



# Budget Newsletter



Rush-Henrietta  
Rush-Henrietta Central School District

May 2015

## 2015-2016 District Budget Proposal

Proposed Budget: \$112,533,282  
Budget-to-Budget Change: 2.1%  
Tax Rate Change: 1.74%

Developing a proposed budget is a complex task. As we developed a proposed 2015-2016 budget, we spoke with many community members to solicit their feedback. While the economy lags, the Rush-Henrietta Central School District continues to deal with rising mandatory expenses such as health insurance and Affordable Care Act compliance. After a careful analysis that included input from many community members, Board of Education members are prepared to present a proposed budget they believe is educationally sound and fiscally responsible.

Rush-Henrietta is proposing a budget-to-budget increase of 2.1 percent. Under this proposal, the true value tax rate would increase by no more than 1.74 percent, within the limits established under the state's new Tax Levy Cap. Rush-Henrietta's tax rate would remain the lowest among the 17 local suburban school districts. The Board of Education is pleased that the proposal maintains all educational programs for children.

### Highlights of Proposed Budget:

- Maintains instructional programs and student services for more than 5,300 students
- Preserves the district's successful small-class-size initiative at elementary schools
- Provides funding for the district music festival, a part-time nurse to support concussion management, improved access to instructional technology, and reinstating Modified B baseball

### What Does This Mean in Dollars and Cents?

- Taking into account the STAR exemption – for which all homeowners are eligible – a district resident owning a house assessed at \$100,000 would see school taxes increase by \$25 next year. A senior citizen with the enhanced STAR exemption who owns a house assessed at \$100,000 would see school taxes increase by \$13 next year. In districts that stay within the tax cap and have a tax-efficiency plan approved by the state, the state has said it will reimburse homeowners the amount of money their school taxes increase in 2015-2016.

### Did You Know?

- Thanks to aggressive cost-cutting measures in recent years, if the proposed budget is approved, Rush-Henrietta's true value tax rate in 2015-2016 will be lower than it was during the 2005-2006 school year.
- Moody's Investors Service recently reaffirmed the district's Aa2 Bond Rating, citing the district's "sound financial position, stable tax base influenced by a degree of institutional presence, and a below average direct debt burden." The district's reserve funds were cited as a financial strength.
- Rush-Henrietta has had the lowest true value tax rate in Monroe County for many years. Under the proposed budget, Rush-Henrietta would have the lowest rate again next year.

VOTE MAY 19



## From the Board of Education

May 1, 2015

Dear Community Resident:

On Tuesday, May 19, eligible voters in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed 2015-2016 school budget adopted by the Board of Education. The proposal reflects our efforts to put forth a budget that is both educationally sound and fiscally responsible, and our continued commitment to provide a high-quality education for all children in our school district.

The budget development process begins each November when community members join teachers, staff members, and administrators to serve on the Budget Advisory Council. The council meets multiple times to review all aspects of the budget – including any new proposals – and makes recommendations to the superintendent. During the budget-development process, stakeholders provided feedback at community forums and public hearings. At the same time, the Board of Education and district administration conducted a comprehensive program and service review to determine how the budget supports the district’s priorities. After a careful review, the Board of Education adopted its proposed budget for the community to consider.

The Board of Education’s proposed budget for 2015-2016 ensures that all programs and services that our children receive this year will be available next year. It also includes funding to preserve our successful small-class-size initiative at our elementary schools, host the district music festival, hire a part-time school nurse to support concussion management, improve instructional technology access (\$250,000 for computer equipment), and offer professional development for instructional technology integration. The proposal also calls for the restoration of Modified B baseball, which was removed from the budget four years ago because of insufficient funding.

Maintaining all of our programs and services at current levels requires a budget of \$112.5 million, an increase of 2.1 percent compared to last year. Factors driving this increase include contractual obligations, increased health insurance costs, taxes associated with the Affordable Care Act, and increased costs for BOCES services.

Just two years ago, Gov. Andrew Cuomo recognized the Rush-Henrietta Central School District for “implementing innovative strategies to improve the overall efficiency of school district management, while maintaining or improving student achievement.” In our effort to become more efficient in recent years, we consolidated central office administrative responsibilities and positions; consolidated district printers into a single contract; revised the district’s health insurance plan; and achieved district-wide energy savings by revising services. We will continue to look for these efficiencies in the coming years.

Given our expense and revenue assumptions, we project a true value tax rate increase of no more than 1.74 percent. As in previous years, this projected tax rate increase is among the lowest in Monroe County, while continuing to fund our current initiatives and school improvement priorities. A homeowner with property assessed at \$100,000 and the basic STAR exemption would pay an additional \$25 next year, while a senior citizen with property assessed at \$100,000 and the enhanced STAR exemption would pay an additional \$13. For the past seven years, the final true value tax rate has actually been lower than the proposed rate. The actual tax rate is established after town assessments are finalized.

All eligible voters are urged to vote between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 19, 2015, at the Transportation and Operations Center at the corner of Lehigh Station and Middle roads. A valid form of personal identification is required to vote. If you have questions, please contact any board trustee listed below. We genuinely appreciate the strong support that our community continues to demonstrate for the delivery of quality programs and services that make our district a great place to learn.

