

# YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKVILLE CENTRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Volume 36• Number 4

April 2015

## 2015/2016 PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

### VOTE

# TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015

## South Side High School - 7AM to 9PM

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ◆ Message from the Board of Education
- ◆ Budget Summary
- ◆ School Improvement Bond Update
- ◆ Proposed 2015-2016 School Budget
- ◆ Your Questions Answered
- ◆ Registration and Voting Information

#### DATES TO REMEMBER

##### April

- 21 Board of Education Regular Meeting and Preliminary Budget Hearing

##### May

- 5 Meet the Candidates
- 6 Budget Hearing
- 19 Annual School Board Election and Budget Vote
- 27 Board of Education Regular Meeting

##### June

- 3 Board of Education Regular Meeting
- 17 Board of Education Public Work Session
- 26 High School Graduation

#### Mission Statement

The mission of the Rockville Centre School District is to educate our students to become independent problem solvers. It is our goal to empower each student to meet the challenges of tomorrow's emerging world. The District will provide a safe, nurturing environment in which individual and civic responsibility is fostered, diversity is respected and all students are enabled to realize their full potential.

We are pleased to present the enclosed 2015-2016 school budget for your review. During the past three months, the Board of Education, District administrators and the public have reviewed and modified the proposed school district budget in an effort to maintain and create educational opportunities for all our children. As a result, we are pleased to present a budget that continues to provide a diverse educational program designed to nurture and challenge our students; ensuring they will be ready for the challenges of tomorrow, while maintaining our facilities and providing a safe environment for all.

The proposed 2015-2016 tax levy increase is lower than the allowable limit set by New York's property tax levy limit or "cap" law. The increase in the proposed budget is primarily due to increases in payroll and related expenses, as well as increases in debt service. Anticipated increases in state aid and local revenues will assist in supporting this budget increase.

The Board is acutely aware of the need to keep costs down and is continuously searching for additional ways to improve our efficiency. This year, the District completed work on an energy performance contract, which improves energy efficiency in all buildings throughout the District, and included installation of solar panels on both South Side High School and Covert Elementary at no cost to the taxpayer. We continue to work with our bargaining units to control future payroll increases and explore opportunities to share costs with the Village, neighboring districts through transportation and purchasing consortiums as well as with Nassau BOCES.

The Board of Education remains committed to the future success of our children and to preparing each of them to be life-long learners. We encourage you to be a part of the Budget process by attending the Preliminary Budget Hearing on April 21st, the Budget Hearing on May 6th and by exercising your right to vote on **Tuesday, May 19th, at South Side High School.**

*The Board of Education*

# 2015/2016 PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

## SCHOOL BUDGET SUMMARY

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
<b>Appropriations</b>			
General Support	9,845,778	9,991,582	10,104,967
Instruction	59,656,231	61,219,178	63,302,674
Transportation	4,098,505	4,150,989	4,157,977
Community Services	192,950	192,950	192,950
Employee Benefits	23,818,400	24,489,400	25,210,400
Debt Service, Building Improvements & Inter-fund Transfers	<u>3,136,488</u>	<u>3,092,655</u>	<u>4,109,692</u>
<b>Grand Total: Appropriations</b>	<b>100,748,352</b>	<b>103,136,754</b>	<b>107,078,660</b>
<b>Receipts</b>			
State Aid	7,132,414	7,782,414	8,732,414
Local Revenues	3,615,938	3,804,340	4,314,340
Applied General Fund Balance	<u>2,800,000</u>	<u>2,800,000</u>	<u>2,800,000</u>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>13,548,352</b>	<b>14,386,754</b>	<b>15,846,754</b>
<b>Balance to be Raised by Tax Levy</b>	<b>87,200,000</b>	<b>88,750,000</b>	<b>91,231,906</b>
<b>Grand Total: Revenues</b>	<b>100,748,352</b>	<b>103,136,754</b>	<b>107,078,660</b>
<b>Assessed Valuation as of March 1</b>	<b>11,505,179</b>	<b>11,578,500</b>	<b>11,150,941*</b>
<i>*Tentative</i>			



*The new turf field at South Side High School*



*The new addition at South Side High School*



*The new playground at Watson Elementary School*

### UPDATE ON THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BOND

Immediately upon approval from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in spring 2014 work on the track and field at South Side High School began. In July 2014 construction of the north addition at South Side High School and the addition at Watson Elementary School began.

