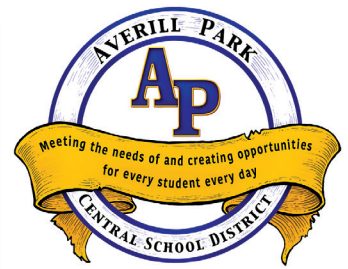


Averill Park



BUDGET VOTE

**Tuesday
May 16, 2023**

**7 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Averill Park High School
AUXILIARY GYM**

*Voting will take place
by scanning-type voting
machines, as required by law*



AP students continue to achieve great things. See page 3.

2023-2024 BUDGET SUMMARY

- ▶ **Proposed Budget:**
\$64,915,480
- ▶ **Budget-to-Budget:**
Increase 1.63%
- ▶ **Estimated Tax Levy**
Increase: 2.99%
(Meets the tax levy limit)

The Proposed Budget maintains most programs and services offered in 2022-23 and meets the changing needs of the district.

Also on the Ballot...

- ▶ **Board of Education Election** (See page 2)
- ▶ **Capital Reserve Fund** (See page 2)
- ▶ **Bus Purchase Proposition** (See page 5)

2023-24 Proposed Budget Focuses on Fiscal Responsibility, Being Student-Centered

Limited State Aid Increase Will Lead to Reductions

On Tuesday, May 16, Averill Park Central School District community members will vote on a spending plan for the 2023-24 school year that seeks to maintain a rigorous academic curriculum and supports diverse music, arts, extracurricular, and athletic programs despite limited State Aid.

"This year, the District received the minimum increase in Foundation Aid from New York State, which will, unfortunately, negatively impact students as we have had to reduce our workforce," Superintendent Dr. James Franchini said. "We will continue to do everything we can to be good financial stewards for our community and honor our commitment to meet the needs of and create opportunities for every student every day."

The \$64,915,480 budget is supported by a 2.99% tax levy increase which continues the District's practice over the past 12 years of adopting tax levies that are within the State's statutory Property Tax Cap limit.

The community will also vote on a proposition to purchase nine (9) school buses and two (2) maintenance trucks at a maximum cost of \$1,126,072 as part of the district's long-term bus replacement plan (page 5).

Summary of the proposed budget:

- Due to the limited State Aid increase, the District must reduce the budget by \$1.3 million in order to balance the budget and stay within the tax cap limit.
- 11 positions will be reduced through retirement, temporary appointments that are expiring, and layoffs.
- Middle School and High School electives, along with intervention services at all levels, will be reduced.
- Budget lines throughout multiple departments will be reduced. For example, athletics will cut JV Cheerleading, and reduce uniform, equipment, and contracted transportation services.
- Four positions will be added to the budget based on special education needs. The creation of a second 12:1:1 program will require a special education teacher and a teaching assistant. Additionally, the District will add a speech therapist and another teaching assistant to the Special Education Department.
- Poestenkill Elementary School will see a reduction in one class section because of enrollment.

For more information about the proposed budget, please visit averillpark.k12.ny.us and click on "Budget Corner."

District Residents to Vote on Implementation of Capital Reserve Fund

In addition to voting on the annual school budget and electing members to the Board of Education, residents will vote on the implementation of a Capital Reserve Fund.

A reserve fund acts as a savings account, allowing a school district to set aside funds for a specific use in the future. There are a dozen different types of reserve funds used in school districts. Funds in

the capital reserve will be used to offset the tax impact of future capital projects.

For example, the District will eventually need to propose another capital project for the community to vote on. If the project costs \$20 million and we do not have a capital reserve, then the entire amount that is not aided by the State will be taxpayer funded. If

the District saves \$5 million in this reserve, then those funds would be used to offset the total cost of the project. This will save taxpayers money by reducing the amount that needs to be borrowed, which will reduce the interest owed on the money that was borrowed.

Please note that there is no tax increase associated with establishing the fund. Additionally, taxpayers will need to vote on whether or not to allow the District to spend the reserve fund in the future.