Sincerely,

*Diane E. McBride*

Diane E. McBride, President  
Board of Education

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# Celebrating Student Achievement

## 2014 New York State Regents Results

Regents Exam	# Tested	% Passing
ASL	42	97.6
English	431	95.1
French	70	100.0
German	56	98.2
Spanish	119	93.3
Integrated Algebra	414	85.0
CCLS Algebra	342	84.2
Geometry	415	84.6
Algebra 2/Trigonometry	291	83.5
Earth Science	511	83.0
Biology	430	91.6
Chemistry	305	84.6
Physics	143	80.4
Global History and Geography	462	87.0
U.S. History and Government	407	93.9

## Advanced Placement Results

Advanced Placement courses are offered in many academic areas. In Rush-Henrietta, our Senior High School students wrote 757 AP exams and 538 (71 percent) of the exams received a score of 3 or better. Exams are graded on scores of 1 to 5; scores of 3 and above generally are accepted for college credit. We continue to encourage our students to take advantage of these Advanced Placement offerings.

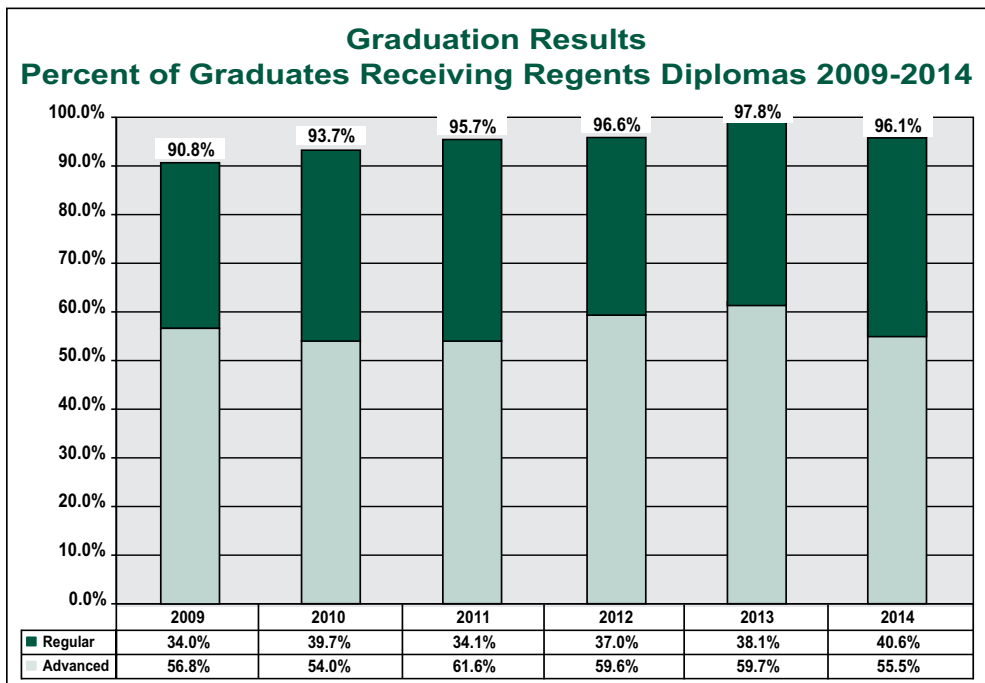


Rush-Henrietta continues to challenge its students to take more rigorous courses in an effort to increase their college readiness. For example, Rush-Henrietta requires all eighth graders to take Earth Science, a class typically taught elsewhere in ninth grade. This gives students the opportunity to take an extra year of science to prepare for college. Rush-Henrietta also offers more challenging math courses.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

The New York State Department of Education requires the district to make documents related to student achievement available prior to annual district budget votes. Information regarding the 2013-2014 School Report Cards Part 1, which provides accountability status for all schools within the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, and the Fiscal Accountability Supplement for the district, is available at [www.rhnet.org/reportcards](http://www.rhnet.org/reportcards).

In addition, a hard copy of each report is available through the Office of Strategic Initiatives, located in the Parker Administration Building at 2034 Lehigh Station Road. To make an appointment to review these documents during regular business hours, please call 359-5042.





## Rush-Henrietta Central School District - Budget Notice

### Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2014-15 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2015-16 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2015-16 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 110,253,694	\$ 112,533,282	\$ 110,339,989
Increase/(Decrease) for the 2015-16 School Year		\$ 2,279,588	\$ 86,295
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) in Proposed Budget		2.07%	0.1%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.62%	
A. Proposed School Year Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 68,080,385	\$ 70,273,678	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$ -	\$ -	
C Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$ -	\$ -	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$ -	\$ -	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A+B+C-D)	\$ 68,080,385	\$ 70,273,678	\$ 68,080,385
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$ -	\$ -	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 68,080,385	\$ 70,437,116	
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E-B-F+D)	\$ 68,080,385	\$ 70,273,678	
I. Difference: (G-H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	\$ -	\$ 163,438	
Administrative Component	\$ 12,778,838	\$ 13,001,222	\$ 12,803,135
Program Component	\$ 86,563,142	\$ 88,462,519	\$ 87,277,313
Capital Component	\$ 10,911,714	\$ 11,069,541	\$ 10,259,541

\*The Contingency Budget information displayed above has been calculated in total, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. Budget items excluded from the calculation include equipment expenditures and other non-contingent expenses. The actual appropriations under a contingency budget, should this be necessary, would be determined by the Board of Education and may include additional contingent expenditures if funding sources other than additional tax levy amounts are identified.

