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VOTE

May 21, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Walter B. Howard
Elementary School Gymnasium

2024–2025 BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget:

\$14,707,074

Tax Levy Increase: 8.91%

School Board Election

Voters will be asked to select two candidates for the Board of Education. Two three-year seats are open. Michael Brutsch and William Buckenroth are running unopposed. They are non-paid terms.

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2024-2025 SCHOOL BUDGET:

District, Facing Shortfall, Urges Community Members to Get Out and Vote

As the District's superintendent for four years and the elementary school's principal for over six years, I have seen firsthand how educating a child takes a whole community. This is particularly true when facing a difficult budget year. Over the past several months, our Board of Education and district have worked tirelessly to create a school budget that balances our students' current needs with the economic realities we face.

On Tuesday, May 21, the community will vote on a \$14,707,074 proposed budget for the 2024-2025 school year. This budget is an increase of \$898,960 from the 2023-2024 school year, due to an increase in student needs and rising costs for the District. During the pandemic the District received COVID grant funding to help support our student's mental health, learning interventions, and specific academic needs. This COVID grant funding is no longer available, but our students still need the additional support. In addition, over the last two years, the District has seen an increase in students who require special programming. To meet those needs, we have successfully opened two special classes that are able to provide an individualized learning environment for those students.

The New Lebanon Central School District is receiving no increase in state aid for the 24-25 school year. Without additional New York State school aid, the increase in student needs, rise in health insurance, inflationary costs, and contractual obligations, we were forced to consider reductions that would impact student programming. After hearing from numerous community members and parents, it was clear that these reductions needed to be reconsidered. As a result, we are asking our community to go above the tax cap.

The District is proposing to go above the tax cap and raise the tax levy by 8.91%, for a total of \$9,846,484. The remainder of the budget consists of non-tax revenue (\$258,000), state aid (\$3,880,675) and use of the District's fund balance/reserves (\$721,915) resulting in a total of \$14,707,074.

To continue programming for our students despite the proposed 8.91% tax levy – the District is moving forward with several Board of Education approved reductions in expenses. Some of these changes include reducing a full-time laborer, campus school resource deputy, reduction of our Jr/Sr. High School hall monitor, curriculum teacher coordinators, and a reduction of our communication specialist. Ultimately, the aim of the District is to maintain as high a quality experience for students as possible, while assuming full responsibility for balancing the budget and putting the District on track towards greater prosperity. If this proposed budget

is not approved by our taxpayers, the district will be faced with having to make significant program and extracurricular reductions to the school budget.

For more information on our budget please refer to our Budget section of our District webpage (www.newlebanoncsd.org/district/budget). Above all, be sure to get out and vote on Tuesday, May 21, 12-8 p.m. at the Walter B. Howard Elementary School gymnasium.

Fondly,
Andrew Kourt
NL Superintendent



How Would This Increase Impact My School Taxes?

AVERAGE COST TO TAXPAYER OF FIVE YEAR AVERAGE INCREASE IN TAX LEVY						
Taxable Value	SENIOR/STAR \$81,400 Equalized Value Exemption Income Restrictions*		WITH STAR \$30,000 Equalized Value Exemption Primary Residence		NO STAR Non-Primary Residence	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
\$220,000	\$ 119	\$ 9.92	\$ 163	\$ 13.58	\$ 189	\$ 15.75
270,000	162	13.50	206	17.17	232	19.33
320,000	205	17.08	249	20.75	275	22.92
370,000	248	20.67	292	24.33	318	26.50
420,000	291	24.25	335	27.92	361	30.08

8.91%

A TRIP OF A LIFETIME:

Jr./Sr. High School Students Explore Eastern Europe with the Travel Club

During Spring Break, the Travel Club embarked on a trip through Eastern Europe, exploring Berlin, Germany; Dresden, Germany; Krakow, Poland; Prague, Czech Republic; and Budapest, Hungary. New Lebanon students covered their own expenses for this trip through payments and/or fundraising.

Throughout the trip, students immersed themselves in the rich history and culture of each city through sightseeing tours and museum visits. For senior Gabe Kalisz, this was his first time outside of the country.

"I considered myself a homebody before this trip, but it was very eye-opening. It was cool to be immersed in someone else's culture, to hear their language spoken, and to see it all around you," said Kalisz.

While he enjoyed exploring the cities, trying different foods, and learning about the history as a World War II enthusiast, one particular moment stood out to Gabe the most. During their time in Poland, the club went to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, the site of a concentration camp during World War II.

"It was a very hard place for me to be. Just to experience even a sliver of what people who were actually sent there had to go through was very difficult and very emotional. It changes the way you see people's actions in that it makes me realize there really is not a place for hate," said Kalisz.

