

# Capital Education

Budget 2024

albanyschools.org

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## SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE & BOARD ELECTION

POLLS OPEN 7 A.M.-9 P.M.



## No tax-levy increase in budget plan for second year in a row

The City School District of Albany's budget proposal includes no tax-levy increase for the second year in a row while continuing to support all current programs and staffing, and also making additional investments to support students.

The \$326.2 million proposal that voters will consider on May 21 includes a \$7.1 million increase in Foundation Aid – the main state aid source that school districts use to support programs and services for students.

The proposal also is supported by \$10.3 million from the district's reserves and fund balance in the ongoing efforts of the district and Board of Education to provide programs and services that students need and deserve while also minimizing the impact on taxpayers.

It is the fourth time in the last nine years that the district has proposed no increase in the tax levy. The district's average tax-levy increase in that period of time has been less than eight-tenths of a percent.

"Maintaining our fiscal responsibility to our entire community while also making sure that we are fulfilling our promise to provide equitable opportunities for every student to reach their potential is a fundamental obligation to which our board and our district are firmly committed," said Board President Vickie Smith.

"We know that many families and residents in our city continue to face a variety of economic challenges, and

we believe this budget proposal once again balances those factors while focusing on success for every child."

The May 21 ballot also will include three additional school-related propositions, none of which would have any additional impact on taxes (see related story at right).

There is one board seat up for election this year as well. Board member Hassan Elminyawi is seeking re-election (at press time, no additional candidates had indicated an intention to run in advance of the May 1 filing deadline; see page 4 for details).

The district also anticipates paying approximately \$40.3 million in tuition reimbursements to charter schools in 2024-25.

For more information about the budget proposal and related topics, visit [albanyschools.org/budget](http://albanyschools.org/budget).

### New staffing proposed

In addition to maintaining all of the district's current programs and services, the budget also proposes 25.6 new positions for the 2024-25 school year.

That includes 6.6 new positions at North Albany Middle School to support the final year of the three-year phase-in of the district's middle school enrollment pattern. It also continues the phased expansion of the Dual Language Program to a two-deep program with the addition of a second third-grade classroom.

Additional positions in the budget proposal are five new special education teachers, two new school counselors at Albany High School, three hall monitors, three clerical positions (two at Albany High School and one bilingual staff position in the Central Registration office), and new positions in communications, human resources and maintenance (see page 2 for more details).

"By carefully managing our resources and maintaining a multi-year framework for our fiscal and programmatic planning, we have been able to propose strategic investments in new staffing that will continue to support our academic and social-emotional goals," Superintendent Joseph Hochreiter said.

"Providing all of our students with a diverse range of opportunities across all grade levels is a top priority for us, and we believe this budget proposal would allow us to continue on that path in 2024-25."

### Early voting by mail new this year

Albany voters will have a new and convenient option for casting ballots in this year's school budget vote and board election – early voting by mail.

Early voting by mail will work much the same way that absentee voting traditionally has.

(Continued on page 2)

## No tax impact for three propositions

Voters will be asked to consider three school-related ballot propositions in addition to this year's budget proposal and Board of Education election. **None of these three propositions would have any additional impact on taxes.**

### Proposition 2

This would allow the City School District of Albany to create a Capital Reserve Fund for future facilities improvement and other related needs. Creating a Capital Reserve Fund requires voter approval. All future deposits to the fund would require Board of Education approval, and all withdrawals would require voter approval. The highest amount that could be set aside in this fund would be \$20 million.

### Proposition 3

This would allow the district to purchase two 10-passenger vehicles to help with student transportation needs such as transportation between buildings during the school day and athletic events. The maximum total cost for these two vehicles would be \$140,000. The purchase of these vehicles would be paid for through the general fund if voters also approve the 2024-25 budget proposal.

### Proposition 4

The district is proposing to buy a parking lot on Spruce Street near Academy Park for a cost not to exceed \$170,000. The district currently leases this lot for \$21,600 annually for employees working at the district headquarters building. The cost of the proposed purchase would come from the district's operating fund balance. The purchase would pay for itself in eight years through the annual savings in lease payments.



