



# CAPITAL education



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2019 BUDGET EDITION

Where do I vote?  
See page 4 for a list



## Proposed 2019-20 budget maintains programs

Albany voters will consider a \$260.4 million City School District of Albany budget proposal when they go to the polls Tuesday, May 21.

The proposed 2019-20 budget includes a 1.99% tax-levy increase. It's the sixth consecutive year the district has proposed a tax-levy increase of less than 2%. If voters approve the plan, the district's average tax-levy increase over that period will be 0.86%.

The plan continues to support academic, social-emotional and extracurricular programs for the district's nearly 9,400 students. It includes new positions that would expand opportunities for students, address growing enrollment and continue to invest in the district's Academic Plan.

The Board of Education approved the proposal unanimously April 4.

The proposal maintains full-day prekindergarten, music instrument instruction at all schools beginning in third grade, middle and high school foreign

language programs, and Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and University in the High School classes at Albany High School.

The proposal also provides support for culturally relevant teaching and learning practices, and social-emotional supports such as restorative practices and trauma-informed care.

In addition, the proposal continues to grow Community Schools initiatives, which provide services to students and families during and beyond the regular school day.

The district's 2019-20 state aid includes about \$4.5 million in Community Schools funding, an increase of about \$600,000 from the current year.

Those funds will continue to support Community Schools models at six schools and also expand to add Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence.

*(continued on page 3)*

**SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE**  
Tuesday, May 21 • 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

### Two changed voting locations

If you voted at Bethany Reformed Church or Mater Christi School in the past, your voting location has changed. You now will vote in the McAuley Building at Maria College, 308 South Manning Blvd.

If you voted at Albany High School in the past, your voting location also has changed. You now will vote at Abrookin Career and Technical Center, 99 Kent St.

### No tax impact for May 21 facilities vote

Following a three-year planning process with extensive community involvement, voters will have the opportunity May 21 to consider a facilities package that includes a proposal for a new permanent middle school at North Albany Academy. **The proposal would have no tax impact.**

Proposition #2 would renovate and expand North Albany to create a 650-student middle school that would open for the 2023-24 school year. The facilities referendum also would expand Arbor Hill Elementary School and support a five-year facilities plan with 87 projects at 18 buildings.

All of the work would be done with no additional taxes.

The total cost would be \$45.6 million. About two-thirds (\$30.6 million) would be paid for through state building aid. The remainder (\$15 million) would come from the district's Capital Reserve Fund, a savings account for long-term building projects such as these.

### Middle school proposal

The Board of Education voted last November to repurpose North Albany as a third middle school, along with Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School and William S. Hackett Middle School.

The district does not have enough space to educate all students in grades 6-8 in a middle school setting, leading to inequities in students' opportunities. There are currently about 250 sixth-graders in district elementary schools.

Proposition #2 would allow the district to operate three middle schools with room to serve all students in grades 6-8 in similar settings.

The schools would be enrolled through a new district-wide feeder pattern that will be determined through an open and inclusive community process that will begin this summer.

The North Albany project would cost about \$28.5 million, with no impact on taxes.

Proposition #2 also would expand Arbor Hill Elementary to add three classrooms and additional upgrades since the district will have 11 elementary schools instead of the current 12 following the repurposing of North Albany.

The Arbor Hill project would cost about \$3.4 million, with no impact on taxes.

*(continued on page 2)*

## 2019-20 budget proposal at a glance

**Total** – \$260.4 million

**Tax-levy increase** – 1.99%

- The sixth consecutive year the proposed increase has been less than 2%
- The average proposed increase over that time has been 0.86%

**Voting day**

- Tuesday, May 21; polls open 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

**What the budget supports**

- Full-day prekindergarten (1,079 spots) in all 12 elementary schools and at 18 community locations
- Three magnet elementary schools
- The bilingual Dual Language Program at Delaware Community School
- STEM/STEAM-focused initiatives at all grade levels
- Band, chorus and orchestra starting in third grade
- 60 athletic teams serving more than 1,100 students in grades 7-12
- Community Schools initiatives at seven schools: Arbor Hill, O'Neal Middle School, Giffen, Schuyler, Sheridan Prep, TOAST and Tony Clement. Community Schools provide academic, health and social services to students and families before, during and after the typical school day.
- Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and University in the High School courses at Albany High

- AVID college- and career-readiness programs at Albany High and each middle school
- Career and technical education pathways at Albany High's Abrookin Career and Technical Center
- Albany International Center, an optional program for refugee and immigrant students in grades 6-12
- Professional development aligned with our Vision, Mission and Goals (focus on equity)
- Culturally relevant teaching and learning practices
- Restorative practices