Description	Amount
**Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount:	
Bus purchases using Bus Reserve (no tax levy impact)	\$ 2,600,000
Capital Reserve transfer to fully fund Full Day Kindergarten(no tax levy impact)	\$12,500,000

### Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings based upon the standard \$30,000 exemption authorized by Section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2015-16 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings	\$ 604

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2015-2016 by the qualified voters of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, Monroe County, New York, will be held at the Transportation & Operations Center in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, between the hours of 6:00 am and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in the Transportation & Operations Center, 1133 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta, N.Y. 14467, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

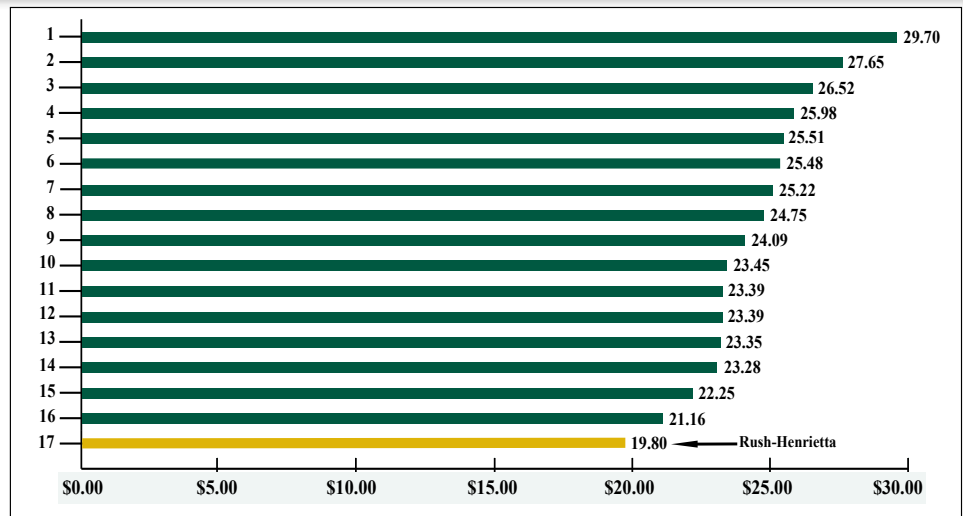
If you are a United States citizen, will be at least 18 years old by May 19, 2015, and have been a resident of the school district at least 30 days prior to the vote, you may vote. Proof of residency and personal identification is required.

## R-H True Value Tax Rate: Still the LOWEST in Monroe County

### Monroe County School District Comparison\*

Tax rates are a means of comparing taxes between towns. The true value tax rate in the Rush-Henrietta Central School District is consistently among the **lowest** in Monroe County. Next year, Rush-Henrietta again would have the lowest tax rate.

\* Data from "2014 Facts and Figures" published by the Monroe County School Boards Association





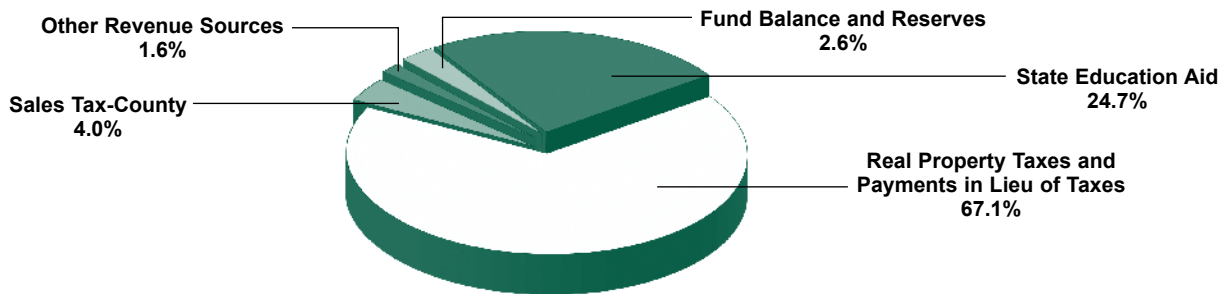


# Rush-Henrietta Central School District Budget Proposal

## 2015-2016 Projected Revenue Statement

Revenue Source	2014-2015	2015-2016	% Change
State Education Aid	\$26,418,538	\$27,815,070	5.3
Real Property Taxes and Payments in Lieu of Taxes	73,194,427	75,473,678	3.1
Sales Tax-County	4,478,279	4,523,959	1.0
Other Revenue Sources	1,912,450	1,770,575	-7.4
Fund Balance and Reserves	4,250,000	2,950,000	-30.6
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$110,253,694</b>	<b>\$112,533,282</b>	<b>2.1</b>

### REVENUES AS A PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET



## 2015-2016 Proposed Expenditures

There are five expenditure categories in the 2015-2016 budget proposal, as outlined below, that support educational programs and school district operations.

