



Vote Tuesday, May 16, on 23-24 Budget, Buses, Student Representative to the Board & Castleton Public Library Proposition

Propositions on the Ballot

On Tuesday, May 16, 2023, Schodack Central School District community members will be asked to vote on whether to approve the following propositions. **See the back page for how and where to vote.**

1. A proposed budget for the 2023-24 school year
2. The purchase of 2 school buses
3. Permitting a non-voting student representative on the board
4. Castleton Public Library funding proposition

Board of Education Election

Community members will also be asked to vote for three seats on Schodack's Board of Education. **See page 2 for candidate information.**

What is the Proposed 2023-24 School Year Budget?

The proposed budget for the 2023-2024 School Year is \$28,020,109. This budget represents a 2.90% tax levy increase which is below the allowable New York State Property Tax Cap of 4.10%.

What Will the Budget Be Used For?

The proposed budget is broken down for use in three categories each year:

- **Program (71.71%):** Teaching & student support staff salaries/benefits (this includes health services, guidance, library, occupational education, computer assisted instruction, extracurricular and athletics staff), textbooks, instructional supplies, BOCES program costs, student transportation services and more.
- **Capital (17.48%):** Salaries/benefits for custodial, maintenance & grounds staff, utilities, building repairs, operations & maintenance supplies and other district facilities related expenses.
- **Administrative (10.81%):** Salaries/benefits of administrative staff, plus the salaries/benefits of supervisory, clerical and other administrative support staff. Also includes expenses for school board costs, curriculum development, building supervision, central printing & data processing, contracts for services, postage and copy costs, insurance and other administrative related expenses.

School Resource Officer

The proposed budget includes the cost of paying for a School Resource Officer (SRO) in the district. SROs are police officers specifically assigned to school districts to help them with a variety of needs including improving school safety, assisting with in-school conflict resolution, teaching safety education programs and building stronger relationships between the police and school community.

Transfer to Capital to Complete Gym Work

Included in the budget is a \$100,000 transfer to capital allocated for finishing work on the Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Gym. This year money was budgeted to refinish the gym floor, replace the sound system and replace the basketball hoop motors. Due to the cost of materials and labor being higher than anticipated when creating the 2022-2023 Budget, only the floor was refinished and basketball hoop motor replacement was started. This transfer will allow the district to finish the work on the gym by replacing the sound system and the remaining basketball hoop motors.

School Bus Purchases

The district asks voters to consider approval for purchasing 2 school buses at a cost of no more than \$300,000. This number represents the purchase price before the district receives NYS aid money which will ultimately lessen the final impact on taxpayers.

Castleton Public Library Proposition

Separate from the school district budget vote is a proposition on the ballot for the Castleton Public Library that will read: "Pursuant to Education Law, Section 259, shall the Board of Education of the Schodack Central School District be authorized to levy and collect an annual tax, separate and apart from the annual school district budget, in the amount of one hundred fifty-nine thousand dollars (\$159,000), which shall be paid to the Castleton Public Library for the support and maintenance of the library; with this appropriated amount to be the annual appropriation until thereafter modified by a future vote of the electors of the Schodack Central School District?"

Board of Education Candidates

Residents of the Schodack Central School District will vote for three (3) seats opening on the Schodack Board of Education. Each seat is for a 3-year term (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026). The four candidates and a statement from each are below.

BLAKE KUSH

I'm Blake Kush and I would be honored to represent you on the Schodack Board of Education. District residents since 2011, my wife Danielle and I chose to live here because of the intimate community and quality of public education offered. Together, we are raising two future glass ceiling breaking daughters who are proud to wear the Wildcat red and blue. Committed to serving the underserved, I have fifteen years of professional experience running training and economic development programs for low-income families and victims of crime in both the non-profit sector and state government. I also have a master's degree in social work, own a small business, and have the title of "coach" for many of your kiddos in our youth soccer and softball leagues. With your support, I will be an advocate for all our children. A better individual makes a better family. A better family makes a better community.