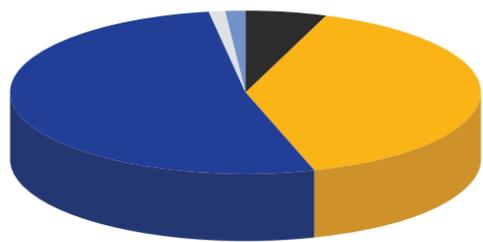
# 2024-25 BUDGET AT A GLANCE

**\$326.2 million  
proposed total**

**Zero tax-levy  
increase**

- Second year in a row, and the fourth time in the last nine years there has been no increase proposed
- Average increase in that time – 0.79%

## ESTIMATED REVENUE



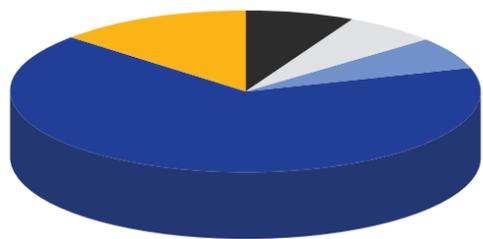
Where the money **would** come from:

State.....	52.94%
Property tax.....	37.50%
Local - Other than property tax.....	5.43%
Other.....	3.18%
Federal.....	0.95%

### REVENUE ▼

	2023-24	2024-25	\$ CHANGE
<b>State</b>	\$160,254,456	\$172,728,014	\$12,473,558
<b>Property tax</b>	\$122,351,302	\$122,351,302	\$0
<b>Local - other than property tax</b>	\$17,510,443	\$17,710,443	\$200,000
<b>Other</b>	\$4,052,257	\$10,354,530	\$6,302,273
<b>Federal</b>	\$3,100,000	\$3,100,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$307,268,458</b>	<b>\$326,244,289</b>	<b>\$18,975,831</b>

## PROPOSED EXPENDITURES



Where the money **would** be spent:

Program including transportation.....	67.30%
Charter school tuition.....	12.39%
Administrative/general support.....	7.65%
Capital/debt service.....	6.23%
Maintenance & operations.....	6.43%

### EXPENDITURES ▼

	2023-24 (ADOPTED)	2024-25 (PROPOSED)	\$ CHANGE
<b>Program including transportation</b>	\$204,111,259	\$219,552,478	\$15,441,219
<b>Charter school tuition</b>	\$40,425,000	\$40,425,000	\$0
<b>Administrative/general support</b>	\$23,428,063	\$24,958,897	\$1,530,834
<b>Capital/debt service</b>	\$19,811,746	\$20,314,074	\$502,328
<b>Maintenance &amp; operations</b>	\$19,492,390	\$20,993,840	\$1,501,450
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$307,268,458</b>	<b>\$326,244,289</b>	<b>\$18,975,831</b>

## What the budget supports

- Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and University in the High School courses at Albany High
- Career and technical education (CTE) pathways at Albany High
- Social-emotional and mental health supports at all grade levels
- Athletic teams and intramurals for students in grades 7-12, including two unified teams in partnership with Special Olympics New York
- STEM enrichment programming at all levels
- Four themed magnet elementary schools, including an expanded bilingual Dual Language Program
- Band, chorus and orchestra starting in third grade
- Albany Marching Falcons and indoor percussion ensembles
- Full-day prekindergarten at 12 elementary schools and 10 community locations
- Community Schools initiatives at eight schools: Arbor Hill, Giffen, Myers, North Albany, Roots, Sheridan Prep, TOAST and Tony Clement
- Albany International Center (K-12)
- Tony Clement Center for Education (grades 7-12)

## What's new in the budget

- 6.6 teaching positions at North Albany Middle School to support the third and final year of phase-in for our middle school feeder pattern
- 5 special education teachers
- 1 teacher to support continued expansion of the Dual Language Program to two-deep (adding a second section of third grade for 2024-25)
- 2 additional school counselors at Albany High School
- 3 hall monitors
- 3 clerical staff (2 Albany High, 1 bilingual staff at Central Registration)
- 1 maintenance staff
- 1 human resources staff (recruitment and diversity)
- 1 communications staff (supporting Albany High and Athletics)
- 1 music teacher on special assignment (TOSA)
- 0.5 dance teacher at Albany High
- 0.5 math coach at Delaware Community School
- Support for mandated increases in homebound instruction

## Budget proposal *(continued from page 1)*

The main change for this year is that the vote-by-mail option now is available to everyone in addition to the absentee option.

The district will continue to automatically send absentee ballots to people the Albany County Board of Elections designates as having a permanent disability or are in the military.

You can download an absentee or vote-by-mail application at [albanyschools.org/vote](http://albanyschools.org/vote), or you can pick up an application at any district building or Albany Public Library branch. You also can call (518) 475-6015 and ask to have one mailed to you *(see page 4 for details)*.