**Instruction: 55.1%** — The instructional program is the largest category in the budget and is the focal point of our educational system. All services that provide, or directly affect, instruction to students are budgeted in this area. The following are included in this category: regular school program, special education, summer school and support services [school libraries, health, psychological and social work services, curriculum coordination & supervision, curriculum development, research & evaluation], BOCES instructional programs, student activities [interscholastic sports, intramurals, co-curricular activities] and required tuition payments for Rush-Henrietta students attending approved private and public school programs.

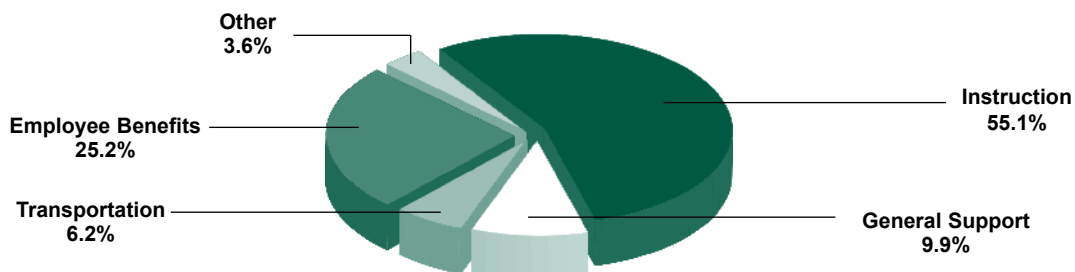
**General Support: 9.9%** — This part of the budget covers the areas that support the educational program through central administration, business operations, human resources, community relations, maintenance and repair of all district grounds and facilities, printing, mailing, district meetings, Board of Education and legal services.

**Transportation: 6.2%** — Includes bus transportation for more than 6,400 students to district, parochial and private schools; BOCES centers for vocational & special education programs; field trips and athletic team trips.

**Employee Benefits: 25.2%** — Included in the employee benefits category are social security, retirement, insurance and the risk fund which includes unemployment insurance, worker's compensation insurance, disability and life insurance.

**Other: 3.6%** — A small portion of the budget is for other expenditures that include bus purchase reserve fund, community services, continuing education, special education extended year, school food services, and debt service.

### EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET





# Rush-Henrietta Central Sch

## 2015-2016 Component Budget

### Administrative Component: 11.6% of Budget

The Administrative Component provides for overall general support and management activities, including business office operations, payroll, purchasing, general administration, personnel, legal and auditing services. Cost for administration and supervision of each of the district's schools is also included in this component.

Function or Account	2014-2015	2015-2016	Increase/(Decrease)
Board of Education	119,296	121,692	2,396
Central Administration	328,986	336,381	7,395
Finance	733,882	740,530	6,648
Legal Services	77,471	75,250	(2,221)
Personnel	416,683	435,410	18,727
Public Information	184,078	207,467	23,389
Other Central Services	1,155,205	1,241,072	85,867
Other Special Items	1,235,080	1,245,133	10,053
Curriculum Development & Supervision	1,775,911	1,754,942	(20,969)
Supervision-Regular School	2,577,498	2,627,624	50,126
Supervision-Special School	281,391	286,544	5,153
Research, Evaluation & Planning	395,742	396,686	944
Employee Benefits	3,497,615	3,532,491	34,876
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$12,778,838</b>	<b>\$13,001,222</b>	<b>\$222,384</b>

### Program Component: 78.6% of Budget

The Program Component provides funding for the instruction of and educational support services for the district's students. Programs are offered in five elementary buildings, two middle schools, one Ninth Grade Academy and one high school. Funds are also included in this component for transporting students.

Function or Account	2014-2015	2015-2016	Increase/(Decrease)
Instruction	54,765,573	56,695,449	1,929,876
In-Service Training	224,025	272,130	48,105
District Transportation	5,164,696	5,314,855	150,159
Garage Building	186,926	177,168	(9,758)
BOCES Transportation	1,312,961	1,434,256	121,295
Community Services	189,400	172,500	(16,900)
Employee Benefits	23,719,561	23,346,161	(373,400)
Other Transfers	1,000,000	1,050,000	50,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$86,563,142</b>	<b>\$88,462,519</b>	<b>\$1,899,377</b>

### Capital Component: 9.8% of Budget

The Capital Component pays for maintaining buildings, for upkeep of property, and for electricity, gas heat, oil, water & sewer and telephone services. Funds are also included for "debt service" payments on capital projects (principal and interest payments) and for refund of taxes for claims against property assessments.

