

AVERILL PARK

BUDGET VOTE: TUES., MAY 19, 2026

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

UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN: Investing in Early Learning

Since the 2022-2023 school year, the Averill Park Central School District has been providing Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) opportunities for its four-year-old students through partnerships with community-based organizations. This past year, the District was able to offer free, full-day preschool experiences to 63 students through funding provided by the New York State Education Department.

In January, as part of the annual budget proposal, Governor Hochul announced that increasing the per student allocation for UPK was a major budget priority. The increased allocation will allow Averill Park to host its own UPK classrooms in addition to the rooms being hosted by our community partner. As a result, the District is planning to host three UPK classrooms at Miller Hill Elementary School for the 2026-27 school year. The combination of these classrooms, in addition to the classrooms at St. Jude's, will allow the District to provide more than 105 UPK spots to eligible four-year-old students.

The proposal includes a mandate to provide UPK spots to all eligible students in schools across New York State by the 2028-2029 school year. "High-quality early childhood experiences are one of the most effective ways to support long-term student success," said Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Matthew Hladun. "We remain committed to strengthening our early learning opportunities and looking ahead at ways we can serve even more of our youngest learners and families."



Students continue to explore, create and excel across every corner of our schools.

Board Adopts Tax Levy of 3.99%, Coming in Under the Tax Cap Maximum of 4.66%

Recognizing rising costs for residents, the Board adopted a tax cap levy below the tax cap maximum. Specifically, the Board adopted a tax cap of 3.99%, which is below this year's tax cap maximum of 4.66%.

This is the second time since the tax cap era began in 2012-2013 that the District has adopted a budget with a tax levy below the maximum. In other years, the District adopted a tax levy at the tax cap. Averill Park CSD has never adopted a tax levy above the tax cap.

"Despite rising costs in areas that are beyond our control such as required employee retirement system contributions, health insurance and utilities, the District is proud to present a budget that comes in under the tax levy cap, a direct reflection of our commitment to being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars," Superintendent Dr. James Franchini said. "While we continue to navigate a budget deficit that requires difficult decisions, we remain focused on fulfilling our mission of meeting the needs of and creating opportunities for every student every day."

The community will also vote on a proposition to purchase six (6) school buses and two (2) sport utility vehicles at a maximum cost of \$899,826 as part of the District's long-term bus replacement plan (page 5).

The District will not propose purchasing any electric vehicles at this time.

Important points of the proposed budget include:

- Significant increases in health insurance, utilities and retirement system costs are a driving factor in this year's budget development. This year alone, the budget impact of these increases is more than \$1.1 million.
- The District will see a reduction of three (3) teachers and one (1) district office employee.
- The 2026-27 budget includes additions of girls varsity golf and GPS and attendance software for the school buses.

If the proposed budget is approved by voters, Averill Park CSD will maintain the current academic programs, Advanced Placement classes, college credit courses and academic intervention service (AIS) teachers. The budget continues to include a wide range of athletics and extracurricular activities for students. For more information about the proposed budget, please visit averillpark.k12.ny.us and click on "Budget Corner."

2026-2027 BUDGET SUMMARY

- ▶ **Proposed Budget:** \$73,273,010
- ▶ **Budget-to-Budget:** Increase 5.42%
- ▶ **Tax Levy Increase:** 3.99%
(Below the tax cap maximum)

ALSO ON THE BALLOT...

- ▶ **Board of Education Election** (See page 3)
- ▶ **Bus Purchase Proposition** (See page 5)

Capital Project Referendum

Zero Cost to Taxpayers Due to Previous Savings

The Town of Poestenkill recently approved a new water district that includes a water line that will run past Algonquin Middle School. This provides the District with an opportunity to connect Algonquin to municipal water. Given the past issues with PFOA/PFOS at Algonquin, the District strongly supports moving to municipal water at AMS.

The \$28.5 million 2021 Capital Project is under budget, leaving \$1 million in savings available to fund the connection to the new water line and associated improvements at Algonquin. This referendum allows the District to use the already approved funds for additional scope not previously presented to voters.

Every Student Every Day



▲ AMS students were honored with the Sandra G. Morley Physical Education Leadership Award, presented by the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

▲ All three elementary schools held their fun run fundraisers.



▲ St. Patrick's Day STEM activities at Poestenkill Elementary.

▲ At AMS, the drama club performed "Shrek the Musical Jr."

▼ As one of eight APHS artists selected for the Annual High School Regional exhibition, Maya Love (Class of 2026) earned both the Albany Art Room Award and a Juror's Choice Award for her mixed media piece "Servitude."



▲ Students and families took part in Math Night at Miller Hill Elementary.



▲ Girls indoor track & field captured the first Section 2 championship in AP history.

Spotlight on Success

DISTRICT

- The Board's Advocacy Committee continued to meet with elected officials to discuss various topics that impact the district, including increasing health insurance costs.
- S&P Global Ratings upgraded Averill Park CSD's credit rating from A+ to AA-, recognizing the District's strong financial management, responsible budgeting practices and stable outlook.
- Averill Park CSD honored a U.S. Army veteran through Operation Recognition, presenting him with a high school diploma during a special in-home ceremony in recognition of his service and sacrifice.