The proposed reserve will be limited to \$10 million in contributions over a 10-year period. This amount is a total over time, not an annual funding amount.

Benefits of a Reserve Fund:

- Save for future needs
- Maintain a stable operating budget
- Maintain a stable tax levy
- Boost a district's overall fiscal strength
- Does not increase taxes.



Former Siena College basketball standout and Harlem Globetrotter, Tay Fisher, presented on bullying, harassment, and the power of being an upstander as part of Algonquin Middle School's Warrior Wellness Day. Thank you to APEF for bringing Mr. Fisher to AMS.

Board of Education Election

Voters in the Averill Park Central School District will elect two (2) members to the Board of Education this year. Board members serve three-year, unpaid terms. For more information on candidates running for the Board of Education, visit averillpark.k12.ny.us and click on "Budget Corner."

Safety Improvements

The \$100,000 Capital Outlay project included in the 2023-24 budget is to fund safety enhancements and upgrades at Averill Park High School. This work is part of a comprehensive safety improvement plan and is in addition to the work being done on the secure vestibules as part of the current Capital Project.

Future \$100,000 Capital Outlay projects are anticipated to fund safety upgrades and enhancements at the middle school and each of the elementary schools.

\$100,000 Capital Outlay projects receive State Building Aid in the year following project completion. The District will then receive approximately \$79,200 in State Building Aid in 2024-25 as reimbursement for this project.

Spotlight on Student Success

DISTRICT

- The District partnered with Rensselaer County and Bus Patrol to install Stop-Arm cameras on every school bus in the fleet. The cameras will record vehicles that illegally pass a bus when its red lights are flashing.
- The District conducted its first district-wide school climate and culture survey of students, parents, and employees in order to gain feedback about the school environment from multiple stakeholders.

HIGH SCHOOL

- Seven students in the Class of 2023 fulfilled their academic requirements in an accelerated manner and graduated at the half-way point in January. Congratulations to Emily Bradley, Olivia Dugan, Sean Foster, Chloe Lombardi, Ripley Story, Ashley Svensson and Emily Warner.
- The girls varsity basketball team won its ninth straight Section 2, Class A title and claimed its second straight Regional Championship.
- For the first time in a long time, APHS brought back its Spring Musical with a performance of Little Shop of Horrors.
- The Jazz Ensemble, Treble Choir, Concert Choir, String Orchestra and Concert Band performed at the Empire State Plaza.
- David Morelli attended the NYSSMA Conference All-State Festival as part of the Symphonic Band.
- Varsity girls basketball coach Sean Organ earned his 300th career victory.
- The varsity golf team won the Section 2 Class B championship for the first time in program history.
- Holocaust Survivor Marion Blumenthal Lazan shared her incredible story with students at Averill Park High School and Algonquin Middle School.
- Logan Barsalow competed in the NYSPHSAA Girls Cross Country Championships, Raegan O'Brien competed in the NYSPHSAA Girls Swimming Championships and LJ Welcome competed in the NYSPHSAA Wrestling Championships.
- Taylor Holohan was named Suburban Council MVP for girls basketball.
- Dan Milanese was named Class A 5th Team All-State for varsity football.
- Brady Mazzeo was named the Section 2 Class A Goalkeeper of the Year.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- 121 students earned the Presidential Award for Educational Excellence, the nation's highest honor for middle school students. To qualify, students must have a 90% or higher average from the previous school year and achieve at the highest level on a NYS Assessment.
- Eighth grade student Rebecca Gallerani was awarded a 2023 Scholastic Art Honorable Mention award.
- 40 students participated in the grant-funded AMS CARES After School Student Success Program, working with teachers twice a week on assignments, organization and their connection to school.
- Daniel McAlonie won the VFW Patriot's Pen essay scholarship contest and was followed by Stella Marcy in second place and Anastazia Valachovic in third.
- Amir Lyons, Lana Valachovic and Anastazia Valachovic attended the No Place for Hate STOP Conference at Siena College where they worked with peers from across the region, and met Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado.
- A new water filtration system was fully installed and made operational, allowing the District to stop using bottled water.
- Students raised more than \$6,000 for the American Heart Association.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- Poestenkill Elementary School held its 30th Kids Heart Challenge. More than 130 students participated, raising more than \$9,000 for the American Heart Association.
- The Miller Hill-Sand Lake Elementary School PTA Science Fair returned after a hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- For the first time ever, all three elementary schools fielded Girls on the Run teams which culminated in a 5K run.
- With zero impact to taxpayers, and in partnership with the Town of Poestenkill, a new basketball / pickleball court was created at Poestenkill Elementary School.
- West Sand Lake Elementary School held its annual Harvest Run, collecting food items to benefit local food pantries.
- Students and Families from all three elementary school communities met at MHSL on January 16th for a Day of Service to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy.