Function or Account	2014-2015	2015-2016	Increase/(Decrease)
Operation of Plant	4,214,441	4,328,022	113,581
Maintenance of Plant	1,944,431	2,011,206	66,775
Refund of Taxes	210,000	215,000	5,000
Other Special Items	142,936	139,843	(3,093)
Employee Benefits	1,538,181	1,494,982	(43,199)
Transfer to Capital Fund	920,000	1,000,000	80,000
Debt Service	1,941,725	1,880,488	(61,237)
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$10,911,714</b>	<b>\$11,069,541</b>	<b>\$157,827</b>

<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$110,253,694</b>	<b>\$112,533,282</b>	<b>\$2,279,588</b>
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# ool District Budget Proposal

## 2015-2016 Proposed Expenditures

### Instruction: 55.1% of Budget

	2014-2015	2015-2016	% Change
Salaries	45,051,619	46,695,838	3.65
Equipment	466,564	453,195	-2.87
Supplies & Materials	1,124,110	1,200,479	6.79
Textbooks & Software	254,176	439,517	72.92
Contractual Expenses	1,316,885	1,286,214	-2.33
BOCES	10,537,932	10,641,220	0.98
Tuition	1,268,854	1,316,912	3.79
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$60,020,140</b>	<b>\$62,033,375</b>	<b>3.35</b>

### General Support: 9.9% of Budget

	2014-2015	2015-2016	% Change
Salaries	4,316,081	4,508,859	4.47
Equipment	146,186	148,087	1.30
Supplies & Materials	647,665	656,149	1.31
Contractual Expenses	3,717,322	3,765,811	1.30
BOCES	1,935,235	2,018,100	4.28
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$10,762,489</b>	<b>\$11,097,006</b>	<b>3.11</b>

### Transportation: 6.2% of Budget

	2014-2015	2015-2016	% Change
Salaries	3,287,697	3,399,860	3.41
Equipment, Supplies & Materials, Contracts	2,063,925	2,092,163	1.37
BOCES, Public, Contract Transportation	1,312,961	1,434,256	9.24
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$6,664,583</b>	<b>\$6,926,279</b>	<b>3.93</b>

### Employee Benefits: 25.2% of Budget

	2014-2015	2015-2016	% Change
Social Security	3,833,090	3,983,749	3.93
Retirement	9,532,403	8,054,706	-15.50
Insurance	15,389,864	16,335,179	6.14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$28,755,357</b>	<b>\$28,373,634</b>	<b>-1.33</b>

### Other: 3.6% of Budget

	2014-2015	2015-2016	% Change
Bus Purchase & Capital Transfers	920,000	1,000,000	8.70
Community Service	189,400	172,500	-8.92
Transfer to Special Education Extended School Year	400,000	400,000	0.00
Transfer to State Schools (Blind & Deaf)	400,000	400,000	0.00
Transfer to School Food Services	200,000	250,000	25.00
Debt Service	1,941,725	1,880,488	-3.15
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$4,051,125</b>	<b>\$4,102,988</b>	<b>1.28</b>

<b>GENERAL FUND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$110,253,694</b>	<b>\$112,533,282</b>	<b>2.07</b>
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# Because

Since January, the Board of Education and Superintendent Ken Graham have been engaging the community in an open and frank dialogue about financial issues impacting our community and Rush-Henrietta Central School District. Board members and Dr. Graham have been answering questions on the district website at [www.rhnet.org/budgettalk](http://www.rhnet.org/budgettalk). If your topic hasn't been addressed, please share it by visiting the website and clicking the Contact Us button. We look forward to hearing from community members and seeing you during the budget vote on Tuesday, May 19. Among the questions and answers posted online:

## Q What is the property tax cap?

A In 2011, New York state established a property tax cap that limits how much a local government or school district can increase its property tax levy each year. Under this law, the growth in the property tax levy – the total money to be raised through property taxes charged on a municipality's taxable assessed value of property – will be capped at 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. Sometimes, a district is allowed to propose a tax rate increase in excess of 2 percent based on a complicated, eight-step formula created by the state. For example, in addition to the base 2 percent limit, school districts are able to add the value of new property development. They also can add to the cap for certain exemptions, including voter-approved local capital expenditures; increases in the state-mandated employer contribution rates for teacher and employee pensions that exceed 2 percent; and court orders and judgments resulting from tort actions of any amount that exceeds 5 percent of a district's current levy. Local communities have the ability to override the cap, but Rush-Henrietta has not chosen to do that. Although this was publicized as a 2 percent tax cap, there are many factors outlined in the law that cause the final cap to be lower or higher than 2 percent, and this amount varies in each school district. For the 2015-2016 school year, the state is allowing Rush-Henrietta to propose a 3.2 percent increase in the tax levy; this is based on the rate of inflation of 1.62 percent, plus a growth factor for all of the new housing and commercial development within the district. Because of new development, the tax rate increase will be no more than 1.74 percent.

## Q I keep hearing how "unfunded mandates" are driving costs for school districts. What does this mean and what unfunded mandates are included in the Rush-Henrietta budget?

A Unfunded mandates are legal requirements placed upon school districts without the specific funding source to offset their cost. Both the federal and state governments impose unfunded mandates upon school districts. A good example of unfunded mandates is for special education costs where the federal government mandates that appropriate, least-restrictive educational services be provided to special education students "regardless

of cost." The state has imposed further special education requirements that add to this expense so it now costs more than three times as much to educate a special education student as it does a general education student. In addition, regarding health insurance, the district now pays more than \$500,000 per year in taxes mandated by the Affordable Care Act. Another example of federal mandates is reflected in transportation. Bus prices have increased more than 45 percent during the past five years because of mandated pollution control and upgraded communications equipment. Employee wages and benefits also are affected by state mandates. In addition to these major unfunded mandates, there are hundreds of smaller ones requiring much administrative cost to implement and ensure compliance. State lawmakers can provide mandate relief by doing the following:

- Reform New York's Triborough Amendment so school districts are not required to pay wage increases under an expired contract.
- Reduce costs of special education by eliminating state mandates that exceed federal requirements.
- Establish statewide maximum health care contributions for school districts.
- Reduce or eliminate some of the hundreds of reports and compliance issues required annually by the state.

