



Budget Newsletter



Scan with your phone camera and read the newsletter in your own language.

Rush-Henrietta Central School District

June 2024

2024-2025 District Budget Proposal

Proposed Budget: \$170,237,893
Budget-to-Budget Change: 5.2%
Tax Rate Change: 1.25%

Dear Rush-Henrietta Residents:

In May, the Board of Education's proposed 2024-2025 budget fell short of approval by 15 votes. As district leaders reflected on the outcome, we sought answers to explain what happened. We discovered there wasn't a single reason, but rather multiple ones. The *Democrat and Chronicle* reported about this in a May 23, 2024, story headlined: "Low turnout, misinformation help drive Rush-Henrietta budget defeat."

Turnout for the May vote was at a five-year low in Rush-Henrietta. This mirrors a trend seen by many local school districts. The newspaper article mentions the role that an uncontested Board of Education election can have on a budget vote. This appears to have been a contributing factor in our district. When there is no competition for board seats, turnout often diminishes. This year, three board incumbents ran unopposed, giving people less incentive to come and vote.

The newspaper also cited "misinformation" as an important reason. Rumors circulated before the vote that our superintendent requested a large raise. That is not true. The misunderstanding stemmed in part from how a line item was presented in the budget newsletter. We attempted to clarify this during public hearings, parent meetings, the Community Budget Forum, and through social media; we recognize these efforts were not enough. To be specific, the superintendent will receive a raise of 2.75 percent next year based on her contract.

In addition, there were three main takeaways from the exit polling data. 1) Residents want more information regarding the role of the deputy superintendent; we provide that in this newsletter. 2) Residents want the district to trim expenses; we propose a reduction of \$1.3 million from the original budget proposal. 3) The reassessment conducted last year by local towns caused some homeowners to see an increase in taxes. The district plays no role in that process and does not collect more tax money as a result. However, we acknowledge this impacted residents. The reductions we are proposing in this revised budget are an attempt to support those impacted by the reassessment.

It is clear that our residents value our school district and understand the important role it plays in supporting the day-to-day growth and development of children. The community's involvement in our schools has played an important role in our district's success for more than 75 years. Thank you for that!

My board colleagues and I respectfully ask all eligible voters to continue to participate in the process by voting on Rush-Henrietta's adjusted proposed budget Tuesday, June 18. If you have questions about the budget revote, contact Andy Whitmore, assistant superintendent of School Finance and Operations, at 359-5037 or awhitmore@rhnet.org, or any of the members of the Board of Education. Our contact information can be found at www.rhnet.org/meettheboard. We look forward to seeing you Tuesday, June 18!

On behalf of the Board of Education,

Scott M. Adair, President

VOTE JUNE 18



Rush-Henrietta Central School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2023-24 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2024-25 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$161,779,198	\$170,237,893	\$167,670,508
Increase/(Decrease) for the 2024-25 School Year		\$8,458,695	\$5,891,310
Percentage Increase/(Decrease) in Proposed Budget		5.2%	3.6%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount			
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$89,496,816	\$92,064,201	
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)	\$89,496,816	\$92,064,201	\$89,496,816
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	-	-	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$89,496,816	\$92,064,201	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E-B-F+D)	\$89,496,816	\$92,064,201	
I. Difference: (G-H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)**	-	-	
Administrative Component			
Program Component	\$17,206,137	\$18,805,996	\$18,065,992
Capital Component	\$123,391,587	\$130,045,576	\$130,045,576
	\$21,181,474	\$21,386,321	\$19,558,940

* 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.

Basic STAR Benefit Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Benefit Savings based upon the standard \$30,000 exemption authorized by Section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.
Estimated Basic STAR Benefit Savings¹

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year
\$527

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District, Monroe County, New York, will be held at the Transportation and Operations Center in said district on Tuesday, June 18, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 am and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in the Transportation and 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.