**What's new in the budget**

- Expanded science opportunities at all middle schools
- 0.5 math coach additions at Giffen, Sheridan Prep
- 0.5 instructional coach/social-emotional support at Clement
- 0.5 Dual Language coordinator/Spanish AIS
- 1 Special Education teacher
- 2 Special Education teaching assistants
- 9 support staff positions (maintenance at Albany High, Delaware and Montessori; hall monitors at Albany High and Pine Hills)
- 2 secondary instructional supervisors (science/STEM and social studies/world languages)
- 1 school improvement manager supporting Giffen, Sheridan Prep
- 1 system administrator in the Office of Assessment, Accountability and Technology Innovation

# Your tax bill: making sense of the numbers

## Q: How will the proposed 2019-20 budget affect my taxes?

**A:** The City School District of Albany is proposing to increase its tax levy by 1.99% for 2019-20. However, your overall tax bill may change by a different percentage:

- If the value of your property changed;
- If your STAR reimbursement changed; or
- If the proportion changes for school taxes paid by homeowners.

## Q: How are my final school tax bill and tax rate set?

**A:** Your school tax bill and tax rate are determined by combining four factors, three of which are outside the district's control.

**1. School tax levy:** The total amount of money a school district needs to collect from property owners each year – \$117.8 million in the 2019-20 proposed budget. There is a 1.99% increase proposed for 2019-20. The proposed increase is below the district's 2019-20 tax "cap" of 2.87%.

**2. The state School Tax Relief Program, or STAR:** Partial school tax exemptions for owner-occupied homes. Basic STAR savings next year will be \$650. Enhanced STAR savings for senior citizens will be \$1,370.

Also, a recent change in state law requires homeowners with incomes of more than \$250,000 to receive STAR credit in a rebate check rather than a school tax deduction. Please notify the city assessor to make this change.

*(Please note that the estimates provided in the table below include only these first two factors. The following additional factors are not yet available and are determined before the Board of Education sets the tax rates in August.)*

**3. Property assessments:** Estimates of the value of how much a property would sell for under normal conditions. This information is determined by the City of Albany.

**4. Homestead vs. non-homestead proportion:** Each summer, the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services finalizes the percentages of local taxes to be paid by homeowners and business owners. This is the final factor in determining the school tax rate.

Once all factors are set, the final tax rate determines how much of the total tax levy each property owner pays.

Estimated school tax bill for a typical taxpayer whose home is valued at \$150,000*			
School tax	2018-19	2019-20	Estimated change*
Without STAR exemption	\$3,289	\$3,355	\$66
With Basic STAR	\$2,639	\$2,705	\$66
With Enhanced STAR for seniors	\$1,919	\$1,985	\$66

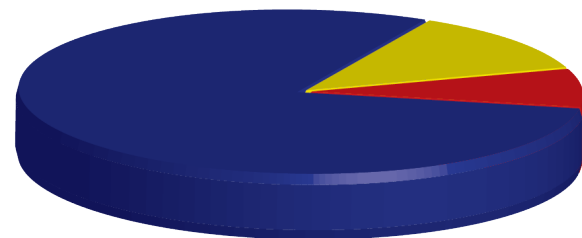
\* The final tax rate is set in August after the City of Albany finalizes its tax assessments and those assessments are reviewed by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services.

## Estimated revenue



- Federal Aid 0.77%
- Fund Balance 1.84%
- Local Revenue 6.77%
- State Building Aid 4.88%
- Other State Aid 40.30%
- Use of Reserves 0.19%
- Property Tax 45.25%

## Estimated expenditures



- Capital 12.28%
- Administrative 7.86%
- Program 79.86%

## Facilities *(continued from page 1)*

### Five-year facilities plan

The district operates 21 total buildings that serve more than 11,000 students and staff each day during the school year.

Proposition #2 includes a five-year plan with 87 projects at 18 buildings. The total cost of that work would be \$13.7 million, with no impact on taxes.

Visit the 2019-20 Budget News section at [albanyschools.org](http://albanyschools.org) for a full list of projects included in the five-year plan.

Proposition #2 will require 60% voter approval, per State Education Department regulations, because the proposal would put the district beyond its debt limit in three years during a 30-year period.

New York requires a smaller debt-limit threshold for the state's 57 small-city school districts such as Albany (5% of total taxable property value), and also requires small-city districts to include estimated state aid when calculating the debt.