MARY YURISTA

Schodack is a special place. As a member of this community for over 35 years, I'm privileged to have served on the Board of Education for 9 years as a member and recently, as Vice-President. We've carefully transformed our facilities into a 21st-century learning environment and enhanced our educational model during that time. With the support of the Schodack BOE, I also serve on the Board of our educational partner, Questar III. In my professional life (BS-SUNY Oswego, MBA-SUNY Albany), I have served in various technical capacities leading and participating in projects that have brought innovation and improvement. The private sector offers beneficial guidance and progressive ideas that allow us to sustain and improve the quality of education and everyday life for all. As a parent and grandparent, I want the same success for every student that my children (three Maple Hill graduates) have been able to enjoy. I would be honored to be able to continue to help the BOE meet the challenges we face in our schools to facilitate the well-being and future success of our students in this new uncertain environment and economy.

SHELLEY PALMER

My name is Shelley Palmer and for about ten years, my husband Zac and I have been proud to call Schodack home. Our two children, Vivienne and Andrew, are members of the Class of 2028. I have had the honor to serve our community as a member of the Board of Education for the past 4 years and have been elected by my peers on the Board to serve as President for the past 2 years. This period of time has been filled with many challenges but school has been dedicated to preparing the students of our community for the challenges of the future. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry from Seton Hall University and a Master's degree in Forensic Science from the University of New Haven. I have 10+ years of experience in education and currently work for the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services. I have been involved in community activities including: Girl Scouts, youth sports, and church activities. It would be a great honor to be re-elected to the Board of Education to continue to support and advocate for the students of Schodack Schools.

ASHLEY PALMER

Born and raised in neighboring East Greenbush, my husband and I chose Schodack to raise our children based on the tight knit community and quality education. We have 3 children, James (LSI '20), Abby (7th grade), and Brody (2nd grade). I was elected last year to a one year board seat, and am grateful for this opportunity to serve our district. I would be honored to remain on the board to continue providing a safe and effective learning environment for all of the children in the district. I am committed to our youth through the Schodack school board, Greenbush Soccer, CYO basketball, and volunteering where and whenever I can. Our strong community base truly shines and they are proud to hear that Schodack is a district that people choose to bring their children to. I would be honored to continue to serve in the position of school board member to continue as an advocate for every child.

Capital Improvement Project Updates

Below is an update about the district's capital improvement work approved by voters last school year.

Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Gym Roof (Approved by voters on December 14, 2021)

Replacement of the approximately 10,000 square foot Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Gym Roof was completed in the Summer of 2022. Over 20 years old, it needed to be replaced since large areas of the fully-adhered rubber roof had delaminated from the structure and were being held in place by concrete pavers as ballast.

Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Gym Floor (Approved by voters on May 17, 2022)

Refinishing the Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Gym Floor was part of a \$100,000 transfer to capital approved by voters as part of the 2022-2023 School Year Budget. The gym floor has now been completely refinished and repainted.

Spring 2022 Capital Project (Approved by voters on May 17, 2022)

Voters approved this capital project the same day they approved the 2022-2023 Budget. Work will cover necessary maintenance, renovations and improvements at all primary district sites (Castleton Elementary, Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School, the District Office and the Bus Garage). Site work for this project will start soon and be broken into two phases. Phase 1 construction is scheduled to begin this May and is expected to be completed in 2023. It will include site work at Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School, the District Office building and Castleton Elementary. We will inform district families if there is any anticipated impact on Summer 2023 programming. Phase 2 construction will begin at a to-be-determined time in 2024 and is expected to be completed within that same year. It will include the remaining site work at Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School, Castleton Elementary, the District Office and the Bus Garage. For more information about specific improvements included in this project visit www.schodack.k12.ny.us.



Gym roof before replacement.



Gym roof after replacement.



Refinished gym floor.