Special Education Staff Visit Apple Store to Better Serve Students

Superintendent's Conference Days are either full days or half days where students are not in school, but staff members often take part in professional development opportunities on these days to learn about strategies, tools and techniques to benefit our students.



Teachers visited the Apple Store to learn about using accessibility features on devices in an educational setting.

During a Superintendent's Conference Day in March, a group of teachers headed

to the Apple Store at the Crossgates Mall to participate in a professional development session that will ultimately benefit Special Education students, especially those who have limited motor control or are non-verbal.

In the fall, Kara Pederson, a Teacher of the Visually Impaired, was looking over a new curriculum and began to wonder how some students would access it as it was more computer-based and not all students in the district can use computers or iPads independently.

"We have some students with limited motor control, making it difficult to use computers without assistance," Pedersen said.

She knew about some of the built-in accessibility features that come with an iPad, such as automatic scanning so a user does not have to touch the screen.

"I just didn't know how to actually use those features," she said.

Pedersen got the green-light from Dr. Camille Harrelson, Director of Special Education, to schedule time during the Conference Day. In total, seven Special Education staff members attended the session, including Pedersen, Ann Marie Laliberte, Katie Dergosits, Danielle MacLeod, Jaclyn Sgambati, Jaimie Peterson and Amanda Schrom.

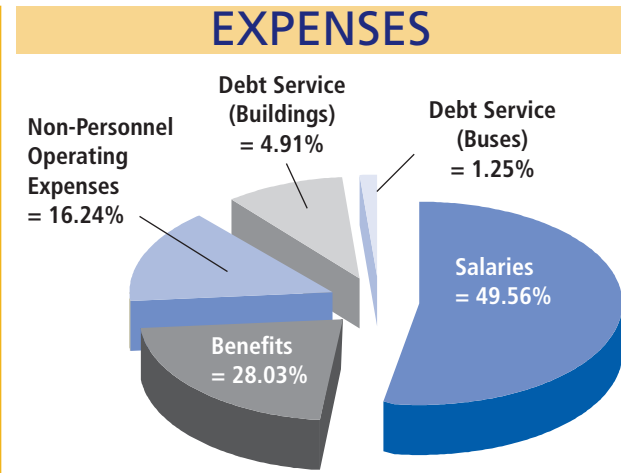
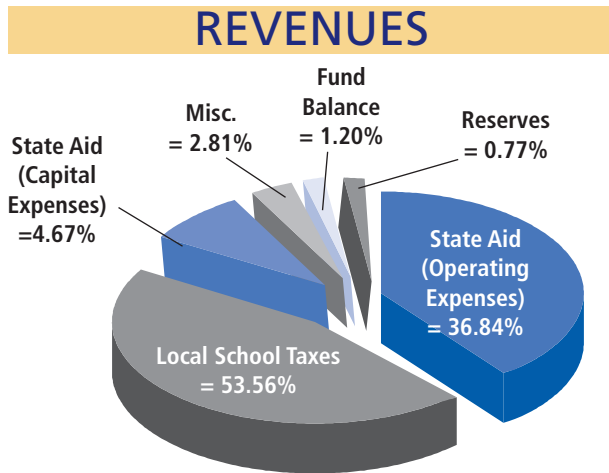
At the Apple Store, the group viewed devices that are usable in an educational setting and learned how students with limited motor control can use the iPad without touching the screen. Students can use switches, which can be a single button or a combination of buttons. They can push to navigate around the screen and select apps. Head movements and sounds can also be assigned commands, like 'Home', 'tap', 'move to next item', and more.