Legislative mandates continue to add millions of dollars of cost into our school district budget each year as well as adding new state programs. At the same time, the state is still reducing our state aid by \$1.9M for the Gap Elimination Adjustment, which reduced our district's aid to help the state balance its budget. Unfortunately, six years after the fiscal crisis, the state continues to withhold state aid from us even as they fund new state initiatives and impose new mandates. Much of this reduction in aid has had to be made up by the local taxpayers.

## Q How are Rush-Henrietta students performing? Are my taxes making a difference?

A You absolutely are making a difference! For the past eight years, academic achievement of Rush-Henrietta students has improved! Please see page 3 of this newsletter to see the difference you are making.





## You Asked...

### **Q How will the proposed budget affect homeowners?**

**A** The Board of Education's \$112.5 million budget proposal calls for a 1.74 percent increase in the true-value tax rate. A homeowner with property assessed at \$100,000 and the basic STAR exemption would pay an additional \$25 next year. A senior citizen with property assessed at \$100,000 and the enhanced STAR exemption would pay an additional \$13.

### **Q What is a contingency budget and how is it determined?**

**A** If voters fail to approve the district's proposed budget, state law requires the district to follow a contingency budget. The amount of the contingency budget is determined by the Board of Education but must be within constraints established by law and the New York State Education Department. The largest constraint is that the property tax levy (amount of taxes raised from local property owners) cannot be any higher than the prior year's levy. In other words, a zero-dollar increase in the total amount of property taxes raised by the levy. Under these new rules, a contingency budget would present much more of a challenge than in the past. Other rules require that certain non-contingent spending items such as equipment purchases, student supplies and the cost of community use of district facilities be removed from the budget. Although the law requires no increase in the property tax levy, the Board of Education could fund increased expenditures from other revenue sources, reserves and use of fund balance. While the budget notice on page 4 shows a potential amount of contingency budget, the actual amount may be different as it is determined by the Board of Education but must be within the constraints discussed above.

### **Q What are the major factors impacting the development of the proposed 2015-2016 budget?**

**A** Despite careful and conservative planning, much of the financial landscape remains unclear. The major factors under consideration for the development of the 2015-2016 budget include contractual costs, health care costs, and mandated special education costs.

### **Q What is Rush-Henrietta doing to control costs?**

**A** The school district has explored many cost-saving measures during the past few years that have resulted in substantial savings. In 2013, Gov. Andrew Cuomo recognized the Rush-Henrietta Central School District for "implementing innovative strategies to improve the overall efficiency of school district management, while maintaining or improving student achievement." We accomplished this by consolidating central office administrative responsibilities and positions; consolidating district printers into a single contract; revising the district's health insurance plan as well as the contract for maintenance staff; and achieving district-wide energy savings through revising services. We continue to attempt to control spending in other areas. The district continues to install energy-efficient equipment such as high-efficiency school boilers and energy-efficient windows, and continues to examine bus runs to make them more efficient. In addition, Rush-Henrietta works with other local school districts to save money, especially through cooperative bidding.

### **Q How are school taxes determined?**

**A** Your school taxes are determined by three factors—the school tax levy, property assessments, and equalization rates.

- The school tax levy is the total dollar amount the district must collect from property owners to support the annual operating budget.
- In terms of property assessments, Rush-Henrietta uses property values provided by the four towns in the school district – Brighton, Henrietta, Pittsford, and Rush – to levy taxes. Each property within a town is assigned a value by the town assessor.
- Each year, the New York State Office of Real Property Services evaluates each town's assessment practices and sets specific equalization rates to ensure a fair tax burden distribution across the district. For this reason, an 8 percent increase in property assessments in one town does not mean that all four towns within our school district would experience the same increase. If the school tax levy increase is greater than the increase in property assessments for the district as a whole, the district's true value tax rate increases.

For more information about school district finances or the budget development process, please consult the district website at [www.rhnet.org/budgettalk](http://www.rhnet.org/budgettalk). Or, contact Andy Whitmore, assistant superintendent for school finance and operations, at 359-5037 or [awhitmore@rhnet.org](mailto:awhitmore@rhnet.org).



## On May 19, 2015, Eligible Voters Will Vote On...

Propositions 2, 3, and 4 will NOT affect the tax rate.

### Proposition 1

#### BUDGET PROPOSITION

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

**Resolved**, that the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to expend the sum set forth in the estimate of amount of money required for school purposes during the fiscal year 2015-2016 in the total amount of \$112,533,282 and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

### Proposition 2

#### BUS EXPENDITURES

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

**Resolved**, that the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to expend the sum of up to \$2,600,000 to be funded by the 2009 Bus Reserve Fund for the purchase and replacement of vehicles for the transportation of district students.