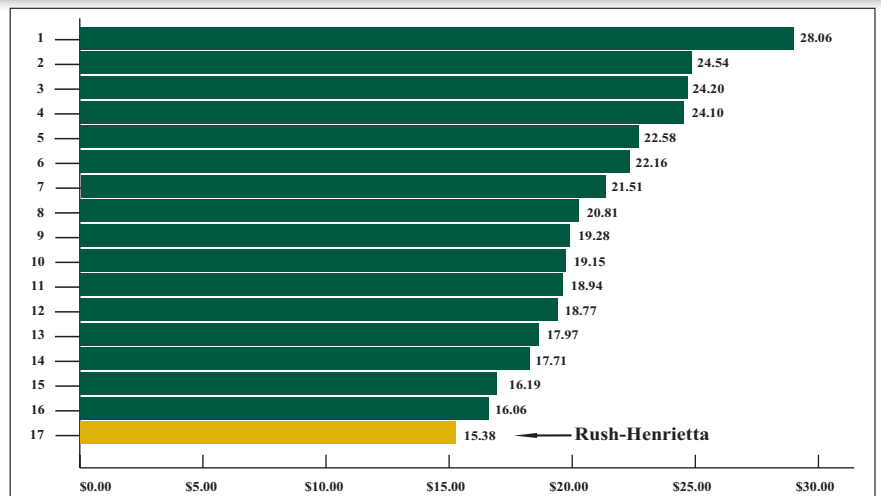
If you are a United States citizen, will be at least 18 years old by June 18, 2024, and have been a resident of the school district at least 30 days prior to the vote, you may vote.
¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

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

Monroe County School District Comparison*

Tax rates are a means of comparing taxes between districts. 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 will have one of the lowest tax rates in the county. Rates shown for 2023-2024.

* Data from "2024 Facts and Figures" published by the Monroe County School Boards Association.





What is a Contingency Budget?

If voters reject an original budget proposal, school districts have the option to put the original budget up for a second vote, or to offer a revised budget as part of a second community vote.

In the event the second vote is not approved, or the district decides not to hold a second vote, the district must operate under what is known as a contingency budget. This is shown on page 2. The Board of Education decided to present a revised budget for voter approval Tuesday, June 18. If the revised budget is not approved, the district will be forced by state law to adopt a contingency budget. This would require an almost \$4 million overall reduction from the original budget.

What Was Removed from the Original Budget?

In preparing for a second vote to be held Tuesday, June 18, the Board of Education agreed it would be wise to trim the budget in ways that will not negatively impact student learning, while at the same time acknowledging community concerns. In doing so, the budget proposal has been reduced by \$1.3 million. This results in an average 1.25 percent tax rate increase.

The following items from the original proposal have been removed in the revised proposal:

- A new director of recruiting.* (\$105,000)
- Clerical support for the director of Career and Technical Education.* (\$68,000)
- A teaching assistant position to assist with Chromebook repairs.* (\$54,000)
- Monies to support the district's tax certiorari reserve fund. (\$25,000)
- Moving four special ed teaching positions to a federal grant (\$360,000)
- Food Services transfer since funding for free meals for students has been included in the state budget. (\$200,000)
- State aid reimbursement that would typically be directed to a reserve fund will instead be used for the general fund. (\$525,000)

* The three positions outlined above were slated to be new additions for next school year and include salary and benefits.

This list reflects spending reductions in multiple areas, including in the administrative component of the budget. You may learn more by watching a May 28, 2024, Board of Education discussion at www.rhnet.org/revisedbudget.

The Role of the Deputy Superintendent

During Dr. Mullen's hiring process last year, she emphasized her focus on student learning outcomes. She identified an opportunity to create the deputy superintendent position to help foster student success by

supporting the delivery of high-quality instruction in our buildings and classrooms.