The state allows the 612 non-city school districts (suburban and rural districts, in most cases) a debt limit equal to 10% of total taxable property value, and allows those districts to exclude estimated state aid.

If the 10% threshold applied in Albany, or if Albany was allowed to exclude estimated state aid like the significant majority of school districts statewide, Proposition #2 would not put the district beyond the limit.



Capital Education is published by the City School District of Albany.

Please direct comments about the newsletter, story ideas and questions to Ron Lesko at (518) 475-6065 or [rlesko@albany.k12.ny.us](mailto:rlesko@albany.k12.ny.us), or Lisa Angerame at (518) 475-6066 or [langerame@albany.k12.ny.us](mailto:langerame@albany.k12.ny.us).

City School District of Albany  
1 Academy Park  
Albany, New York 12207

## Estimated revenue, or where the money will come from

	2018-19	2019-20	\$ Change
Federal Aid	\$1,170,000	\$2,000,000	\$830,000
Fund Balance	\$4,800,000	\$4,786,637	-\$13,363
Local Revenue	\$15,730,000	\$17,619,500	\$1,889,500
State Building Aid	\$10,550,042	\$12,700,000	\$2,149,958
Other State Aid	\$100,971,569	\$104,935,896	\$3,964,327
Use of Reserves	\$711,567	\$500,000	-\$211,567
Property Tax Levy	\$115,514,377	\$117,813,113	\$2,298,736
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$249,447,555</b>	<b>\$260,355,146</b>	<b>\$10,907,591</b>

## Proposed expenditures, or where the money will be spent

	2018-19 adopted	2019-20 proposed	\$ Change
<b>Program Budget</b>	<b>\$200,416,974</b>	<b>\$207,921,814</b>	<b>\$7,504,840</b>
Instruction	\$153,998,054	\$160,335,974	\$6,337,920
Charter School Payments	\$35,955,974	\$36,620,945	\$664,971
Pupil Transportation	\$9,338,515	\$9,802,952	\$464,437
Athletics	\$1,124,431	\$1,161,943	\$37,512
<b>Capital Budget</b>	<b>\$28,832,154</b>	<b>\$31,966,547</b>	<b>\$3,134,393</b>
Debt payments and borrowings	\$15,143,668	\$17,349,704	\$2,206,036
Building Rentals	\$168,305	\$170,111	\$1,806
Operations/Maintenance/Capital	\$9,850,181	\$10,711,732	\$861,551
Utilities	\$2,670,000	\$2,735,000	\$65,000
Tax Refunds and Judgments	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0
<b>Administrative Budget</b>	<b>\$20,198,427</b>	<b>\$20,466,785</b>	<b>\$268,358</b>
School Supervision	\$18,033,022	\$18,250,236	\$217,214
Property and Liability Insurance	\$612,500	\$633,800	\$21,300
Printing, Mailing and Data Processing	\$1,240,437	\$1,257,049	\$16,612
Legal and Other Services	\$312,468	\$325,700	\$13,232
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$249,447,555</b>	<b>\$260,355,146</b>	<b>\$10,907,591</b>

# What voters will see on the May 21 ballot

Albany residents will be asked to consider two propositions and vote for two Board of Education members Tuesday, May 21.

The first proposition asks voters to consider the proposed \$260.4 million school budget for 2019-20. Here's what will appear on the ballot:

## Proposition #1

Shall the resolution adopted by the Board of Education on April 4, 2019 authorizing the City School District of Albany to expend the sum in the amount of \$260,355,146.00 during the 2019-2020 school year, and to levy a tax therefore be approved?

YES  NO

The second proposal asks voters to consider a facilities proposal that would have no additional tax impact. The proposal would allow the district to execute a five-year facilities plan with 87 projects at 18 buildings, and expand and renovate North Albany Academy to create a 650-student middle school. Please see page 1 to learn more about Proposition #2.

## Proposition #2

Shall the bond resolution adopted by the Board of Education on April 4, 2019 which authorized: (1) the purchase from the Albany Housing Authority and the Capital District YMCA of approximately 2.4 acres of land and the building, fixtures and other improvements located thereon (the "YMCA Facility"), the construction of additions to and the reconstruction of various District buildings and facilities, including site work thereat, the acquisition of original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus required for the purpose for which such buildings and facilities are to be used, and the payment of the costs incidental thereto, at a maximum aggregate cost of \$45,656,000 (including \$2,500,000 for the purchase of the YMCA Facility); (2) expenditure of such sum for such purposes, including the expenditure of \$7,644,000 from the 2013 Capital Reserve Fund and \$7,390,900 from the 2018 Capital Reserve Fund; (3) levy of the necessary tax therefor (including the levy of a tax to pay the interest on obligations when due), to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education taking into account state aid and the amount expended from the Capital Reserve Funds; (4) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, issuance of bonds and notes of the District in the principal amount not to exceed \$30,621,100; and (5) issuance of obligations in excess of the constitutional debt limitation applicable to the District in accordance with the provisions of Section 4 of Article VIII of the New York State Constitution and paragraph c of Section 104 of the Local Finance Law, be approved?