### Proposition 3

#### CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

**Resolved**, that the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to expend the sum of up to \$12,500,000 from the 2015 Capital Reserve Fund to complete the funding for the district's Full-Day Kindergarten and Enrollment Management Capital Project for the construction, and reconstruction of the Vollmer Building, Sherman Elementary School, and Burger Middle School buildings, grounds and facilities, to include various building and site improvements and the acquisition of certain original furnishings, equipment, and apparatus and other incidental improvements required in connection therewith for such construction and school use.

### Proposition 4

#### 2016 BUS PURCHASE RESERVE FUND

Shall the following proposition be adopted?

**Resolved**, that the Board of Education of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District be authorized to establish a reserve fund for the purpose of purchasing school buses and vehicles in accordance with Education Law Section 3651, to be designated as the 2016 Bus Purchase Reserve Fund, over a probable term of 10 years, but to continue for its stated purpose until liquidated according to Education Law or until its funds are exhausted, the ultimate amount of such fund to be \$12,000,000, the source of which shall be determined by the Board of Education to be transferred from any and all state aid and any and all federal and state funds available by grant or otherwise generated by the purchase of buses or other transportation expenditures, to be transferred from the general fund unassigned fund balance, any identified surplus funds in previously established bus purchase reserve funds, transfers from other reserve funds, and interest earnings.

## As Phase III Concludes, Work Begins on School Reconfiguration

As Rush-Henrietta's Phase III facility renovations project nears completion, the district is already working on a comprehensive school reconfiguration that will allow for full-day kindergarten and future increases in enrollment.

At the Senior High School, we have completed nearly all of the Phase III renovations approved by the community in 2011. This includes revamping Elmer Gordon Stadium and adjacent athletic fields and building an expanded, state-of-the-art gymnasium. The old gym has been transformed into usable space and features a new fitness center, team locker rooms, a wrestling room, a team room,

and more. A second floor has been added and is home to a new counseling center, conference room, and office space. The district soon will turn several business classrooms into science/technology classrooms. Finally, this summer, the worksite – where the giant mountain of dirt was located near the west parking lot – will be reseeded and restored to normal.

As the Phase III project nears completion, the district is busy working to accommodate full-day kindergarten and a school reconfiguration that was supported in overwhelming fashion during a February 2015 vote. At that time, residents gave their approval for the district to

spend money already saved in reserve funds on this project. During the May 19 vote, the district will ask the community for permission to move money from those funds into one that the state will allow us to use for this project. This is what is reflected in Proposition 3, listed above. There will be no impact on the tax rate.

If you have any questions regarding the completion of the Phase III renovations or the upcoming school reconfiguration, please call Andy Whitmore, Assistant Superintendent of School Finance and Operations, at 359-5037 or [awhitmore@rhnet.org](mailto:awhitmore@rhnet.org). We also invite you to stay updated on the latest news by visiting [www.rhnet.org/reconfiguration](http://www.rhnet.org/reconfiguration).



## Candidates Vie for Three Board of Education Seats

The school district is governed by a seven-member Board of Education elected by the eligible voters of the district. Members are volunteer public officials who serve without pay. As elected representatives of district residents, and as officers of the state of New York, board members must carry out duties required by the state Legislature, the Board of Regents, and the state Commissioner of Education. The board establishes policies for the operation of the district. On Tuesday, May 19, 2015, eligible voters in Rush-Henrietta will elect three candidates to the Board of Education. The following information is provided by each candidate. A random drawing determined ballot order of candidates.



**BOB COOK** 4507 East Henrietta Road, Henrietta, N.Y. 14467 • Resident of the district for 26 years

**FAMILY:** Spouse, Gail, and two children, Chad [15] and Isabelle [13]

**EDUCATION:** James E. Sperry High School, Regents Diploma; Eisenhower College, B.A.; Boston University School of Law, J.D.

**EMPLOYMENT:** New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, District Tax Attorney

**STATEMENT:** *As a Rush-Henrietta graduate, district parent and educator, my concern is that R-H strive for high student achievement while maintaining strong schools with small classes at a stable tax rate. As our schools reconfigure and transition to full-day kindergarten, we need to keep parents at the table, advance planning for Universal Pre-K, reduce high stakes testing, ease common core anxiety and support our teachers - the vanguard of change. As an attorney, I'll bring a unique perspective to these tasks. I've been involved in our schools and*

*community as a member of the Budget Advisory Council, the Roth and Leary PTOs, the Henrietta Foundation and R-H Troop 134 Scoutmaster. A published children's author, I taught at SUNY Geneseo for 10 years. Meeting the needs of our children requires the collaboration of a School Board committed to implementing the best educational practices. Your vote will enable me to join that effort.*



**SUE A. SMITH** 400 Farrell Road Ext., West Henrietta, N.Y. 14586 • Resident of the district for 37 years

**FAMILY:** Spouse, Gregory, and two children, Leisha [35] and Ben [33], both R-H alumni

**EDUCATION:** SUNY Binghamton, B.A.

**EMPLOYMENT:** Retired Management Assistant, Academic Services, Monroe Community College

**STATEMENT:** *I am so proud to be a part of the inspiring work taking place in Rush-Henrietta. Changes to curriculum and instruction to better prepare our students for college and career pathways have resulted in continued growth in student achievement. We have worked hard to develop budgets that provide for the needs of our students while keeping our annual tax levies below the mandatory tax cap. Facing enrollment imbalances at our schools and the recognized need for full-day kindergarten, we have developed and received voter approval for a comprehensive plan to reorganize our schools to address these issues. Consistent and informed leadership is needed to move this important*