Construction has been moving along steadily throughout the school year. The field at South Side High School was completed in time to hold the South Side Cyclone's homecoming game on the new turf field. The footprint at the high school has begun to change. The exterior of the north addition is almost complete. Construction teams are working on the interior electric, plumbing and masonry. The construction of the north addition will hold a new fitness room, a music lab, as well as photography and art rooms, which will improve the learning environment for our high school students. The north addition is scheduled to be complete and ready for instruction in September 2015.

Upon completion of the north addition at the high school, four outdoor structures (portables), holding ten instructional spaces will be removed and those classes will be held within the main high school building. The remaining portable building, holding two classrooms, will be removed after the construction of the south addition at South Side High School which is expected to be ready for instruction in September 2016.

The construction at Watson Elementary School includes three classrooms and one small instructional space. The construction team has completed most of the exterior work and is now working to finalize the interior work which includes installing the HVAC system (heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning), drop ceilings, cabinetry, sinks, floor tiles and doors, as well as completing electrical work, painting, and plumbing. Once complete, the classrooms will be fitted with SmartBoards, white boards, computers and classroom furniture in order to prepare them for students in September 2015.

Remaining bond projects, which have been submitted to NYSED for approval, include installing the remaining classroom air-conditioning units and new security lock-sets throughout the District, updating the high school science labs, reconfiguring the high school kitchen and cafeteria, updating the high school and middle school libraries and auditoriums, and installing new public address systems. In anticipation of NYSED approval, the District has pre-bid the air-conditioning work so that installation of the units could begin immediately upon approval of the projects.

We invite you to our Board of Education meetings, or to check on our District website [www.rvcschools.org](http://www.rvcschools.org) for the latest updates on projects and additional pictures.

## 2015/2016 PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

### General Support

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
Board of Education	26,910	28,325	28,400
District Clerk	43,802	44,819	45,756
District Meetings—Annual Election	95,525	110,754	120,440
Superintendent's Office	526,187	530,909	535,265
Business Administration	869,611	872,363	894,360
Auditing	125,000	120,000	120,000
Treasurer	88,044	90,214	93,266
Legal Services	359,900	309,900	281,500
Personnel Administration	462,042	470,439	474,516
Public Information Services	29,883	29,883	30,333
Plant Operations	3,928,871	4,017,007	4,049,921
Plant Maintenance	1,586,359	1,645,165	1,698,025
Central Printing	385,568	386,445	384,474
Data Processing Services	403,076	405,359	408,711
Insurance	415,000	420,000	440,000
BOCES Administrative Fees	<u>500,000</u>	<u>510,000</u>	<u>500,000</u>
<b>Total General Support</b>	<b>9,845,778</b>	<b>9,991,582</b>	<b>10,104,967</b>

### Instruction

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
Curriculum Development	600,557	611,898	619,524
Supervision of Schools	2,815,978	2,938,580	2,968,788
Supervision of Special Schools	54,000	54,540	55,358
Research, Planning & Evaluation	121,490	124,527	126,084
Staff Development	302,190	302,727	321,984
All Regular Instruction	36,323,467	37,155,513	38,483,736
Pupils with Special Needs	10,032,274	10,421,723	10,632,080
Occupational Education	220,000	270,000	270,000
Instruction in Special Schools	910,625	895,375	908,220
Library and Audio-Visual Services	502,818	532,348	545,723
Educational Television	124,307	123,795	141,601
Computer Assisted Instruction	2,053,195	2,055,620	2,313,282
Attendance Services	56,113	57,516	58,810
Guidance Services	1,137,593	1,165,804	1,216,208
Health Services	1,023,587	1,098,930	1,126,530
Psychological Services	1,027,146	1,051,968	1,082,880
Social Work Services	791,000	789,375	834,578
Pupil Personnel Services	93,296	95,628	97,780
Co-Curricular Activities	379,120	385,720	390,171
Interscholastic Activities	<u>1,087,475</u>	<u>1,087,591</u>	<u>1,109,337</u>
<b>Total Instruction</b>	<b>59,656,231</b>	<b>61,219,178</b>	<b>63,302,674</b>

### Transportation

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
District Transportation	411,941	501,651	511,595
Contract Transportation	3,243,564	3,194,338	3,218,382
Public Transportation	43,000	55,000	55,000
BOCES Transportation	<u>400,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>	<u>373,000</u>
<b>Total Transportation</b>	<b>4,098,505</b>	<b>4,150,989</b>	<b>4,157,977</b>

## 2015/2016 PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

### Community Services

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
General Support	180,000	180,000	180,000
Instruction	<u>12,950</u>	<u>12,950</u>	<u>12,950</u>
<b>Total Community Services</b>	<b>192,950</b>	<b>192,950</b>	<b>192,950</b>

