these propositions reflect the district's commitment to providing high-quality educational experiences, maintaining fiscal responsibility, and preparing for future needs. I encourage you to take a few moments to review this newsletter to learn more about our approach—and to make your voice heard at the polls on May 20.

With Monti Pride,

**Matthew T. Evans, Ed.D.**

*Superintendent of Schools*



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR FALL AND WINTER SPORTS SEASONS

#WithMontiPride

## New student-led Student Athlete Advisory Council aims to inspire younger students to play sports

The benefits of youth sports are clear – research from the President's Council on Sports, Fitness & Nutrition Science Board shows that participation in sports is correlated with positive impacts on mental and physical health, as well as educational and career success. But that's no secret to any of the Monticello High School on the school's newly-formed Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), led by President Diya Patel and Vice President Tyrese Shaw.

The two students participated in the Student-Athlete Leadership Summit at Mount Saint Mary College back in November. A collaborative venture by the Mid-Hudson School Study Council, Mount Saint Mary Athletics, and Section 9 athletics, the summit brought together student athlete leaders from throughout the region for a day of discussions and activities designed to encourage students to take an active role in promoting athletics. Inspired by their work at the summit, Patel and Shaw have spent the past four months organizing a "SAAC Day" at the Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School to instill a curiosity and excitement about sports in the district's elementary students. After months of planning, the event took place at KLR during the week of March 3.

High school winter varsity athletes set up stations at the KLR gym where they demonstrated their sporting skills, and answered questions during each physical education period. The younger students spent the first part of their class rotating between the stations, which included alpine ski, Nordic ski, cheer, basketball and wrestling. Afterwards, they split into teams and participated in an indoor relay complete with medals and prizes for the winners.

"I had one student come up to me and ask 'can I start track right now?'," Patel said. "The relay especially got them excited because there were prizes and rewards at the end. They really enjoyed the whole experience."

During any down time, the older students let loose with the younger ones – breaking into dance battles, performing popular TikTok dances and having impromptu group Q&A sessions.

"Going to high school or middle school can be a scary experience, but when they see the high schoolers coming down and inspiring them it can make really want to be like that when they're in high school as well," Shaw said. "A lot of kids get scared when they come into high school thinking they won't be able to find a friend group or find their clique, but sports can really help a lot with that. because when you're on a sports team you guys have the same interests, and you hang out in school and out of school, and build that chemistry so that you have a great team."

With the SAAC Day being such a success, the committee is already hard at work planning a spring day where they'll introduce students to fall sports.

"This was a completely student-led initiative," said MCSA Athletic Director Ryan Jasper. "Every phone call to [KLR Principal] Ms. Serrano, every email, every conversation with KLR's physical education teachers – it was all done by the students on the committee. They really stepped up to the plate to get the younger kids excited and enthusiastic about become future Panther athletes."



SAAC President Diya Patel, left, listens as Baya Titus speaks about her experiences as a varsity athlete.



SAAC Vice President Tyrese Shaw, center, said he wants to see his younger peers reap all of the benefits of playing a team sport.



Senior athletes led sports demonstrations to familiarize the younger students with their options.





Monticello High School senior Alexis Heins (center) took home second place in the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Alpine Skiing Championship at Gore Mountain on Feb. 25, 2025. A six-year varsity skier, Alexis finishes her illustrious high school skiing career with four Section IX Championships, a State Championship in 2023 and a second-place state finish in 2025.



Giovanni Gutierrez, Baya Titus, Abby Morse and Yousef Elsayed who competed at the Section 9 Nordic Ski Championships. The four qualified to compete in the NYSPHSAA Nordic State Championships in Lake George in February 2025.



On Wednesday, March 5, the Monticello High School Trap Team was welcomed in Albany by Assembly Member Paula Kay. The team was introduced on the floor of the Assembly, where they were recognized for their outstanding achievements at the state tournament last year. After their visit in the Assembly, the team met with Senator Peter Oberacker, and then took a tour of the Capitol.



Monticello High School runners Baya Titus and Diya Patel competed at the NYSPHSAA Cross Country Championships in Queensbury, NY.



Gabby Almonte's performance at the NYS qualifiers earned her an invitation to compete at the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Indoor Track and Field Championships at the Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex on Staten Island, held in March 2025.



Six fall and six winter athletic teams were named as scholar athlete teams by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). Teams that earn this distinction must have 75% of their members maintain an overall average of 90% or better throughout the season.

Congrats to the following scholar athlete teams:

#### FALL

- Boys Cross Country
- Girls Cross Country
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Volleyball
- Girls Tennis

#### WINTER

- Girls Indoor Track & Field
- Boys Indoor Track & Field
- Girls Nordic Ski
- Boys Nordic Ski
- Girls Alpine Ski
- Boys Alpine Ski

Monticello High School was also named as a school of excellence by NYSPHSAA, with more than 75% of our athletic teams earning the scholar athlete distinction.



# OUR GOALS:

## OUR VISION

This Board aspires to build a world-class community of schools, and be a district of choice.

## OUR MISSION

This Board's mission is to ensure that each learner is future-ready by providing empowering educational experiences.

**This Board will provide a holistic education comprised of extensive curricular and extra-curricular experiences that empower each individual student to conquer challenges, develop talents, and discover passions, while sustaining rigor and achieving evidence-based academic growth.**

STUDENT  
success



391 George L. Cooke Elementary School students and their families had a fantastically fun evening during the school's nature-themed STEAM Night on March 18.