Reflecting on the trip as a whole, Gabe said that he is happy he went with the Travel Club as it pushed him outside of his comfort zone and encourages fellow students to take the leap and join the next trip.

"It was an amazing experience. It's good that students have this opportunity and it really brings people together. I traveled with a group of people that I don't consider close friends and I had a lot of great



experiences with them," said Gabe.

Jr./Sr. High School Principal Matthew Klafehn is happy that the district is able to offer these opportunities for our students to travel abroad. "The learning and perspective that naturally occurs in these experiences will be carried with our young travelers throughout their lives. I would like to extend a big thank you to our advisors and chaperones who plan each trip and make it possible for our kids. I am also very proud of our students, as they represent our community incredibly well on these excursions," said Klafehn.

The Travel Club is currently planning their trip to Switzerland, Germany, and Austria in 2026. If you are interested in learning more about the trip, please reach out to Sarah Roblez at sroblez@newlebanoncsd.org for more information.

Bus Purchase Proposition

On May 21, 2024, New Lebanon residents will see a separate proposition on the 2024-2025 school budget seeking voter approval to bond 3 new, 30 passenger school buses for a total of \$284,561. Bonding buses allows the district to pay for the buses over several years, instead of spending all of the money upfront.

The bus purchase is part of the district's replacement plan designed to keep the fleet in working order. By bonding buses, the district will receive 29% in state aid reimbursement. This plan allows the district to maximize the efficiency and safety of the bus fleet while saving on parts, labor and fuel that would be required to keep older buses on the road.

New bus purchases replace old buses based on the vehicle's mileage, age, repair history, and condition. The average lifespan of a bus is 10-12 years, and between 120,000-130,000 miles. Corrosive salt mixture used during winter weather also affects the conditions of buses in the northeast and our region.



Why is the district purchasing new buses?

New buses have the latest safety features, increased fuel efficiency, reduced maintenance costs, and higher trade in values. Maintenance costs for older buses are much higher and the trade in value much lower. It's a cost-efficient way to keep our fleet up to date, and our students safe during transport.

Bus Purchase Financing Breakdown

Borrowing Costs	\$317,830
Total Principal to be financed over 5 years	\$ 284,561
Add Finance costs	\$ 33,269
Total Purchase cost	\$ 317,830
Less State Aid	\$ 92,824
Total Tax Payer Cost	\$225,006

Annual Tax Payer Cost Over 5 Years

Year 1 2025.....	\$	0
Year 2 2026.....	\$	141,603.00
Year 3 2027.....	\$	39,812.00
Year 4 2028.....	\$	26,820.00
Year 5 2029.....	\$	19,435.00
Year 6 2030.....	\$	(2,665.00)

Reductions Already Made to the 2024-2025 Budget

Ahead of the 2024-25 school budget vote, the District and Board of Education have already made the following reductions to positions and services.

Laborer	\$54,000
School Resource Officer	\$40,000
Communication Specialist	\$23,084
Hall Monitor	\$22,000
Curricular Coordinators	\$20,500
2 Full-Time Aides (Due to student needs) ...	\$61,588

Possible Reductions to School Budget if Budget Vote is Not Passed

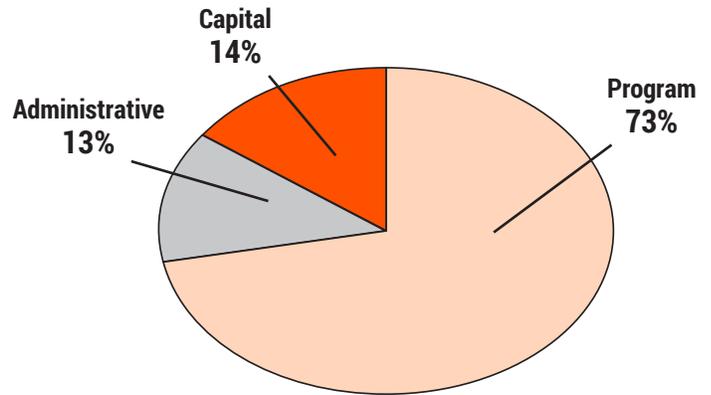
If the 2024-25 school year budget does not pass on May 21, the district will be forced to consider additional possible reductions, some examples include:

- Instructional non-mandated positions
- Administrative positions
- Sports
- After-school clubs
- District wide field trips

2024–25 New Lebanon CSD Budget

3 PART BUDGET

Component	Amount	Percentage
Program	\$10,746,308	73%
Administrative	\$1,915,308	13%
Capital	\$2,045,458	14%
Total	\$14,707,074	100%



BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	2023-24	Proposed Budget 2024-25	Change from 2023-24
Instruction	\$4,291,604	\$4,901,426	\$609,822
Special Education	\$1,249,529	\$1,384,321	\$134,792
Employee Benefits	\$3,966,832	\$4,329,882	\$363,050
Information Technology	\$180,085	\$195,581	\$15,496
General Support	\$862,970	\$884,877	\$21,907
Operations and Maintenance	\$1,013,344	\$926,943	-\$86,401
Co-Curricular and Athletics	\$180,800	\$155,400	-\$25,400
Transportation	\$895,568	\$761,629	-\$133,939
Debt Service	\$1,012,382	\$1,127,015	\$114,633
Interfund Transfers	\$155,000	\$40,000	-\$115,000
Total Expenditures	\$13,808,114	\$14,707,074	\$898,960

REVENUE SUMMARY

Category	2023-24	Proposed Budget 2024-25	Change from 2023-24
Non Tax Revenue	\$250,394	\$258,000	\$7,606
State Aid	\$3,905,690	\$3,880,675	-\$25,015
Tax Levy	\$9,040,936	\$9,846,484	\$805,548
Fund Balance	\$611,094	\$404,915	-\$206,179
ERS Reserve	\$0	\$157,000	\$157,000
Debt Service Fund	\$0	\$160,000	\$160,000
Total Revenues	\$13,808,114	\$14,707,074	\$898,960

New Lebanon CSD 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	\$ 13,808,114	\$14,707,074	\$13,901,526
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-24 School Year		\$898,960	\$93,412
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		6.51 %	1%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$9,040,936	\$9,846,484	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$9,040,936	\$9,846,484	\$9,040,936
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$523,153	\$268,811	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$8,626,043	\$8,761,913	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$8,517,783	\$9,577,673	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$108,260	-\$815,760	
Administrative Component	\$1,678,407	\$1,915,308	\$1,709,296
Program Component	\$9,655,096	\$10,746,308	\$10,146,772
Capital Component	\$2,474,611	\$2,045,458	\$2,045,458

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2024-25 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

The contingency budget administrative percentage will not exceed the prior years percentage, the budget will require a reduction in all equipment, supplies and professional development. The Tax levy decrease will be offset by extracurricular and program reductions.

** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	
Town of Canaan	\$ 373
Town of Chatham	\$377
Town of Nassau	\$326
Town of New Lebanon	\$373
Town of Stephentown	\$313

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the New Lebanon Central school district, Columbia County, New York, will be held at the Walter B. Howard Elementary school(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 between the hours of 12:00pm and 8:00pm, prevailing time in the Walter B. Elementary school(s), at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

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Kyle Kuffel
Robert Long
Sharon Powers
Thom Rigg

The Board of Education meets once a month on the second Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. Please visit our website for specific dates.

www.newlebanoncsd.org/district/boe

SUPERINTENDENT

Andrew Kourt

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POSTAL PATRON

BUDGET VOTE & BOARD ELECTION

May 21, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Walter B. Howard Elementary
School Gymnasium

SAVE THE DATE!

Important Upcoming Dates in the District

- May 21, 2024: School Budget Vote at Walter B. Howard Elementary School, 12:00 pm-8:00 pm
- May 22, 2024: Jr./Sr. High School Spring Concert, 6:00 pm
- May 23, 2024: Memorial Day Assembly at the Jr./Sr. High School, 9:00 am
- May 30, 2024: World Fair at Walter B. Howard Elementary School, 6:00 pm
- June 1, 2024: Jr./Sr. High School Prom, 4:30 pm
- June 4, 2024: Walter B. Howard Elementary School Spring Concert, 6:00 pm
- June 5, 2024: Junior High School Academic Awards at the Jr./Sr. High School, 7:45 am
- June 6, 2024: High School Academic Awards at the Jr./Sr. High School, 7:45 am
- June 21, 2024: Kindergarten Graduation at Walter B. Howard Elementary School, 9:00 am
- June 26, 2024: 6th Grade Moving Up Ceremony at Walter B. Howard Elementary School 9:00 am
- Jun 27, 2024: Jr./Sr. High School Graduation, 6:00 pm

Voting Information

Voter Eligibility: You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older and a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

Absentee Ballots: The 2024 election and budget vote is occurring in-person at Walter B. Howard Elementary School. Absentee ballots are available to residents who will be out of town or unable to vote in person because of illness or disability. You may request a mailed absentee ballot from the District Clerk's Office until May 14th. After that date, absentee ballots can be requested in person at the District Clerk's Office. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the School District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on May 21, 2024. Copies of the itemized budget are available online, in the school's main office, and in the town libraries. For information email kmcgivern@newlebanoncsd.org.