YES  NO

## School board elections

Elections to fill two of the seven seats on the City School District of Albany Board of Education will be held May 21. Both seats carry four-year terms that begin July 1 and end June 30, 2023.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed legislation in 2017 to shift Albany's board elections to the third Tuesday in May – the same time as the school budget vote. That's also when nearly all other school districts in the state hold board elections.

Before that, Albany's board elections were held in November in conjunction with the general election.

Board President Anne Savage and board member Damarise Alexander-Mann are running for re-election this year. Savage was elected in 2014 and is completing her first term. Alexander-Mann was elected in 2018 to fill a vacancy.

When *Capital Education* went to press in late April, no other candidates had submitted petitions to run for school board. The deadline was May 1. Please visit the 2019-20 Budget News section at [albanychools.org](http://albanychools.org) for any updates.

## Library vote information

Residents also will be asked to vote for two seats on the Albany Public Library Board of Trustees. There will be no vote on the library's annual budget, since there is no tax-levy increase proposed. For more information about the library trustee vote, call Stephanie Simon at (518) 427-4344.

## A 'look' at the budget

Below are snapshots of just four of the many programs that the budget supports each year. Learn more about the 2019-20 budget proposal on page 1.



Literacy



STEM



Music



Pre-K

## Budget (continued from page 1)

Overall, the budget proposal is supported by a total increase of about \$4.3 million in state Foundation Aid, as well as investments of about \$5.3 million from the district's fund balance and reserves.

State aid would contribute about 45.2% of the district's total revenue, or \$117.6 million.

About 45.3% – \$117.8 million – would come from local property taxes. That continues to reduce the district's reliance on local property taxes, which accounted for 53% of total revenue in 2014-15.

The district's remaining revenue would come from a variety of other sources (*learn more on page 2*).

The May 21 ballot also will include a facilities referendum that would allow the district to provide upkeep and maintenance at 18 buildings, and expand and renovate North Albany Academy to create a new permanent 650-student middle school. Proposition #2 would have no additional impact on taxes (*see related story on page 1*).

In addition, residents will have the opportunity to vote for two seats on the Board of Education (*learn more at left*).

Please visit the 2019-20 Budget News section at [albanychools.org](http://albanychools.org) for more information. You also can call (518) 475-6065 to schedule a presentation for your group before the May 21 vote.

# By the numbers

**0** Snow days used during the 2018-19 school year

**0.86** Average proposed tax-levy increase over the past six years in the City School District of Albany (*less than 1%*)

**1** Place Albany High sophomore Danvass Gekonge earned in his section at the 2019 New York State Scholastic Chess Championships

**1.99** Percent tax-levy increase in the proposed 2019-20 budget

**5** Albany High JROTC cadets attending American Legion Empire Boys State this summer (*The most ever from any school in Albany County!*)

**6** Years in a row the proposed tax-levy increase has been less than 2%

**9** State ranking for the Albany High girls' basketball team last winter

**10** Students in grades 4-7 who won medals at the 2019 Joseph Henry Science Fair

**11** State ranking for the Albany High boys' soccer team last fall

**20** Date in July for the district's annual Summer Celebration, to be held this year in Lincoln Park

**50** Languages spoken by district students

**60** Sports teams for student in grades 7-12

**685** Students play an instrument in a school orchestra

**735** Students made third-quarter honor roll at Albany High

**1,079** Full-day prekindergarten spots for 3- and 4-year-olds in 2019-20

**1,500** Fathers and father-figures who turned out to support their children's education during Dads Take Your Child to School Day last September

**1,594** People following the district on Twitter (*Join them at [twitter.com/albanychools](https://twitter.com/albanychools)*)

**6,006** People signed up for School News Notifier (*Sign up at [albanychools.org/SNN](http://albanychools.org/SNN)*)

**6,691** People following the district on Facebook (*Join them at [facebook.com/albanychools](https://facebook.com/albanychools)*)