Bus Stop Arm Cameras Now Live

In April, stop arm cameras were installed on all Schodack Central School District buses. The district is now using them to deter drivers from illegally passing buses when their stop sign arms are extended. Installation of these cameras came at no cost to the district thanks to funding from a grant partnership with Rensselaer County. The cameras are created/installed by BusPatrol, which works with school districts around the country to improve student bus safety.

Now if a driver passes a Schodack bus with its stop arm extended – meaning students are entering or exiting the bus – the cameras automatically record a video of the incident and capture the vehicle's license plate number. Footage of the traffic violation is sent directly to BusPatrol, who in turn reports it to the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Department which will then send a ticket to the registered owner of the vehicle.

"I'm very grateful for this opportunity for us to partner with Rensselaer County and BusPatrol. If a student uses our transportation services, we're responsible for their safety from the moment the bus arrives to get them in the morning up until they are back home," says Superintendent of Schools Jason Chevrier.

Mr. Chevrier added, "we're doing everything we can on our part to ensure those students are as safe as possible at the start and end of their school day. Hopefully, it encourages the drivers sharing the roads with our buses to do their part as well."



Stop arm camera on Schodack bus.



Expenditures

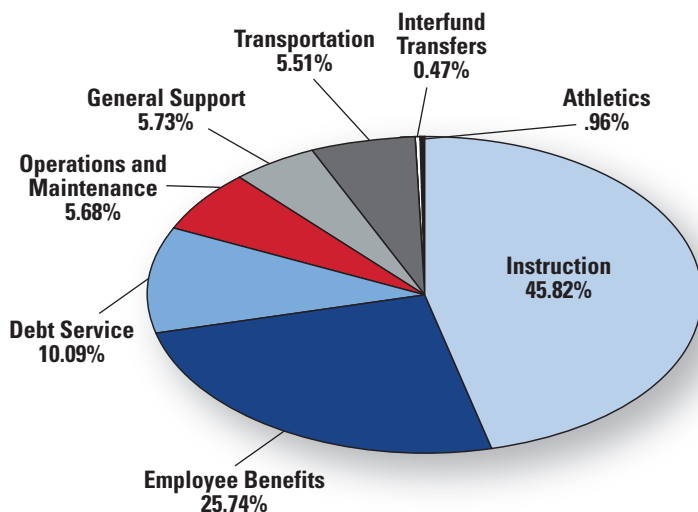
Category	2022-2023	Proposed 2023-2024	Change from 2022-2023	% of Budget
Instruction	\$ 12,172,355	\$ 12,839,572	\$ 667,217	45.82%
Employee Benefits	6,953,643	7,211,012	257,369	25.74%
Debt Service	3,076,211	2,826,748	(249,463)	10.09%
Operations and Maintenance	1,543,456	1,592,513	49,057	5.68%
General Support	1,545,010	1,604,496	59,486	5.73%
Transportation	1,198,969	1,544,384	345,415	5.51%
Athletics	269,760	269,234	(526)	0.96%
Interfund Transfers	132,150	132,150	—	0.47%
Total Expenditures	\$ 26,891,554	\$ 28,020,109	\$ 1,128,556	100.00%