*and challenging work forward. I believe that my many years of effective service and my commitment to this community have prepared me well for this work. I would be honored to continue serving our community as a member of the Board.*



**WILLIAM SM HALL SR.** 59 Derrick Drive, West Henrietta, N.Y. 14586 • Resident of the district for 10 years

**FAMILY:** Spouse, Tanisha, and three children, William [18, Rush-Henrietta graduate], Aiden [8], and Taylor [4]

**EDUCATION:** St. John Fisher, Bachelor's degree, Business Management; working toward Master's degree in finance at Simon School of Business

**EMPLOYMENT:** New York Life, Financial Services Representative; Previously J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, Vice President/Branch Manager

**STATEMENT:** *I believe that it is better to get involved than to complain. My first interaction with the school district was one of lack of understanding from both sides. I decided to get involved. My goal is to be a voice for the voiceless. Henrietta has been good to my family and I have become an advocate of our district and our town. As a member of so many parent groups in R-H, I have the knowledge and ability to see both sides of the coin. My desire has been to be a vessel to gather information from our citizens and students and get the information to*

*the appropriate members to invoke change, while also being available to citizens to inform. Our board has done an excellent job, and I hope to be a member of this group to continue the great work that they have already been doing.*



**SEAN MCCORMICK** 106 Campus Drive, Rochester, N.Y. 14623 • Resident of the district for 25 years

**FAMILY:** Spouse, Pamela, and two children, Timothy [19] and Kevin [17, Class of 2015]

**EDUCATION:** SUNY Plattsburgh, B.A., Communications; St. John Fisher, M.A., Education

**EMPLOYMENT:** Five Star Bank, Sr. Credit Analyst

**STATEMENT:** *My name is Sean McCormick and I am running for a seat on the Rush-Henrietta Board of Education. I have resided in Henrietta for over 25 years. My two sons attended Rush-Henrietta for their entire education. As a parent of children in our district, I watched as they progressed through each grade and observed what works and what I felt could be improved on. I substituted in the Rush-Henrietta school district for eight years. This gave me a unique opportunity to be involved with many students as well as schools in the district. I was able to discuss with students and teachers the issues in today's academic environment. If elected to the Rush-Henrietta School Board, I would bring*

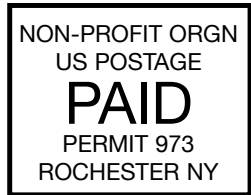
*this knowledge and work together to resolve issues facing our students and the community. I believe I would be an open-minded advocate for making any positive changes to our school district.*

To view the candidates' honors and activities, please visit [www.rhnet.org/boeinfo](http://www.rhnet.org/boeinfo)



*Rush-Henrietta*  
**Rush-Henrietta Central School District**

2034 Lehigh Station Road  
Henrietta, New York 14467  
(585) 359-5000  
www.rhnet.org



**2014-2015 Board of Education**

- Mrs. Diane E. McBride, President
- Mrs. Phyllis P. Wickerham, Vice President
- Mr. Robert C. Bower
- Mrs. Jean M. Chaduari
- Mrs. Rosie B. Mitchell
- Mrs. Pamela J. Reinhardt
- Mrs. Sue A. Smith

**ECRWSS  
Postal Customer**

**Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. J. Kenneth Graham, Jr.

Published by the Office of Community Relations

**VOTE MAY 19**

**Voter Eligibility**

- **Personal identification will be required.**
- You must be a United States citizen.
- You must be at least 18 years old by May 19, 2015.
- You must be a resident of the school district at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- You do not have to own property in the district.

**Absentee Ballots**

Absentee ballots are available to eligible residents of the district who are unable to vote in person on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, for reasons specified by law. *Voters must complete an application for an absentee ballot in order to receive one.* Applications are available by phone or in person at the District Clerk's Office, Parker Administration Building, 2034 Lehigh Station Road.

*If you have questions regarding voter eligibility or absentee ballots, please call Karen Flanigan, district clerk, at 359-5010.*

**2015-2016 Proposed Budget:  
Striving for a Fiscally Sound,  
Educationally Responsible Budget**

- Maintains instructional programs and student services
- Preserves the successful small-class-size initiative
- True value tax rate remains lowest in the county



**RUSH-HENRIETTA  
CENTRAL SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

**TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015  
6 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

**Vote at the Transportation  
and Operations Center  
1133 Lehigh Station Road**

**Voters will elect three members to  
the Board of Education  
and vote on four propositions:**

**PROPOSITION NO. 1  
BUDGET PROPOSITION  
\$112,533,282**

**PROPOSITION NO. 2  
BUS EXPENDITURES**

**PROPOSITION NO. 3  
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES**

**PROPOSITION NO. 4  
2016 BUS PURCHASE  
RESERVE FUND**

**Propositions 2, 3, and 4 will NOT  
affect the tax rate.**