Staff led science experiments in the gymnasium. Students created a volcano, made a snowstorm in a jar, used milk and food dye to simulate the Northern Lights, and stuck their hands in Crisco to experience how polar bear blubber protects them

in the Arctic. They also learned how clouds form and create rain. In one room, participants planted seeds to grow into flowers. Organizers set up microscopes for attendees to learn how to use them and view cool slides. The event featured Maker Space stations, robots, a chicken room with live baby chicks, and the Star Lab. Families also enjoyed pizza and cookies.



43 Monticello High School students from Jeff Danzer's ninth-grade honors global classes competed in the first-ever local National History Day competition.

National History Day is a research project that about half a million students throughout the country participate in each year. Participants choose a topic that relates to the initiative's annual theme (this year's is "Rights and Responsibilities"), and spend months performing research. Once they've amassed enough knowledge of their selection, they begin to draft a project – they can choose to build a website, film a documentary, construct an exhibit, write a paper or script and act a live performance – which they then display during the competition phase.

Out of the 43 MHS students who participated in the local competition, 21 were selected to move forward in the regional competition.



Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School students and their families enjoyed a STREAM/ELA Night at the school on Wednesday, March 26. KLR's Science Liaison, Kayleigh Bowles, with the help of a group of teachers, organized the event, which gave students the opportunity to take ownership in a project that practiced experimentation and problem solving.

With STREAM practices becoming more present in the world, particularly in the job force, our educators are determined to help our students develop a strong base for these practices as they move through their school years. The event was an opportunity for students to flex their STREAM skills, learn new ones, and have some fun along the way.



After wrapping up a unit focusing on clothing, including the type of clothing people wear to work, the students in Mrs. Difrenza's class at the St. John Street Preschool had a special visitor to help reinforce the lesson.

Edward Smith, a supervisor for Fed Ex in Chester, NY, came to talk about his job and how his uniform supports his duties. He showed the students his reflective stripes that help keep him visible and safe, and all the pockets he has to keep things he may need while working. Before parting ways, he left all the students with a super-cool Fed Ex logo football.



Students at the Emma C. Chase Elementary School took part in a school-wide STREAM activity of building "monsters" during library time. After reading "How I Met My Monster" by Amanda Noll, students received a variety of materials to use to construct their own monsters, and let their creativity (and knowledge of shapes, math and science) fly!



Ms. Tonkin and Ms. Volpe's ELA classes brought some extra life and a lot of knowledge to the Robert J. Kaiser Middle School with their Living Museum and Night at The Museum. Students chose a person to bring to life, dressed like the person and shared facts with staff, students, and community members. Attendees had the opportunity to speak with "Queen Elizabeth", "Selena", "Clara Barton", and "Dr. Seuss" among others.

The students were enthusiastic about giving the information and fun facts that they learned. It was a great opportunity to discover new information about popular historical figures!



This Board will strive to build authentic relationships rooted in trust, transparency and two-way communication with all constituents. We will actively seek avenues to partner with local organizations and agencies to increase our network of resources to improve and support life-long learning opportunities for our community.



COMMUNITY  
engagement



Eighth-grade students at the Robert J. Kaiser Middle School ventured out to Bear Mountain for a day of ice skating fun. Class Advisor Rachel Petrone has organized this trip for the last few years as a special

experience for the students before they move on to high school next year. There were lots of smiles and laughs as the students tried something new, slipped and slid, and ultimately made memories with their peers and teachers.



Students at the St. John Street UPK program took a stroll down to the Ethelbert B. Crawford Public Library. Once there, ECPL staff members "Ms. Brittany" and "Ms. Chelsea" read stories, led the tots in song, and guided the students in a craft to create tissue-paper leaves.

It was a great way to get the students excited about the library, and about reading. Ms. Brittany and Ms. Chelsea reminded the students about the many resources the library has to offer the community: books, games/toys, computers and programs, and invited the students to come back soon with their grown-ups!

The George L. Cooke Elementary School held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct. 10 to celebrate the official unveiling of



the school's Nature Path -- the path is an avenue to get Cooke students moving, learning and growing under an open sky. A labor of love made possible under the leadership of Cooke teachers Cathy McFadden and April Rutledge, and through the generosity of a host of organizations, dedicated staff, families and local businesses, including the Sullivan 180 Healthier Generation grant, including: the Rutledge and McFadden families, Baer Landscaping, Doug Rutledge, Jason Chevalier, Nick Mootz, Jason Sayers, the Town of Thompson Highway Department, BSA Troop 1101, Girl Scout Troop 00205, and a variety of area businesses and staff members.

Research shows that the benefits of outdoor learning are vast, citing an increase in focus, creativity, engagement, and problem-solving skills, to name a few. Research also shows that moving learning outside also fosters a connection with nature, while improving students' physical activity and mental health. The school has been emphasizing outdoor learning all year long with the help of the Nature Path.

Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School students packed the school's hallways and classrooms on Wednesday, Feb. 26 for Multi-Cultural Night. Spearheaded by KLR ENL Teacher Tianny Almanzar and District Translator Marta Mangual, and organized in conjunction with the school's Parent Engagement Committee and the Every Person Influences Children program (EPIC), the event celebrated



the many cultures that comprise the school community. Students were invited to create a poster project showcasing their culture, and the evening started off with families mingling among the bright displays. Attendees then moved on to the cafeteria, where they enjoyed a dinner of chicken and rice prepared by none other than Principal Vernoica Serrano, along with the food services staff. After the meal, families chose from activities such as read-alouds, crafts and postcard writing. The evening culminated with a festive performance from a group of student dancers, set to "Columbia, Mi Encanto" from the movie Bruno, and a traditional Mexican dance from the dance group Colores de mi Tierra.