### Employee Benefits

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
NYS Employee Retirement System	1,400,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
NYS Teacher Retirement System	5,800,000	6,500,000	6,500,000
Social Security	4,350,000	4,300,000	4,400,000
Workers' Compensation	475,000	510,000	525,000
Life Insurance	60,500	60,500	60,000
Unemployment Insurance	110,000	100,000	95,000
Health/Dental Insurance	10,758,000	10,961,000	11,577,000
Union Benefits	<u>864,900</u>	<u>857,900</u>	<u>853,400</u>
<b>Total Employee Benefits</b>	<b>23,818,400</b>	<b>24,489,400</b>	<b>25,210,400</b>

### Debt Service, Building Improvements and Inter-fund Transfers

	2013/14 <u>Budget</u>	2014/15 <u>Budget</u>	2015/16 <u>Proposed Budget</u>
Interest on Tax Anticipation Notes	331,481	200,000	180,000
Transfer: Debt & Special Aid Funds	1,805,007	2,892,655	3,929,692
Transfer: Capital Fund	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total Debt Service, Building Improvements and Inter-fund Transfers</b>	<b>3,136,488</b>	<b>3,092,655</b>	<b>4,109,692</b>

## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### WHAT WILL BE THE BUDGET INCREASE THAT THE COMMUNITY IS ASKED TO VOTE ON?

The budget that will be presented to the voters reflects a 3.82% budget increase and a 2.79% tax levy increase. This increase will allow the District to maintain all its current programs, provide additional support for the implementation of Common Core and support the funding of the capital and bond projects approved in the March 2013 School Improvement Bond.

### WHAT IS THE TAX LEVY CAP?

For the 2015/2016 school year, the State determined Tax Levy Cap for the Rockville Centre Schools is 2.81%. The Tax Levy Cap is a State limit on the total levy set by local governments and school districts. It is not a limit on the assessed value, tax rate, or the amount to which an individual homeowner's taxes may increase. The Tax Levy Cap is calculated using a State determined formula. School districts may not adopt a budget that requires a tax levy which exceeds the prior year's levy by more than 2% or the rate of inflation plus any exclusions as determined by the State formula, whichever is less, unless the voters officially override the tax levy limitation with a 60% supermajority vote. Since the budget being presented to the community requires a tax levy which is under the allowable Tax Levy Cap, the budget needs a simple majority approval rate in order to be successful.

### WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE 2015/2016 BUDGET ON THE AVERAGE TAXPAYER?

There are a number of factors and variables that contribute to the changes in how much a homeowner pays in taxes each year. These include changes to the assessed value, tax levy, adjusted base proportion, and STAR exemptions. According to the Nassau County Department of Assessment, the average home in Rockville Centre for the 2015/2016 school year is tentatively valued at \$491,200. The projected tax increase on the average home in Rockville Centre for 2015/2016 is estimated to be approximately \$206 based on the information currently available from the Nassau County Assessor's Office.



## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### HOW IS THE 2015/2016 BUDGET AFFECTED BY COMMON CORE AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION?

New York State has shifted its Math program to the Common Core. This shift has created a number of challenges for local school districts and their students. In 2015/2016, the Rockville Centre School District intends to further invest in refining its curriculum, training its teachers, and providing adequate support to students who may be struggling during this transition to the Common Core. This budget, therefore, reflects the District's commitment to our students by increasing our support of students at the elementary level. This budget also reflects an increase in our commitment to training staff more deeply and thoroughly on the skills necessary to effectively provide instruction in the Common Core.

### HOW WILL THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BOND AFFECT THE 2015/2016 BUDGET?

This year the District issued \$35 million in bonds, of the \$45.9 million authorized, to pay for the capital projects identified in the School Improvement Bond. These projects include the construction that is currently taking place at South Side High School and Watson Elementary School, as well as the various projects underway throughout the District. The District took advantage of historically low interest rates which will result in a lower cost to the taxpayer than originally estimated. The proposed 2015/2016 budget reflects payments on the new debt of \$1,037,037.

### WHAT TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES ARE SUPPORTED BY THE BUDGET?

After successfully rolling out one-to-one iPad initiatives with students in grades 5 through 8 over the past three years, the District plans to continue its momentum towards building and improving 21st century skills by providing iPads to all students in grades 9 through 12 for the 2015/16 school year. iPads have become an invaluable resource to our students. By continuing this initiative in the high school, students will continue to have access to the vast resources available through technology including programs such as "Flipped Learning" which allows students to access, outside of the classroom, lessons prepared by their teachers.