# How the proposed budget will affect school taxes

The City School District of Albany is proposing no increase in the tax levy this year for the second year in a row. That means that the total amount of property taxes that the district will collect will be the same as it was in both 2022 and 2023. However, despite the fact that the tax levy will be the same again this year, your tax bill likely will be different this year for three reasons, all of which are outside the district's control:

- 1. Change to the homestead "Adjusted Base Proportions:"** The City of Albany sets this, which splits the levy into two parts: homestead (paid by homeowners) and non-homestead (paid by commercial property owners). In January, the city increased the portion of the levy paid by homeowners by 2.94% and decreased the commercial portion by the corresponding amount. If nothing else had changed, each homeowner's tax bill would be up by 2.94% this year over last.
- 2. New assessments:** The City of Albany also recently reassessed all properties, so almost every property has a different assessed value this year than it did last year. That can result in an increase or a decrease to your taxes depending on whether your property's assessed value increased more or less than the average

(the average assessment increase city-wide is 62.5%). For more information about the city's reassessment, visit the City of Albany website: [albanyny.gov/207/Assessment](http://albanyny.gov/207/Assessment)

- 3. Reduction in School Tax Relief (STAR):** New York's STAR program pays a portion of school tax bills for owner-occupied homes. Because of the city's reassessment, the state may recalculate STAR this summer, and at this time the impact of that recalculation on Basic STAR and Enhanced Star for seniors is not known. For more information on STAR, please visit: [tax.ny.gov/star](http://tax.ny.gov/star)

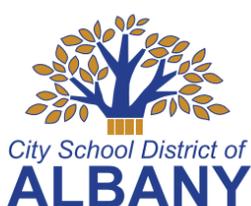
The estimated change for a typical residential property that was valued at \$150,000 before the City of Albany's recent reassessment, and now is valued at \$243,750 (an increase of 62.5% – the city-wide average assessment increase) would be \$97.

Once the city finalizes the assessed values in late summer, and the state finalizes the STAR calculations, the district will calculate the tax bill for each property by dividing the total levy among all properties based on the homestead/non-homestead proportions and the assessed value, and exemptions for each property.

To summarize, while there is no increase in the proposed school tax levy this year, your taxes will likely be different because of factors determined by the city and state.



For more information, visit [albanyschools.org/budget](http://albanyschools.org/budget)



Capital Education is published by the City School District of Albany. Please direct comments, story ideas and/or questions to either:

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(518) 475-6066 | [langerame@albany.k12.ny.us](mailto:langerame@albany.k12.ny.us)

# BY THE NUMBERS

0

Tax-levy increase in the 2024-25 budget proposal (second year in a row!)

0.79

Percent of the district's average tax-levy increase over the past 9 years

1

Place the Albany High Speech and Debate/Mock Trial Team won in the 2024 Albany County Mock Trial championships last winter

4

Albany High JROTC juniors selected for American Legion Boys State this summer

7

Years 2024 CAPSA Principal of the Year Marie Culihan has led Albany School of Humanities (ASH)

20

Years of innovation and engineering for Albany High's Robotics Team 1493

41

Falcons rostered in 2023-24 for new girls' sports teams in flag football and wrestling

43

Languages spoken by district ENL students and families. Top five: Spanish, Arabic, Karen, Pushto and Bengali

48

Members of the Albany Marching Falcons traveling to France in June for the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration of D-Day

66

Sports teams available to students in grades 7-12

92

Albany High seniors inducted into National Honor Society this year

274

Pieces of artwork from district students at the K-8 Art Exhibition at the Empire State Plaza in March

567

People who took our district communications survey this spring – thank you!

661

Tickets purchased for Albany High's musical, *The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*

761

Advanced Placement tests Albany High will administer in May (to 483 students)

877

Children signed up to attend our full-day prekindergarten for 3-year-olds (269) and 4-year-olds (608)

936

People following our growing Instagram account @albany.schools

12,910

People following the district's Facebook page @albany.schools

59,392

Servings of nachos in our cafeterias since September

475-6065

Number to call to schedule a budget presentation before the May 21 vote (don't forget the 518!)

BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Vickie Smith**, President  
**Anne Savage**, Vice President  
**Sridar Chittur, Ph.D.**, Secretary  
**Hassan I. Elminyawi**  
**Ellen Krejci**  
**Damarise Mann**  
**Tabetha Wilson**

**Joseph Hochreiter**  
 Superintendent

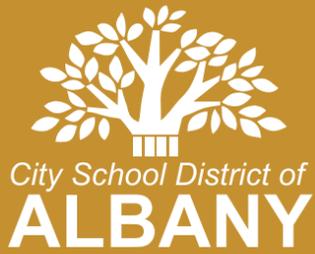


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You can access all the information  
 in this newsletter and more at:  
**albanschools.org**

# OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



## OUR VISION

The City School District of Albany will be a district of excellence with caring relationships and engaging learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for all students to reach their potential.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the City School District of Albany is to work in partnership with our diverse community to engage every learner in a robust educational program designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for success.