2025 marked the first time that Lunar New Year was observed as a state holiday, per NYS guidelines. To learn more about this ancient cultural celebration, students in Ms. Furman's class at the Emma C. Chase Elementary School researched the holiday by reading books and watching videos of the vibrant festival. Afterwards, the students created their very own traditional craft in honor of the "Year of the Snake."



Nearly 30 local businesses, organizations and employers visited Monticello High School for the school's annual career fair. The participants represented a wide variety of career choices spanning different industries, including arts and communications; business and information management; engineering, technological and industrial services; health and natural resource sciences and human and family services.

Students moved from table to table, asking the representatives what a typical day looks like in their industry, and the qualifications needed to enter the field. In some cases, students were able to apply for internships or part-time work on site, or to leave their resumes with the representative for follow up.

"The career fair is a wonderful opportunity to get students excited for their future plans, and thinking about how they can achieve their goals," Principal Jennifer Gorr said. "We're so thankful to the many local community organizations who were just as enthusiastic to speak to our students, as our students were to speak to them. By coming here today, they helped showcase the wealth of opportunity here in Sullivan County."



This Board will foster an inclusive culture that sparks community pride, emphasizes kindness and respect and ensures that all students, staff and visitors are valued and supported in safe, secure, orderly and clean appropriately effective facilities.

## SCHOOL culture & climate

Students at the St. John Street preschool celebrated 100 days of learning and fun with a day filled with activities to help them reflect on what they've learned since September. The students also had plenty of opportunities to reinforce their counting and math skills with plenty of "100"-themed projects.



During Monticello High School's Senior Advisory Day, students kicked off the day-long event by sharing the wisdom they've accrued over the last four years. Each senior wrote a piece of advice to succeeding in high school, and then tied the advice to a key as a tangible "key to success." The keys will be distributed later to the incoming ninth-grade students so that they can receive from tried-and-true advice from those who have navigated high school before them.



Students at the Robert J. Kaiser Middle School can earn "Monti Bucks" this school year. Monti Bucks are a form of currency that students earn by embodying certain virtues. The school highlights a different virtue each month. The Monti Bucks can be traded in for small prizes, or entries into drawings, or other fun rewards. During the month of "kindness" Juan Reyes, Jr. was the grand prize winner of a brand-new bike, and he was speechless when he learned that he was the winner.



To honor the beloved children's book author and illustrator, George L. Cooke Elementary School's Literacy Committee hosted a special Mo Willems Day on Feb. 11.

Students and staff showed their love for his books by dressing up as their favorite Mo Willems characters. Plus, lunch featured hot dogs and chocolate chip cookies—a tasty tribute to *The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog!* and *The Duckling Gets a Cookie!*

It was a fun-filled day celebrating the joy of reading!



Fifth-grade students in Mrs. Unverzagt's class at the Emma C. Chase Elementary School have been reading to younger students in Mrs. Crofoot's class—a win, win initiative! The older students get to practice their reading and fluency skills, while the younger students benefit from building relationships and familiarity with their older peers.



The hallways at the Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School were reimagined into vibrant streets for the launch of Post Office: KLR Delivers! This innovative program empowers fifth-grade students to become postal workers, facilitating a unique opportunity for students and staff to connect through handwritten mail. Following a rigorous "hiring" process, complete with interviews and orientation, our young postal workers are now equipped to deliver mail and foster a sense of community. As students eagerly anticipate receiving mail each week, we celebrate this exciting initiative that inspires connection, creativity, and joy.



**Our leadership team aggressively pursues alternative funding opportunities such as state aid or grant opportunities to deliver district improvements while minimizing taxpayer impact.**



**See page 10 for updates on our 2024 capital improvement project**



## Coming soon: community pickleball and basketball courts

Thanks to a \$250,000 SAM grant from the office of Aileen Gunther, our community will soon have some new recreational options.

Construction of two new basketball courts and a pickleball court is underway at Somerville Field in the village of Monticello. These new spaces are expected to be completed in summer of 2025, and will be open for public use and enjoyment.



## Grant-funded Fitness Court now open

**Located near the tennis courts at Monticello High School**



The Monticello Central School District unveiled a new community Fitness Court over the summer, featuring equipment to facilitate cardio and strength-based workouts. Created with people aged 14 and over, and with all abilities in mind, the workouts are adaptable for all fitness levels, allowing participants to move at their own pace. The Fitness Court is open to the public from dawn to dusk, when not in use by students. Funding for the Fitness Court was made possible by: Sullivan 180, Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, Garnet Medical, WSUL Heart-a-thon, Sullivan County Legislative Discretionary Funding from Louis Alvarez, Nadia Rajs and former Legislators Ira Steingart and Alan Sorensen; MVP Health Care and the National Fitness Campaign.



## IP-DDS / IP-DD

*IP Dual Sided LCD With or Without Speakers*



## Improving school security with Smart School Bond Act

The final phase of the district's Smart School's Improvement Plan is underway, and once complete, our staff will have the ability to initiate a lockdown with the tap of a button, accelerating response time in an emergency situation.

In 2014, the Monticello Central School District became eligible to receive \$3,020,208 through the Smart Schools Bond Act (SSBA), part of New York State's \$2 billion investment in the modernization and improvement of educational technology and infrastructure.