"We practiced with the Blue2 Bluetooth Switch," Pedersen said. "Students who aren't able to physically touch, swipe, or tap the iPad screen can use this switch to navigate to their desired app, open it, and interact with it. With tools like this, all students will be able to actively participate in their classes and work toward independence."

Sessions such as these go a long way in continuing the Averill Park Central School District's mission of meeting the needs of and creating opportunities for every student every day.

REVENUES: Where money comes from to pay for Averill Park's schools

Source of Revenue	Proposed 2022-23	Proposed 2023-24	Dollar Change
State Aid - Operating	\$23,164,373	\$23,912,423	\$748,050
Local Tax	33,756,381	34,765,729	1,009,348
State Aid - Capital	3,805,597	3,034,428	(771,169)
Misc	1,766,996	1,822,900	55,904
Fund Balance	780,000	780,000	-
Workers' Compensation Reserve	100,000	100,000	-
ERS Reserve	500,000	500,000	-
Total Revenues	\$63,873,347	\$64,915,480	\$1,042,133



EXPENSES: How money is spent for Averill Park's schools

Expenses	Proposed 2022-23	Proposed 2023-24	Dollar Difference
Operating Expenses			
Personnel Salaries	\$31,875,381	\$32,173,032	\$297,651
Personnel Benefits	17,465,551	18,197,586	732,035
Non-Personnel Items	9,775,527	10,544,484	768,957
Total Operating Expenses	\$59,116,459	\$60,915,102	\$1,798,643
Capital Expenses			
Debt Service Buildings	\$3,942,100	\$3,188,850	\$(753,250)
Debt Service Buses	814,788	811,528	(3,260)
Total Capital Expenses	\$4,756,888	\$4,000,378	\$(756,510)
Total Expenses	\$63,873,347	\$64,915,480	\$1,042,133

School Bus Purchase Proposition

On May 16, when Averill Park residents vote on the 2023-24 school budget, they will also consider a bus purchase proposition. The proposition seeks voter approval to purchase nine (9) school buses and two (2) maintenance trucks at a total cost not to exceed \$1,126,072 (see the breakdown of bus cost and financing below). The bus purchase is part of the district's long-term bus replacement plan designed to keep the district's fleet in safe, working order.

The School Bus Purchase Proposition breaks down as follows:

- \$921,102 for the purchase of three (3) 65-passenger school buses and six (6) 30-passenger buses.
- \$204,970 for the purchase of two (2) maintenance trucks.

Because the district is eligible to receive approximately 73 percent State Aid on the purchase of these buses, the actual cost to the district will be significantly less than the amount requiring voter approval. The district would also trade in nine (9) buses with a total value of \$42,750 that have become too costly for the district to maintain.



Elementary School students ride the bus to a field trip.

Breakdown of Bus and Equipment Cost & Financing	
Bus Total	\$ 963,852
Less Trade-ins	\$ 42,750
Net Borrowing Cost	
After Trades	\$ 921,102
Total Principal to be financed (5 years)	
financed (5 years)	\$ 921,102
Add Finance Cost	\$ 113,420
Total Purchase Cost	
Total Purchase Cost	\$1,034,522
Less State Aid	\$757,270
Total Taxpayer Cost	
Total Taxpayer Cost	\$ 277,252
Annual Local Taxpayer Cost (over 5 years)	
Annual Local Taxpayer Cost (over 5 years)	\$ 55,450

TRANSPORTATION FACTS

- ▶ Between daily transport, sports, field trips, summer school and summer camps, Averill Park's 75-unit bus fleet travels nearly one million miles a year.
- ▶ In 2022-23, there are 35 in-district runs covering 130 square miles and 14 out-of-district runs to 30 different private, parochial, charter and special needs schools. New York state requires the district to provide transportation to students living in-district who attend private and parochial schools within 15 miles of their home.
- ▶ The average life of fleet buses, due to terrain traveled and Northeast weather conditions, is about 10 years with each bus logging approximately 90,000-130,000 miles over that time.

