



PROPOSED 2014-15 BUDGET FACT SHEET

Q. What is the budget that I'll be voting on? How does it compare with the current 2013-14 budget? What are the budget-to-budget and tax levy differences?

A. The budget that will be considered on May 20, 2014 in the amount of \$111,123,460 results in a spending **decrease** of nearly \$3.8 million from the current \$114,879,543 budget. The projected tax levy is \$98,920,738, a **decrease** of 3.76% from that of the current school year. This is \$5.7 million lower than the District's calculated 2014-15 New York State tax levy cap limit of \$104,633,938.

Q. How did the District develop a budget which results in a tax levy decrease?

A. The District's transition from a self-funded health insurance plan to one that is premium-based accounts for the greatest amount of savings by reducing budgeted expenses more than \$3.4 million. The closure of Lewisboro Elementary School, which was approved by the Board of Education in January, results in a recurring savings totaling \$1.9 million. Additionally, continued attrition associated with declining student enrollment lowers costs by approximately \$1.1 million.

Q. What does the proposed budget include?

A. The proposed budget includes the implementation of full-day kindergarten, preservation of programs and courses, and maintenance of reasonable class sizes. In addition, staffing has been increased in certain areas to comply with NYS mandates.

Q. Are there any additional propositions? Will they impact my taxes?

A. The proposed budget includes two additional propositions for the community to consider. One calls for the transfer of \$872,500 from the general fund to the capital fund for the purchase of five 75-passenger school buses, one wheelchair-accessible van, and one utility vehicle. The other would authorize the transfer of \$1,620,000 from the general fund to the capital fund for the replacement of the turf field at John Jay High School as well as renovation/replacement of the school's track. More details on each proposition are provided in their respective FAQ documents. **If approved, neither of these propositions will impact taxes.**

Q. How does the Governor's newly approved Tax Freeze rebate program apply to us?

A. Although the District's 2014-15 tax levy will actually **decrease**, STAR-eligible District homeowners will still be eligible for the new NYS-adopted Tax Freeze Credit. It is the District's understanding that this credit will be equal to the homeowner's prior year school taxes multiplied by the allowable levy growth factor – which for school districts this year is 1.46%. NYS will issue all credits directly to eligible property owners. NYS has defined certain earning limitations related to eligibility.

Q. Are there any Board seats up for election? Who are the candidates?

A. There are two seats up for election this year, those of Board members Charles Day and Janet Harckham. Four candidates are running for these seats: Rory Burke, Carmen Delessio, Scott Posner and William Rifkin.

Q. How is the District planning for Full-Day Kindergarten? What will this do for the District?

A. A committee of approximately twenty volunteers has been meeting after school to plan for full day kindergarten. Its mission statement is as follows: "Full day kindergarten at the elementary schools of the Katonah-Lewisboro School District is a child-centered, developmentally appropriate learning experience. Children engage in learning within nurturing classroom environments that promote exploration and personal growth while addressing the Common Core Learning Standards for kindergarten." An overview of the skills and opportunities that full-day kindergarten would provide to students of the Katonah-Lewisboro School District are listed below:

- Children will develop analytical and critical thinking skills through an integrated balanced literacy approach focused on advancing foundational reading and writing skills through experiences with literature, the arts and character education. They will be guided to reflect on their experiences as they learn what it means to be a citizen in a learning community.
- Children will construct foundational numeracy concepts and skills through a scaffolding mathematics curriculum. A cross-disciplinary approach fosters curiosity as students inquire, observe and collaborate within authentic scenarios involving science and engineering learning experiences that include use of engaging technology tools.
- Special areas afford children creative experiences in art, music, physical education and library media both in specialized settings and integrated within the grade level curriculum.
- A center-based classroom that includes opportunities for differentiated support and early intervention. All children will be both challenged and supported as they advance in their natural acquisition of skills and grow socially, emotionally and academically.