As a condition of receiving these funds, each district was asked to create and submit a Smart Schools Investment Plan (SSIP) outlining how they planned to use their allocation to expand high-speed broadband access, purchase classroom technology, enhance school security, and/or construct or renovate pre-kindergarten facilities. After an intricate research and evaluation project, state approval process and public hearing, Monticello's plan was approved in 2019.

In Phase I of the SSIP, the district made significant upgrades to its security technology, including the addition of cameras, upgrades to our security hardware and the implementation of the Access Control system throughout the district, which controls building and room access.

Phase II of the SSIP is underway and expected to be completed by the end of the summer. In this phase, each classroom, hallway, office and entrance in the district will be outfitted with a LCD-display dual-sided clock and speaker that can be triggered in the event of a lockdown to simultaneously contact law enforcement, display warning text, and activate a strobe system – all with a single push of a button. In a catastrophic event, these systems save precious time, simultaneously alert all occupants of the building, and facilitate an organized response.

These systems have already been installed in the St. John Street preschool hallways and at the George L. Cooke Elementary School. Installation is underway at the Emma C. Chase School, and is expected to be completed at St. John Street classrooms, Robert J. Kaiser Middle School and Monticello High School by the end of the summer.



# 2024 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO BREAK GROUND THIS SUMMER

In May 2024, resident voters in the Monticello Central School District approved a capital improvement project to improve safety and security at the George L. Cooke and Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary Schools, replace the district's deteriorating athletics facilities, and make needed repairs and restorations at the St. John Street Community School and Monticello High School. Since the project's approval, the district and its architect team have been working diligently on the project, and the plan was approved by NYSED in the spring of 2025. Here are the latest updates:

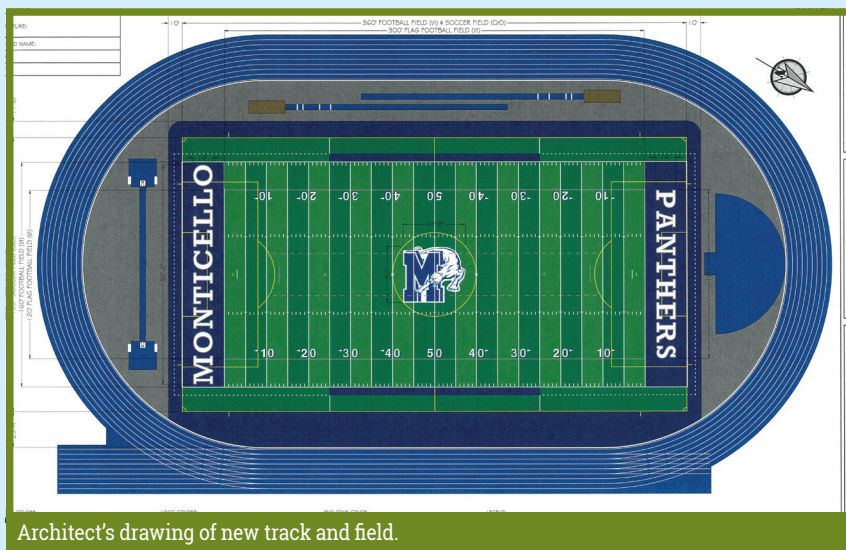
## Summer 2025

- Construction in the George L. Cooke Elementary School and Emma C. Chase Elementary School is scheduled to begin this summer. The original storefront windows will be replaced with reinforced, fire-resistant classroom doors. In addition, each classroom will receive new flooring, ceilings with energy-efficient LED lighting, updated sinks and cabinetry and new storage casework. These changes will reinforce the security of our buildings, decrease our energy costs, and provide updated spaces for our teachers to create a positive learning environment for our students.



The original "storefront" window designs at Monticello elementary schools.

- Track and field: Construction will begin on our new track and field this summer. During the construction process, our athletic teams who utilize the track and field will exclusively play at away games, as we will not be able to host home games during the process. We're excited to know that once our athletes return to the field, they'll be playing and practicing in a new, state-of-the-art athletics facility.



Architect's drawing of new track and field.

## Summer 2026

- Classroom renovations similar to the ones scheduled at Cooke and Chase during the summer of 2025 will take begin at the Kenneth L. Rutherford Elementary School in the summer of 2026. Renovations to the façade at the 22 St. John Street building, and Monticello High School Library windows are also scheduled to begin in summer 2026.



The façade renovations at 22 St. John Street are expected to take place in summer 2026



Our track will expand from six lanes to eight lanes, and our football/soccer field will be refitted with synthetic turf.



Patch repairs over the years have left our track and football/soccer field with uneven, worn-out surfaces, putting our athletes at a disadvantage when competing against athletes training in more optimal conditions.



## PROPOSITION 2: CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

Residents will see a second proposition on the ballot on May 20: the creation of a \$10 million capital reserve fund, funded by excess fund balance, that could help reduce the cost of future capital projects, facility improvements or emergency repairs.

### What is a capital reserve fund?

A capital reserve fund is essentially a savings account for school districts. It's set up to finance large-scale capital improvements, such as renovating buildings, replacing roofs, upgrading heating systems, or improving athletic facilities. Unlike the general fund, which covers day-to-day operational costs like salaries and classroom supplies, a capital reserve can only be used for specific projects that voters approve ahead of time—both when the fund is created and again when the money is spent.

Funds are gradually set aside over time, with no impact on the tax levy when the reserve is established. Because voters approve both the creation and the use of the funds, capital reserves offer a transparent and controlled way to plan for big expenses.