The deputy superintendent's responsibilities filled a gap the district identified to help support the adults who support our students. One of the most important duties is to provide additional support to principals and assistant principals. That is necessary because each leader at R-H, no matter how experienced, needs to be a learner. Professional growth has been a key point of emphasis since Dr. Mullen's arrival.

A significant amount of the deputy's time is spent engaging in providing direct support to each principal and assistant principal to boost student achievement. The district strives to identify evidence-based practices and help principals incorporate them. Outside of our teachers, principals can have the most profound impact on student learning. We take to heart the words of the organization New Leaders, which states: "Schoolwide systems for observation, coaching, and actionable feedback are often synonymous with instructional leadership and student gains."

R-H is committed to improving its instructional practices to better support students. The deputy superintendent is leading Professional Learning Communities, which occur monthly for principals and assistant principals. This effort is a recognized strategy to further develop school leaders and increase student achievement. After a meeting this year, administrators were asked to anonymously submit feedback. One said: "The fact that you took the time to listen to understand about (School Improvement Teams) and shift your thinking around it on the fly was impressive."

R-H's goal is for teachers to play a key role as members of the Instructional Leadership Team at each school next year. This will help support successful implementation and monitoring of each school's improvement plan. This effort is being led by the deputy superintendent.

The role also ensures that we have clear and effective policy implementation, which helps our district operate more efficiently and effectively for our students and community. This task is directly aligned to the board's goal of bringing district policies up to date. Since the deputy joined the district in July 2023, 59 policies have been updated. This work also helps the district in legal compliance with the State Education Department.

By supporting school improvement plans, the deputy superintendent also has played a role in helping to reduce chronic student absenteeism this year from 21 percent to 18 percent. That's impressive progress made during one school year. This number, by the way, was 10 percent before the pandemic and had risen as high as 23 percent last year. The deputy superintendent also has oversight of the district's Office of Professional Learning and Information Services.

You may learn more by watching a May 28, 2024, Board of Education discussion at www.rhnet.org/deputy.

Rush-Henrietta Central School District

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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Henrietta, NY
Permit No. 2

2023-2024 Board of Education

Mr. Scott M. Adair, President
Mrs. Mai Adbullah, Vice President
Ms. Shiloh Arthmann
Mrs. Suzanne Bennett
Mrs. Laura P. Borate
Mrs. Kimberly DeLardge
Mrs. Rachel Sherman

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Barbara A. Mullen

Published by the Office of Community Relations

What Will We Be Voting On June 18?

Only one item will be on the ballot. That is the budget proposition in the amount of \$170,237,893.

When And Where To Vote

All eligible voters are encouraged to participate. The vote will be held from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at the Rush-Henrietta Transportation and Operations Center, 1133 Lehigh Station Road.

Voter Qualifications:

- You must be at least 18 years of age.
- You must be a citizen of the United States.
- You do not have to own property in the district.
- You must be a resident of the school district for at least 30 days immediately preceding the vote.

Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots are available to qualified school district voters. An application for an absentee ballot must be completed. Given the short timeframe in which this revote is being held, absentee ballots at this time are available only to those who can return them to the Parker Administration Building by mail or in person no later than 5 p.m. Tuesday, June 18. A sidewalk dropbox is available at the administration building, which is located at 2034 Lehigh Station Road. For more information, contact District Clerk Cheryl Castronovo at 359-5010.

ASL Interpreter Services

If you need ASL interpreter service at the polling site for the June 18 vote, contact District Clerk. Castronovo at 359-5010 to request that an interpreter be present.

All Voting Will Take Place At:

Transportation and Operations Center
1133 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta



**RUSH-HENRIETTA
CENTRAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024

LOCATION

**Transportation Center
1133 Lehigh Station Road
6 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

**Vote on one proposition:
PROPOSITION NO. 1**

**BUDGET
PROPOSITION
\$170,237,893**

VOTE JUNE 18

Visit our district website (www.rhnet.org) or Facebook page (facebook.com/rhschools)