## OUR GOALS

Increase student achievement; Enhance the delivery of quality instruction; Build our leadership capacity and increase accountability; Empower families; Partner with our diverse community

# VOTING LOCATIONS



The City School District of Albany will hold in-person voting at locations city-wide May 21. Polls will be open from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Not sure of your voting location? Visit [albanschools.org/vote](http://albanschools.org/vote) for a searchable directory.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) New Hope Church 334 Second Ave.	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 5-9) Albany School of Humanities (ASH) 108 Whitehall Road
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl St.	<b>9<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Ave.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Ave.	<b>10<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) North Albany Middle School 570 North Pearl St.	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Albany High School's Abrookin Career and Technical Center 99 Kent St.
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Arbor Hill/West Hill Library 148 Henry Johnson Blvd.	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 1-3) Italian-American Community Center 257 Washington Ave. Extension
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 4-9) Montessori Magnet School 45 Tremont St.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 1-5) Delaware Community School 43 Bertha St.	<b>13<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 6-8) William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	<b>14<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) <b>NEW LOCATION</b> Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School 100 Elbel Court
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 1-4) <b>NEW LOCATION</b> Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School 100 Elbel Court	<b>15<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Ave.

## Absentee and mail-in voting

The City School District of Albany sends absentee ballots to people the Albany County Board of Elections designates as having a permanent disability, and who are in the military.

Also, new this year, all residents now have the option to vote by mail.

Early voting by mail will work much the same way that absentee voting traditionally has. The main change for this year is that the vote-by-mail option now is available to everyone.

You can call (518) 475-6015 and ask to have an absentee or mail-in vote application mailed to you, or you can visit [albanschools.org/vote](http://albanschools.org/vote) to download one. You also can pick one up at any district building or Albany Public Library branch.

If you want an absentee or vote-by-mail ballot sent to your home, the district clerk must receive your completed application at least seven days before the vote – by Tuesday, May 14 at 4 p.m.

If you want to pick up your absentee or vote-by-mail ballot in-person at the district headquarters in Academy Park, you must have your completed application to the clerk by 4 p.m. the day before the budget vote – Monday, May 20.

All absentee and vote-by-mail ballots must be received in the clerk's office by 5 p.m. on the day of the vote – Tuesday, May 21.

Questions? Call (518) 475-6015.

## One board seat open

One seat on the City School District of Albany Board of Education will be up for election May 21.

Board member Hassan I. Elminyawi is seeking re-election to his second four-year term. He was appointed in September 2019 to finish the term of a vacated seat and was elected to a full term in June 2020. He would begin his second full term July 1 if re-elected.

The deadline for prospective candidates to submit petitions was May 1 (no additional candidates had submitted petitions by press time in late April).

Visit [albanschools.org/boe](http://albanschools.org/boe) for more information.

## What if the budget is not approved?

If voters do not approve the budget May 21, state law gives the Board of Education three options:

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

If the board opted for a second vote and it also failed, state law would require the district to adopt a contingency budget.

For 2024-25, a contingency budget would be \$326,117,831 and would hold the tax levy to its current level as required by state law (the current budget proposal also includes no tax-levy increase). In addition, under a contingency budget the administrative component cannot exceed that of the previous year. The district would need to eliminate \$126,458 from the proposed budget to meet that requirement.

The state closely regulates any district operating under a contingency budget. It prohibits spending on student supplies, equipment and certain raises, to name a few items. Community groups also are required to pay to use school buildings when a district is operating under a contingency budget.

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

## Library vote info

In addition to school-related items on this year's ballot, residents will be asked to vote on the Albany Public Library's 2024-25 budget proposal and Board of Trustees election.

The library's proposed budget for 2024-25 is \$7,864,740. The total tax levy includes a 2% increase, which is below the library's tax cap.

The proposed increase would mean that the owner of a \$250,000 home would pay approximately \$9.15 more in library taxes next year.

There are three library trustee positions up for election this year.

For more information, visit [albanypubliclibrary.org](http://albanypubliclibrary.org) or contact Stephanie Simon at (518) 708-3912.