### How does this differ from other types of school funding?

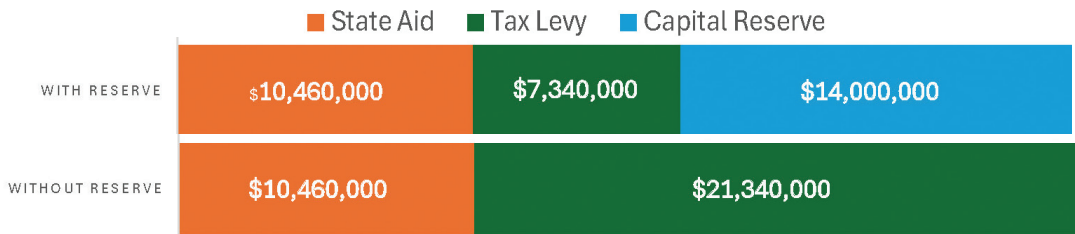
To understand how capital reserves fit into the broader picture, it's important to know the difference between the fund balance and the general fund. The general fund is the main operating budget for the district—it pays for everything from instruction to transportation to facility maintenance. The fund balance is any money left over at the end of a school year after all expenses have been paid. A portion of this surplus can be transferred into a capital reserve (if one exists).

Capital reserve funds give districts a way to responsibly use portions of the fund balance toward long-term projects to improve and maintain school facilities.

### Capital reserve fund was used to finance new athletics center, classroom updates and more

A \$14 million capital reserve fund was used to offset the cost of the \$31.8 million capital improvement project that voters approved in 2024. Another \$10,460,000 in state aid will be applied, and the remaining \$7,340,000 will be funded by the tax levy over the length of the capital project. Without a capital reserve fund, the tax levy would have funded the remaining \$21,340,000.

#### 2024 CAPITAL PROJECT WITH AND WITHOUT A CAPITAL RESERVE



Also on the budget: Capital Reserve Fund  
Responsible Planning. Real Savings. Community Control.

### ESTABLISHING A CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:

- **Uses Existing Fund Balance**
- **Saves Money:** Cuts down on borrowing and interest costs—protecting your tax dollars.
- **Plans Ahead:** Funds major repairs and upgrades without hurting classroom programs.
- **Puts You in Charge:** Every dollar spent needs voter approval, keeping decisions local.



### Can the district use the monies in the capital reserve fund to create new academic programming or add staff positions?

No. Capital reserve funds are strictly limited to capital expenditures, which typically include long-term, physical infrastructure improvements—like renovating buildings, replacing roofs, upgrading heating or ventilation systems, or enhancing athletic facilities. These funds cannot be used for operational costs, which include:

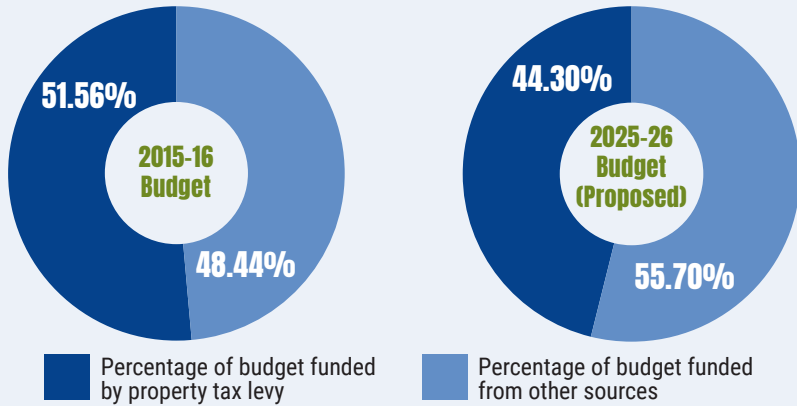
- Hiring or paying salaries for teachers, aides, or administrators
- Launching new academic programs or curriculum initiatives
- Purchasing consumable supplies or classroom materials
- Academic programming and staffing are considered recurring operational expenses, and must be funded through the general fund, which is part of the annual school budget that voters approve each year.

## GENERAL FUND VS. CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

CATEGORY	GENERAL FUND	CAPITAL RESERVE FUND
Purpose	Covers day-to-day operational expenses of the school district	Funds long-term capital improvements and major facility needs
Examples of Allowable Uses	Salaries, textbooks, utilities, transportation, classroom supplies	Roof replacement, HVAC upgrades, athletic facility renovations, building construction
Requires Voter Approval to Spend?	No (approved through annual budget vote)	Yes (to create and to spend)
Covers Recurring Costs?	Yes	No
Source of Funding	Primarily from annual tax levy, state aid, and other recurring revenues	Transfers from fund balance; no direct increase in taxes unless spent

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

### Taxpayer burden has decreased by 6.98% since 2015-16



The district has historically worked to progressively shrink the percentage of the budget funded by the taxpayers, while aggressively pursuing alternative revenue streams. In the 2015-16 school year, the tax levy funded 51.56% of the budget. In the proposed 2025-26 budget, the tax levy would fund 44.30% of the budget, a decrease of 7.06%.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

#### VOTE ONE FOR EACH SEAT:

Seat 1  
Roberto Bravo Colon  
OR  
Melinda Gwiozdowski

Seat 2  
Ashley Rielly

Seat 3  
Victoria LaRusso

Board of Education candidate statements are available on the budget webpage on the district's website [www.monticelloschools.net](http://www.monticelloschools.net)



### Voters will see two separate propositions on the ballot on May 20

**Proposition 1** asks voters to consider the proposed budget for the 2025-26 school year as outlined on p. 12-15 of this newsletter.