By utilizing iPads already in the high school library, the District will only need to purchase iPads for three grades. While this is a large investment, we feel strongly that it's not just an investment in technology but an investment in the future of our students. In an effort to support this initiative, we will be conducting professional development for our teachers and administrators to ensure that we use the technology to its greatest potential. The technology budget is purchased through Nassau BOCES from whom we will receive approximately 50% in aid for every dollar we spend.

### WHAT MEASURES HAS THE DISTRICT TAKEN TO KEEP EXPENDITURES LOW?

Rockville Centre School District's long-range planning results in a spending plan that has been developed to keep educational expectations high while trying to minimize the cost to the District residents. Some of the steps the District has taken to keep expenditures low are:

- Negotiated increased employee contribution to health insurance.
- Settled contracts for all bargaining units over the past several years at historically low increases.
- Cooperatively bid with BOCES, other districts, County, and the State.
- Trained staff members to provide needed services for students who previously received them from contracted consultants.
- Refinanced existing debt at historically low interest rates.

### WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF VOTERS REJECTED THE PROPOSED BUDGET?

If the budget fails to pass on May 19th, the Board can decide to put up the same budget or an adjusted budget for a public re-vote in June. If the re-vote fails, the District would be forced to adopt a contingency budget with a 0% tax increase. A 0% tax levy increase budget would require the Rockville Centre School District to reduce the budget by \$2,481,906. In addition, school districts that do not receive approval from the voters for their budgets are required to develop "contingent" budgets that strictly limit the types of activities, programs, services and purchases that may be funded.

## Striving for Excellence and Success

### Academics

- 100% of students graduated with a Regents Diploma and 85% of students received a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation
- 98% of graduates went on to higher education
- 2 National Merit Scholarship finalists
- 3 Commended Students in the National Merit Scholarship Program

### Science

- Junior Science and Humanities Symposium— 1 regional finalist
- Nassau Community College Arts and Science Fair—second-place
- Toshiba Exploravision—3 in the top 10% nationwide
- Intel Science and Talent Search— 9 participants
- Siemens Science Competition— 9 participants

### Athletics

- 1 All American athlete
- 7 All State athletes
- 5 All Long Island athletes
- 22 All County athletes
- 2 All County Honorable Mention athletes
- 5 All Class athletes
- 34 All Conference athletes
- 1 Conference Player of the Year in boys' basketball
- 1 Conference Champion in girls' winter track
- 12 All Division athletes
- 5 Scholar athletes
- NYS Gatorade Girls' Soccer Player of the Year
- New York Cosmos Siggy Stritzl Award
- New York State Girls' Soccer Player of the Year

### Music & Art

- 2 American Choral Directors' National Honor Choir
- 4 All State musicians
- 6 All County artists
- 83 All County musicians
- 7 Long Island String Festival musicians
- 28 PEAK (Parents, Educators, and Kids) musicians



## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Rockville Centre Public Schools  
128 Shepherd Street Rockville Centre, NY 11570  
(516)255-8957  
LIZ DION, President  
MAYDA KRAMER, Vice President  
JOHN O'SHEA, Secretary  
MARK MASIN, Trustee  
GREGG SPAULDING, Trustee  
WILLIAM H. JOHNSON, Ed.D., Supt. of Schools  
ROBERT A. BARTELS, Asst. Supt. of Schools  
CHRISTOPHER J. PELLETTIERI, Asst. Supt. of Schools  
NOREEN LEAHY, Ed.D., Asst. Supt. of Schools

# **Annual Election and Budget Vote** **Tuesday, May 19, 2015—7 AM to 9 PM** **South Side High School Gymnasium**

### **Preliminary Budget Hearing:**

Changes or modifications in budget may result at this meeting.  
Tuesday, **April 21, 2015** at 7:30 PM – South Side High School

### **Budget Hearing:**

No changes to the budget can be made at this time.  
Wednesday, **May 6, 2015** at 7:30 PM – South Side High School

### **Voter Registration:**

School Business Hours 8:15 AM—4:30 PM through **May 14, 2015**  
District Administration Building, 128 Shepherd Street

### **Voter Qualifications:**

You must be eighteen years of age or older, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the District for at least thirty days before the day of the vote.

### **Absentee Ballot Information:**

Absentee ballot applications can be picked up at the District Clerk's office, mailed to you, or downloaded from the District's website at [www.rvcschools.org](http://www.rvcschools.org). Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk by 5:00PM on **May 19, 2015**.

**YOUR VOTE COUNTS!**