**120,000**

Square feet in Albany High's new academic building, which will be ready in January 2020

**381,710** School breakfasts served since September

**(518) 475-6065**

Phone number to call to schedule a budget presentation for your organization before the May 21 vote

## Board of Education

**Anne Savage**  
President

**Vickie Smith**  
Vice President

**Jennifer Lange**  
Secretary

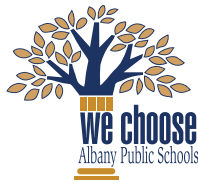
**Damarise Alexander-Mann**

**Sridar Chittur, Ph.D.**

**Ellen Krejci**

**Tabetha Wilson**

**Kaweeda G. Adams**  
Superintendent



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Albany, NY 12207

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# Remember to VOTE Tuesday, May 21

Polls open 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

## Voting locations

Find your voting location below, or visit the searchable online directory in the 2019-20 Budget News section at [albanschools.org](http://albanschools.org). If you have additional questions, please call (518) 475-6015.

Please note: If you voted at Bethany Reformed Church or Mater Christi School in the past, your new voting location is the McAuley Building at Maria College, 308 South Manning Blvd. If you voted at Albany High School in the past, your new voting location is Abrookin Career and Technical Center, 99 Kent St.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Ward, Districts 1-10</b> City Parks and Recreation Building 7 Hoffman Ave.	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 5-9</b> Albany School of Humanities (ASH) 108 Whitehall Road
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Ward, Districts 1-10</b> Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl St.	<b>9<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-9</b> New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Ave.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Ward, Districts 1-10</b> Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Ave.	<b>10<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-9</b> Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-6</b> North Albany Academy 570 North Pearl St.	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-10</b> <b>(new voting location)</b> Abrookin Career and Technical Center 99 Kent St.
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-7</b> Arbor Hill/West Hill Library 148 Henry Johnson Blvd.	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-3</b> Teresian House 200 Washington Ave. Extension
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-8</b> William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 4-9</b> Montessori Magnet School 45 Tremont St.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-5</b> Delaware Community School 43 Bertha St.	<b>13<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-7</b> Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 6-8</b> William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	<b>14<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-9</b> <b>(new voting location)</b> Maria College, McAuley Building 308 South Manning Blvd.
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-4</b> <b>(new voting location)</b> Maria College, McAuley Building 308 South Manning Blvd.	<b>15<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-7</b> Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Ave.

## Voting requirements

To vote on the City School District of Albany's proposed 2019-20 budget, you must be:

- Registered to vote with the Albany County Board of Elections by Monday, May 6;
- At least 18 years old; and
- A citizen of the United States for at least 30 days before the vote.

For more information, please contact Sierra Sturdivant, clerk of the Board of Education, at (518) 475-6015.

## Absentee ballots

The City School District of Albany automatically sends absentee ballots to people the Albany County Board of Elections designates as having a permanent disability.

Others who want to vote with an absentee ballot because of illness, hospitalization, vacation, studies, business or incarceration must apply for the absentee ballot.

You can call (518) 475-6015 to have an application mailed to you, or you can download one from the 2019-20 Budget News section at [albanschools.org](http://albanschools.org). You also can pick up an application from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday at the board clerk's office at Academy Park on Elk Street.

If you want the absentee ballot mailed to your home, you must mail the completed application to the district clerk seven days before the vote – by Tuesday, May 14. If you want to pick up your ballot at the district office, you must have your completed application to the board clerk by 4 p.m. the day before the budget vote – Monday, May 20, at which time you will complete your vote.

All absentee ballots must be returned to the district clerk by 5 p.m. the day of the school budget vote – **Tuesday, May 21**.

## What happens if the budget is not approved?

State law gives the Board of Education three alternatives if voters do not approve the proposed budget on Tuesday, May 21:

- Put the same budget up for another vote;
- Present a revised budget for voter consideration; or
- Adopt a contingency budget.

If the board presents a revised budget and it is turned down, a contingency budget must be adopted.

For 2019-20, a contingency budget would be \$258,056,410 and would hold the tax levy to its current level as required by state law. In addition, a contingency budget requires cuts to specific areas; the district would need to eliminate about \$2,298,736 from the proposed 2019-20 budget to meet those contingency requirements.

The state closely regulates any district operating under a contingency budget, prohibiting spending on student supplies, equipment and certain raises, to name a few items. Also, community groups have to pay to use school buildings during a contingency budget.

This would mean that, in addition to the prohibited spending noted above, the district would have to consider cuts to its staffing and programs to meet the new contingency requirements.