**Proposition 2** asks voters to consider the creation of a capital reserve fund from excess fund balance, as outlined on page 11.

These are two separate propositions, and the results of one proposition would not affect the results of the other.

#### This is the text that voters will see on the ballot on May 20:

☐ Yes ☐ No

#### PROPOSITION 1

Shall the budget of \$103,522,576, for the 2025-2026 school year be adopted and the requisite portion thereof in the amount of \$45,872,100, be raised by taxation on the taxable property of the Monticello Central School District?

☐ Yes ☐ No

#### PROPOSITION 2

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to establish a Capital Reserve Fund pursuant to Section 3651 of the New York State Education Law to be known as the Monticello Central School District 2025 Capital Reserve fund in an amount not to exceed \$10,000,000, with a probable term of ten years, for the purpose of financing, in whole or in part, the construction of additions to, and reconstruction of, School District buildings, site work, and acquisition of land, original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus, required for the

purposes for which such buildings are to be used, with such Capital Reserve Fund being from (i) year-end budget surplus funds known as unassigned fund balance, as available, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter for the term of the reserve fund, (ii) transfers of excess monies from Board of Education designated reserves, (iii) amounts from budgetary appropriations from time to time, and (iv) New York State Aid received and made available by the Board of Education from time to time, all as permitted by law?

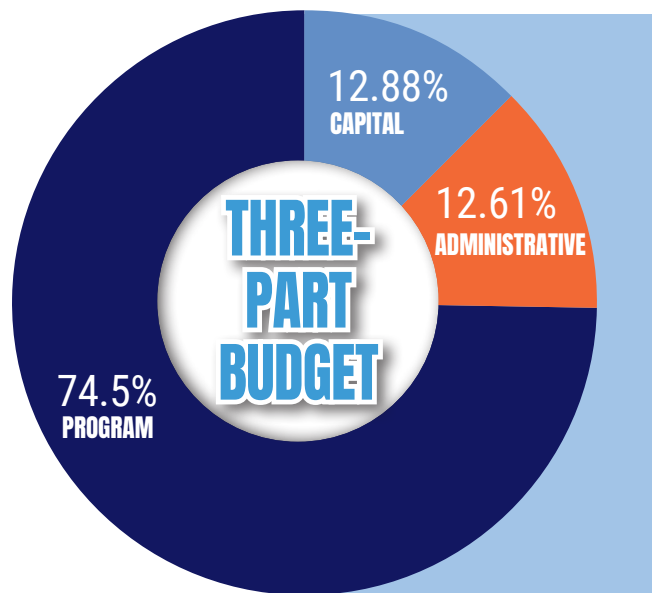


# 3-Part Budget Fiscal Year: 2025

State Function	Description	2025-26 Proposed Budget	2024-25 Adopted Budget
ADMINISTRATION			
1010	Board Of Education	\$60,000	\$59,000
1040	District Clerk	\$60,755	\$55,625
1060	District Meeting	\$47,640	\$42,640
1240	Chief School Administrator	\$343,950	\$334,741
1310	Business Administration	\$822,523	\$988,701
1320	Auditing	\$84,500	\$84,500
1330	Tax Collector	\$47,420	\$48,200
1380	Fiscal Agent Fee	\$20,000	\$20,000
1420	Legal	\$280,000	\$260,000
1430	Personnel	\$277,256	\$228,223
1460	Records Management Officer	\$15,000	\$20,000
1480	Public Information and Services	\$147,200	\$150,847
1670	Central Printing & Mailing	\$110,000	\$110,000
1910	Unallocated Insurance	\$442,000	\$284,500
1920	School Association Dues	\$15,000	\$15,000
1950	Assessments on School Property	\$30,000	\$30,000
1981	BOCES Administrative Costs	\$1,518,293	\$1,429,364
2010	Curriculum Development and Supervision	\$1,039,779	\$1,022,325
2020	Supervision-Regular School	\$3,832,258	\$3,852,148
2070	Inservice Training-Instruction	\$80,000	\$80,000
2110	Teaching-Regular School	\$293,000	\$188,100
9000	Employee Benefits	\$3,492,361	\$3,552,914
Total Administration		\$13,058,935	\$12,916,828
CAPITAL			
1620	Operation of Plant	\$3,993,068	\$3,971,803
1621	Maintenance of Plant	\$2,056,639	\$2,189,702
1930	Judgments and Claims	\$5,000	\$5,000
1964	Refund on Real Property Taxes	\$40,000	\$40,000
5510	District Transportation Services	\$700,000	\$600,000
9000	Employee Benefits	\$1,690,650	\$1,719,964
9711	Serial Bonds-School Construction	\$4,151,438	\$4,278,888
9731	Bond Antic Notes-School Construction	\$0	
9732	Bond Antic Notes-Bus Purchases	\$0	
9785	Install Purch Debt-State Aided Hardware	\$426,578	\$603,441
9788	Leases	\$172,865	\$157,828
9950	Transfer to Capital Fund	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total Capital		\$13,336,238	\$13,666,626