HIGH SCHOOL

- The Off-Broadway Players continued their tradition of high-quality student theater with the 2026 spring musical *Mamma Mia!*, featuring student performers, musicians and technical crew.
- The Golden Knights girls indoor track and field team won the Section 2 Division III Championship, placing first out of 16 teams and capturing the program's first-ever sectional title.
- Averill Park High School unveiled the James R. Dunn Mineral Collection, a display donated by Nancy Dunn featuring specimens from around the world, honoring the legacy of Dr. Dunn.
- Student musicians welcomed internationally acclaimed jazz musician and Bach Trumpet Artist Bria Skonberg, who worked with the Treble Choir, Concert Band and Jazz Ensemble during a workshop.
- Seniors Madelynn Collins, Ethan Colwill, William Cumming and Maya Love were named Commended Students in the 2026 National Merit Scholarship Program, placing them among the top 50,000 students nationwide.
- Five AHS students attended the Women in Law Symposium with Mrs. Rosemarino, hearing from judges, attorneys and other legal professionals while exploring careers in the legal field.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- AMS received the 2025 NYSASCD Whole Child Award, recognizing its commitment to supporting students' academic, physical, social and emotional well-being through programs such as CARES, Wellness Day and expanded extracurricular opportunities.
- AMS Drama Club staged a sold-out production of *Shrek the Musical Jr.* with student performers and a pit band.
- Six eighth grade students received the Sandra G. Morley Physical Education Leadership Award from NYSASCD for leadership, sportsmanship and a commitment to healthy lifestyles.
- AMS hosted a Celebration of the Arts, featuring student artwork, performances and the unveiling of a new Golden Knight mural by alumnus Eugene O'Neill, marking a milestone in the transition to the new mascot.

MIDDLE SCHOOL cont'd

- AMS students participated in hands-on STEM learning with RPI's Engineer Ambassadors, completing design challenges and exploring engineering pathways.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- Fourth grade students explored New York State geography through the National Geographic Giant Traveling Map, a hands-on experience made possible through an Averill Park Education Foundation grant and led by Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H educator Kandis Freer.
- A student from each elementary school served as "SRO for the Day" alongside Sgt. Nikles, learning about school safety and visiting classrooms.
- West Sand Lake Elementary fifth grade musicians performed on 17 instruments during a three-day holiday tour, sharing music with classrooms across the school.
- Miller Hill Elementary students showcased creativity and environmental awareness during the fifth annual Recycle-Fest, transforming recycled materials into imaginative creations.
- Poestenkill Elementary installed new flexible learning furniture in the Grade 4/5 Pod, creating a collaborative space with support from the Averill Park Education Foundation and PTA.

High School Upgrades

The \$100,000 Capital Outlay project included in the 2026-27 budget is to fund lighting upgrades at Averill Park High School. The project will include LED lighting in the library and classrooms. In addition to improving the lighting in the selected rooms, the LED lighting will be more energy efficient and result in reduced long-term energy costs.

A \$100,000 Capital Outlay project receives State Building Aid in the year following project completion. The District will then receive approximately \$77,900 in State Building Aid in 2027-28 as reimbursement for this project.

BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION

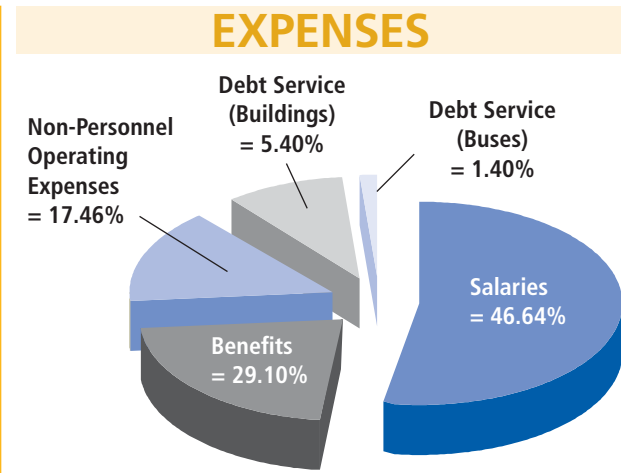
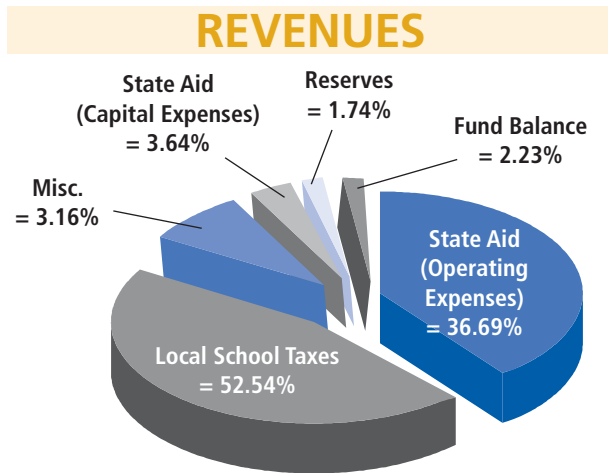
There are two (2) open seats for the Board of Education. In order to appear on the ballot, anyone interested in running for the Board must turn in a petition with the required number of signatures before the deadline determined by New York State. The deadline for submitting petitions was Monday, April 20, 2026. No petitions were submitted, which means no names will appear on the ballot.