Revenues

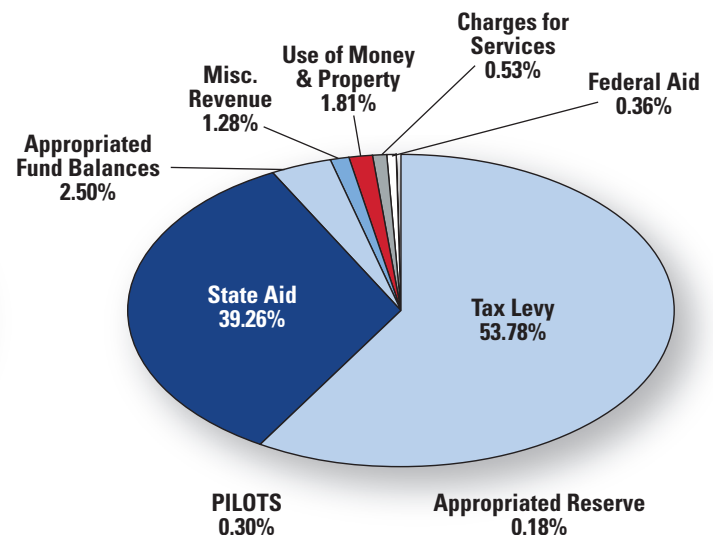
Category	2022-2023	Proposed 2023-2024	Change from 2022-2023	% of Revenues
Tax Levy	\$ 14,643,450	\$ 15,068,110	\$ 424,660	53.78%
State Aid*	10,309,437	11,000,789	691,352	39.26%
Appropriated Fund Balance	750,000	700,000	(50,000)	2.50%
Use of Money & Property	385,723	507,985	122,262	1.81%
Miscellaneous Revenue	386,179	359,706	(26,473)	1.28%
Charges for Services	204,500	149,500	(55,000)	0.53%
Federal Aid	95,000	100,000	5,000	0.36%
PILOTS	83,138	84,494	1,356	0.30%
Appropriated Reserve	34,126	49,525	15,399	0.18%
Total Revenues	\$ 26,891,553	\$ 28,020,109	\$ 1,128,556	100.00%

*A Note on State Aid: New York State Aid revenues are based upon New York State Budget estimates at the time of printing.

Expenditure Summary



Revenue Summary



SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2022-23 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2023-24 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 26,891,553	\$28,020,109	\$27,699,778
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-24 School Year		\$1,128,556	\$808,225
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		4.20 %	3.0%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$14,643,450	\$15,068,110	
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)	\$14,643,450	\$15,068,110	\$14,643,450
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$786,941	\$1,011,192	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$13,856,509	\$14,232,526	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$13,856,509	\$14,056,918	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$175,608	
Administrative Component	\$2,891,344	\$3,030,152	\$2,923,513
Program Component	\$18,945,214	\$20,092,637	\$19,939,056
Capital Component	\$5,054,995	\$4,789,320	\$4,732,880
* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2023-24 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.			
** 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	
Bus Purchase (Not to Exceed)		\$300,000	
2023 Capital Outlay Project		\$100,000	
		\$	
		\$	

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$662

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the qualified voters of the Schodack Central School District, Rensselaer County, New York, will be held at the Jr./Sr. HS school in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 between the hours of 6:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Schodack 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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VOTING FAQ

What am I voting on?

Residents will vote on a proposed \$28,020,109 budget for the 2023-24 School Year, a proposition to purchase school buses, permitting a non-voting student representative on the board and a Castleton Public Library funding proposition. Additionally, residents will elect three individuals to sit on Schodack's Board of Education.

When and where is the vote?

Voting will take place in the Maple Hill Jr./Sr. High School Gym on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Who can vote?

You must be at least 18 years old and a U.S. citizen. Advance registration is not required, however, voters will be asked to swear or affirm that they are residents of the district and have been for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

Can I vote by absentee ballot?

Completed absentee ballot applications must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be given personally to the voter. To request an absentee ballot application, please contact District Clerk Michele Reickert at (518) 732-2297.

What if I have questions?

For further information, please call the District Office at (518) 732-2297 or visit the district website: www.schodack.k12.ny.us

A FOND FAREWELL TO RETIRING SCHODACK FACULTY AND STAFF!

Schodack CSD bids a fond farewell to the following retiring faculty and staff members. The district thanks them all for the many things they have done to benefit the students and this school community. We wish them a very happy retirement!

- **Tracy D'Amico, Physical Education Teacher**
- **Janis Clarke, Stenographer**
- **Richard Ostrander, Building Maintenance Mechanic**
- **Kelly Travers-Main, School Bus Driver/Courier**
- **Deborah Hammond, School Bus Attendant**