State Function	Description	2025-26 Proposed Budget	2024-25 Adopted Budget	
PROGRAM				
1420	Legal	\$2,000	\$2,000	
1910	Unallocated Insurance	\$55,000	\$55,000	
2070	Inservice Training-Instruction	\$115,500	\$134,500	
2110	Teaching-Regular School	\$22,407,732	\$22,303,872	
2250	Program For Students w/Disabilities-Med-Eligible	\$21,819,401	\$19,221,528	
2280	Occupational Education (Grades 9-12)	\$2,485,824	\$2,268,720	
2330	Teaching-Special Schools	\$374,000	\$380,500	
2610	School Library & AV	\$416,193	\$359,943	
2630	Computer Assisted Instruction	\$2,083,319	\$2,180,865	
2805	Attendance-Regular School	\$150,015	\$141,608	
2810	Guidance-Regular School	\$1,061,676	\$996,673	
2815	Health Services-Regular School	\$547,176	\$600,803	
2820	Psychological Services-Regular School	\$372,963	\$305,824	
2825	Social Work Services-Regular School	\$941,075	\$808,811	
2830	Pupil Personnel Services-Special Schools	\$202,130	\$314,535	
2850	Co-Curricular Activities-Regular School	\$274,700	\$257,000	
2855	Interscholastic Athletics-Regular School	\$900,994	\$843,457	
5510	District Transport Services-Med-Eligible	\$5,186,342	\$4,477,303	
5530	Garage Building	\$101,375	\$109,875	
8070	Census	\$28,035	\$27,040	
9000	Employee Benefits	\$17,426,953	\$17,729,115	
9901	Transfer to Special Aid Fund	\$175,000	\$175,000	
Total Program		\$77,127,403	\$73,693,972	
BUDGET COMPONENT SUMMARY				
	2025-26 Proposed Budget	% of Budget	2024-25 Adopted Budget	% of Budget
Administration	\$13,058,935	12.61%	\$12,916,828	12.88%
Capital	\$13,336,238	12.88%	\$13,666,626	13.70%
Program	\$77,127,403	74.50%	\$73,693,972	73.42%
Total	\$103,522,576	100.00%	\$100,277,426	100.00%
For more information about the 2025-26 proposed budget, please visit our website <a href="http://www.monticelloschools.net">www.monticelloschools.net</a>				





By law, school districts must divide their proposed budgets into three portions – administrative, capital and program – and compare them to the current year's amounts. Monticello's three-part budget breaks down as follows:

	Proposed 2025-26	Budgeted 2024-25
ADMINISTRATIVE Amount:	\$13,058,935	\$12,916,828

The administrative component includes all administrative salaries, benefits and office and program costs for directing and supervising all instructional activities of the district.

	Proposed 2025-26	Budgeted 2024-25
PROGRAM Amount:	\$77,127,403	\$73,693,972

The program component includes salaries and benefits for classroom teaching personnel, instructional materials, supplies and services, interscholastic sports, extracurricular programs and transportation.

	Proposed 2025-26	Budgeted 2024-25
CAPITAL Amount:	\$13,336,238	\$13,666,626

The capital component includes all costs for facility maintenance operations, including salaries and benefits of plant operations staff, supplies, utilities, capital expenditures, debt service and purchase of transportation vehicles. Contractual leases that were included in the program budget for installment purchases and leases are now included in the capital budget.

## REVENUES ► Where the money comes from

REVENUE	Proposed 2025-26	Budgeted 2024-25
Charges for Services	\$200,000	\$200,000
Other	\$3,875,000	\$4,143,011
Interest Income	\$500,000	\$300,000
Medicaid	\$300,000	\$250,000
State Aid	\$51,525,476	\$49,947,852
Fund Balance	\$1,250,000	\$726,915
Tax Levy	\$45,872,100	\$44,709,648
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$103,522,576</b>	<b>\$100,277,426</b>

## EXPENSES ► Where the money goes

EXPENSES	Proposed 2025-26	Budgeted 2024-25
Employee Salaries	\$43,238,701	\$41,971,612
Benefits	\$22,609,964	\$23,001,993
BOCES	\$17,486,470	\$15,760,048
Program Support	\$11,518,878	\$10,422,444
Equipment	\$1,161,937	\$935,297
Materials and Supplies	\$2,480,745	\$2,705,875
Debt Service	\$4,578,016	\$5,040,157
Transfer to Capital and Special Aid Funds	\$275,000	\$275,000
Lease of 60 Jefferson St. Admin Offices	\$172,865	\$165,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$103,522,576</b>	<b>\$100,277,426</b>

## Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF VOTERS REJECT THE PROPOSED 2025-26 SCHOOL BUDGET ON MAY 20?

Under New York State Education Law, if voters defeat their school district budget in May, a district has three options.

It can:

- ✓ Resubmit the same proposal for a revote;
- ✓ Submit a revised proposal for a revote; or
- ✓ Adopt a contingent budget.

If it resubmits a proposal and the proposal is rejected a second time, it must adopt a contingent budget.

According to state law, a contingent budget prevents the district from spending money on particular expenses, including community use of school facilities (unless all costs are reimbursed to the district); new equipment purchases, non-essential maintenance, capital expenditures (except in emergencies) and certain field trips and student supplies. Therefore, the district would need to remove \$1,265,932 worth of buses, equipment, training, supplies and materials, as well as unrepresented employee salary increases if it adopted a contingent budget.





## What are EQUALIZATION RATES and why are they used?

### A tale of two houses, two towns, one school district, and two tax bills

Town A and Town B are different towns within the same school district. The house in Town A and the house in Town B recently sold for the same amount. So, the two houses have the same market value and should pay the same amount in school taxes.

However, Town A and Town B use different assessment practices, which means that the houses have different assessed values – and assessed values are used in the computation of property tax bills. Therefore, for the houses in Town A and Town B to pay the same in taxes, the tax rates (per \$1,000 of assessed value) must be different for each town.