Since no petitions were filed, the only option available for someone to be elected to the board would be write-in votes on the date of the election - May 19, 2026. If write-in votes are received for more than one person, the two highest would be elected to the board. If write-in votes are only received for one person, that person would be elected to the board. If no write-in votes are received, the board could proceed with appointing people to fill the two vacancies.

Board members are elected to serve a three-year term.

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

Source of Revenue	Proposed 2025-26	Proposed 2026-27	Dollar Change
State Aid - Operating	\$25,416,887	\$26,883,677	\$1,466,790
Local Tax	37,022,118	38,499,300	1,477,182
State Aid - Capital	2,055,637	2,666,859	611,222
Misc	2,402,650	2,316,566	(86,084)
Interfund Transfer (Debt Service)	—	300,000	300,000
Fund Balance	1,631,608	1,631,608	—
Workers' Compensation Reserve	125,000	125,000	—
ERS Reserve	700,000	700,000	—
TRS Reserve	150,000	150,000	—
Total Revenues	\$69,503,900	\$73,273,010	\$3,769,110



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

Expenses	Proposed 2025-26	Proposed 2026-27	Dollar Difference
Operating Expenses			
Personnel Salaries	\$33,707,851	\$34,176,034	\$468,183
Personnel Benefits	20,215,183	21,320,809	1,105,626
Non-Personnel Items	12,252,017	12,792,040	540,023
Total Operating Expenses	\$66,175,051	\$68,288,883	\$2,113,832
Capital Expenses			
Debt Service Buildings	\$2,368,513	\$3,956,078	\$1,587,565
Debt Service Buses	960,336	1,028,049	67,713
Total Capital Expenses	\$3,328,849	\$4,984,127	\$1,655,278
Total Expenses	\$69,503,900	\$73,273,010	\$3,769,110



Students arriving by bus on their first day of school.

School Bus Purchase Proposition

On May 19, when Averill Park residents vote on the 2026-27 school budget, they will also consider a bus purchase proposition. The proposition seeks voter approval to purchase three (3) 65 passenger school buses, three (3) 30 passenger buses and two (2) sport utility vehicles at a total cost not to exceed \$899,826 (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.

Because the District is eligible to receive approximately 70 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.

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 sell 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.

How does the District plan to meet the state mandate of converting to an all-electric bus fleet?

The District completed a Fleet Electrification Plan through NYSERDA which was presented to the Board in the Fall of 2025. During the 2026-27 budget presentations, the District presented an option of purchasing an electric bus to the Board of Education. The Board decided not to include electric buses in this year’s proposition.

BREAKDOWN OF BUS & EQUIPMENT COST & FINANCING

Bus Total	\$ 899,826
Total Principal to be financed (5 years)	\$ 899,826
Add Finance Cost	\$ 111,993
Total Purchase Cost	\$ 1,011,819
Less State Aid	\$ 708,273
Total Taxpayer Cost	\$ 303,546

Annual Local Taxpayer Cost (over 5 years) \$ 60,709

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 2025-26, there were 33 in-district runs covering 130 square miles and 15 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 10-12 years with each bus logging approximately 90,000-130,000 miles over that time.

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



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2026-27 School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2025-26 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2026-27 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$69,503,900	\$73,272,010	\$71,795,828
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$3,768,110	\$2,291,923
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget ⁵		5.42%	3.30%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.63%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$37,022,118	\$38,499,300	
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)	\$37,022,118	\$38,499,300	\$37,002,118
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$859,760	\$1,536,046	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$36,162,358	\$37,210,363	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$36,162,358	\$36,963,254	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$247,109	
Administrative Component	\$7,018,298	\$6,963,872	\$6,684,049
Program Component	\$53,752,295	\$55,348,189	\$54,349,993
Capital Component	\$8,733,307	\$10,960,949	\$10,761,786

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. This would lead to staff reductions, elimination of equipment purchases, and a reduction in supplies and contractual expenses. 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 \$1,477,182.

Description	Amount
Bus Purchase Proposition	\$899,826
Expand the scope of the capital project to construct a water line and associated improvements for Algonquin Middle School to the connect to the town water line	\$0
	\$
	\$

** 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)

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$472

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2026-27 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 19, 2026 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Auxiliary Gym at the Averill Park High School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting machine.

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

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 19, 2026. Advance registration is NOT required. However, you will be asked to show proof of residency when you vote. 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 518-674-7066 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 19, 2026.

HOW CAN I VOTE BY EARLY MAIL BALLOT?

Registered voters can obtain early mail ballots through an application to the school District. This process is similar to an absentee ballot but without a requirement to provide a reason to vote early by mail. Early voting is available to all voters. Applications may be requested by calling the District Clerk's office at 518-674-7066 or picked up at the District Office, located in the Averill Park High School at 146 Gettle Road. Completed applications for early mail 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. Early mail ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on May 19, 2026.