Bus Purchase Questions & Answers

Why does the district purchase buses on a regular basis?

The proposed bus purchase is part of an ongoing bus replacement plan designed to ensure students are transported on buses that meet the latest safety standards. The plan allows the District to trade in or phase out older, high-mileage vehicles to avoid cost inefficiencies related to keeping them in service.

How does the district determine when to replace a bus?

Mileage is not the only consideration when determining which buses to remove from service and to replace. The primary consideration is the age of the bus. The average lifespan of a school bus in Upstate New York is roughly 10 to 12 years, mostly due to weather conditions. The salt mixture used on local roads is corrosive to a bus structure. After about 10 to 12 years, buses require costly and necessary repairs to pass New York state's rigorous inspection process. It is not cost effective for the District to repair these vehicles.

Why do I sometimes see buses with only a few students on them?

Usually, when you see a bus with only a few students on it, you are probably seeing a bus at the beginning or end of its route, depending on the time of day. Because we have combined high school and middle school bus runs, you may see a bus light in passengers as it travels between the schools for pick-up or drop off. We also transport students to several private, parochial, charter and special needs schools, using smaller vehicles in our fleet better suited to transport smaller numbers of students.

BOARD OF EDUCATION
 Jessica Zweig, *President*
 Samantha Hicks, *Vice President*
 Jacqueline Geraci
 Douglas Kelley
 Meghan McGarry
 Ann Morone
 Adam Stewart

ADMINISTRATION
 Dr. James R. Franchini
Superintendent of Schools
 Matthew Hladun
Assistant Superintendent
 Carrie Nyc-Chevrier
Assistant Superintendent for Business

For more information,
 please call the district at
(518) 674-7066

Averill Park

CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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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	\$ 63,873,347	\$64,915,480	\$63,906,132
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-24 School Year		\$1,042,133	\$32,785
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.63 %	0.05%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$33,756,381	\$34,765,729	
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)	\$33,756,381	\$34,765,729	\$33,756,381
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$699,575	\$696,585	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$33,056,806	\$34,069,144	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$33,056,806	\$34,069,144	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$5,878,022	\$6,470,825	\$5,939,543
Program Component	\$48,827,853	\$49,690,539	\$49,345,531
Capital Component	\$9,167,472	\$8,754,116	\$8,621,058

* Under NYS law, a school may submit a budget to voters a maximum of two times. If the budget is defeated the Board may adopt a contingent budget or put a budget before the voters a second time. If the budget is defeated twice, the Board must adopt a contingent budget. Certain existing contingent budget requirements remain in effect that prohibit spending in specific areas including community use of buildings, certain salary increases and new equipment purchases. More significantly a district that adopts a contingent budget may not increase its current tax levy by any amount. Using the required formula, the proposed budget is within the allowable tax levy limit and requires a simple majority. The proposed tax levy increase under the proposed budget is \$1,009,348.

** 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 and Equipment Purchase Proposition	\$1,126,072
Creation of a Capital Reserve Fund	\$0
	\$
	\$

WHO MAY VOTE?

In order to vote, you must be 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of the Averill Park CSD for at least 30 days prior to May 16, 2023. Advance registration is NOT required, however, you will be asked to show proof of residency. Such forms may include a driver's license, a non-driver's identification card, a utility bill, or a voter registration card.

HOW CAN I VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT?

Residents who will be out of town, or are unable to vote in person, can vote by absentee ballot. You must complete an application to receive an absentee ballot. Applications may be requested by calling the District Clerk's office at 674-7085 or picked up at the District Office, located in the Averill Park High School at 146 Gettle Road. Completed applications for absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days prior to the vote if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. Absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on May 16, 2023.

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$556
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the qualified voters of the Averill Park Central School District, Rensselaer County, New York, will be held at Averill Park High School in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time, 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.