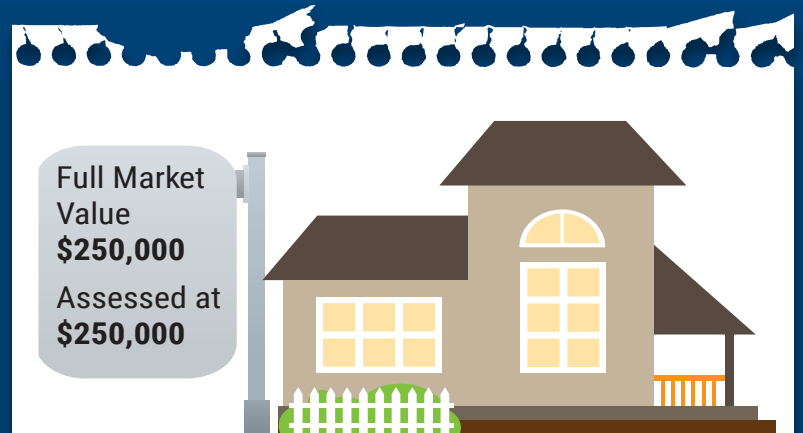
The process of equalization is used to determine these tax rates. Essentially, full market value serves as a common denominator, or equalizer, in the process of setting tax rates.

Equalization rates indicate the ratio of the assessed value to market value in the municipality. They are used in an effort to fairly apportion the share of taxes when a taxing jurisdiction, such as a school district, contains multiple municipalities. They are designed to ensure that owners of properties with similar full market values pay an equivalent amount of taxes.



### TAX BILL – HOUSE IN TOWN A

Full Market Value:	\$250,000
Equalization Rate:	74.00
Assessed Value:	\$185,000
Town Tax Rate:	\$27.03 per \$1,000
<b>Total Taxes Due:</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>



### TAX BILL – HOUSE IN TOWN B

Full Market Value:	\$250,000
Equalization Rate:	100.00
Assessed Value:	\$250,000
Town Tax Rate:	\$20.00 per \$1,000
<b>Total Taxes Due:</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

In this example, House A and House B pay an equivalent amount of taxes due to the different tax rates.

$$\text{Remember: Assessed value} \times \frac{\text{Tax Rate}}{1,000} = \text{Total Tax Bill}$$

In the example given, properties in Town A are assessed at 74 percent of full market value (an equalization rate of 74) and Town B properties are assessed at full market value – an equalization rate of 100.

School districts calculate the total full market value of all properties in each municipality. Equalization rates allow them to determine the share of the tax levy to be paid by each town, a necessary step to calculating tax rates for each town. The process is designed to:

- Fairly apportion the tax levy among the municipalities in a school district ; and
- Ensure that the amount of taxes paid by owners of similar properties in the district is similar – regardless of the town and its assessment practices.



**Board of Education**

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Adrianna Mayson-Greco, *Vice President*  
Wendy Galligan-Weiner  
Todd Grodin  
Jennifer Holmes  
Helen Jersey  
Victoria LaRusso  
Ashley Rielly  
Meghan Stalter

**Student Board Members**

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Alexandra Cushing (Alternate)

**District Administration**

**Superintendent of Schools**  
Matthew T. Evans, Ed.D.

**Assistant Superintendent for Business**  
Lisa Failla

**Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction**  
Theresa Carlin

**District Public Information Officer**  
Courtney Bonfante



**CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
60 Jefferson Street, Suite 3, Monticello, NY 12701

**BUDGET  
EDITION  
2025**

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**BUDGET EDITION 2025**

**MONTICELLO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT // BUDGET 2025-26 // VOLUME 11 // PAGE 16**

# School District Budget Notice

**VOTE!**

**May 20  
8 a.m.  
to 8 p.m.**

**Voting Locations:  
See page 1**

For more information  
about the 2025-26  
proposed budget,  
please visit our website  
[www.monticelloschools.net](http://www.monticelloschools.net)

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2024-25 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2025-26 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$100,277,436	\$103,522,576	\$102,256,644
Increase/Decrease for the 2025-26 School Year		\$3,245,140	\$1,979,208
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.24%	1.97%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.95%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$44,709,648	\$45,872,100	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$44,709,648	\$45,872,100	\$44,709,648
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$2,840,956	\$2,831,880	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$41,868,692	\$43,161,689	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$41,868,692	\$43,161,689	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$12,916,828	\$13,058,935	\$12,954,940
Program Component	\$73,693,972	\$77,127,403	\$76,875,466
Capital Component	\$12,926,626	\$13,336,238	\$12,426,238

According to state law, a contingent budget prevents the district from spending money on particular expenses, including community use of school facilities (unless all costs are reimbursed to the district); new equipment purchases, non-essential maintenance, capital expenditures (except in emergencies) and certain field trips and student supplies. If the district adopted a contingent budget it would need to remove \$1,265,932 worth of buses, equipment, training, supplies and materials, as well as unrepresented employee salary increases.

Description	Amount
buses	\$700,000
equipment	\$461,937
unrepresented employee salary increases	\$103,995

**Under the Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year**

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$385
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-26 by the qualified voters of the Monticello Central School District, Sullivan County, New York, will be held at Robert J. Kaiser Middle School, Dr. Duggan Community Center, Emma C. Chase Elementary School, Rock Hill Fire Department and Forestburgh Town Hall in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm, prevailing time in the Robert J. Kaiser Middle School, Dr. Duggan Community Center, Emma C. Chase Elementary School, Rock Hill Fire Department and Forestburgh Town Hall at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

<sup>1</sup> The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.