

2024-25 BUDGET NEWSLETTER

Proposed 2024-25 school budget maintains programs and staff

Herkimer Central School District voters will go to the polls on Tuesday, May 21, to decide on a proposed \$33,932,756 budget for the 2024-25 school year that remains under the district's tax levy limit while maintaining all programs and staff.

“Providing the best opportunities, programs and electives for our students to learn and thrive along with a safe environment is always our top priority with any school budget proposal,” Herkimer Superintendent Kathleen Carney said. “We also are very aware of the need to limit tax increases for our community, so we’re pleased to once again offer a budget that’s under our levy limit.”

The proposed budget would be a 3.53% increase from the 2023-24 spending plan. It includes a tax levy increase of 1.75%, which is below Herkimer's tax levy limit of 3.27%, as calculated using the state's formula. The district has been under the levy limit for 13 of the 14 years since the limit's inception in 2012-13, and the one year over the limit was a 0% increase.

The budget includes additional speech services at the Elementary School and instructional support at the Jr./Sr. High School through adding a licensed teaching assistant and academic support teacher. The district will continue to seek qualified teachers to fill vacant positions including special education teachers.

Voters will also elect one Board of Education member, decide whether to authorize a capital reserve fund of up to \$5 million over 10 years (see page 2 for more) and vote on the public library budget and library Board of Trustees.



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Proposed 2024-25 budget at a glance:

- ▶ Maintains **student programs and services**.
- ▶ Is a **3.53% increase** from the 2023-24 budget.
- ▶ Carries a **1.75% tax levy increase**, which is under the calculated levy limit. The district has been under the levy limit for 13 of the 14 years since its inception.

Highlights included in the proposed 2024-25 budget:

Districtwide highlights:

Technology:

- ▶ Fully fund phase one of a five-year replacement plan for classroom technology
- ▶ Upgrade network infrastructure and access points

Programs:

- ▶ Maintain Connected Community School program established in 2023-24
- ▶ Sustain enrichment opportunities and mental health services

Athletics:

- ▶ Provide additional interscholastic opportunities, including wrestling and boys tennis

Support services:

- ▶ Proceed with year four of five-year transportation contract
- ▶ Continue free breakfast and lunch through Community Eligibility Provision
- ▶ Replace utility vehicle (UTV) for grounds maintenance

Safety:

- ▶ Upgrade and replace security cameras

Other:

- ▶ Make electrical and general repairs at Harmon Field
- ▶ Replace aging classroom furniture

Elementary highlights:

- ▶ Maintain all existing staff and programs
- ▶ Sustain smaller class sizes
- ▶ Increase contracted speech services
- ▶ Continue R4K (Ready 4 Kindergarten) program at prekindergarten level

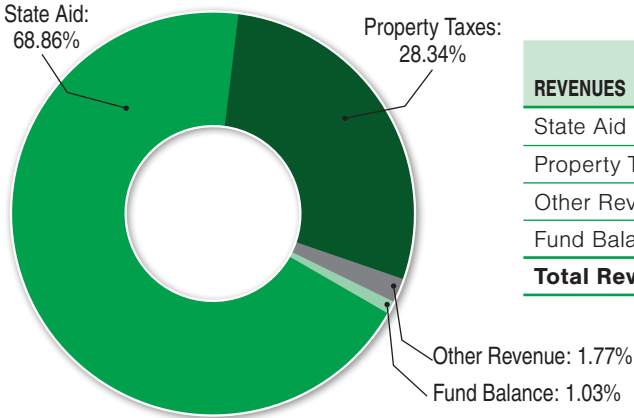
Secondary highlights:

- ▶ Sustain enrichment opportunities, social emotional supports and academic programming
- ▶ Add a full-time licensed teaching assistant for instructional support
- ▶ Expand academic support program
- ▶ Continue off-campus programming including CTE, VP-TECH and Project Lead the Way



Projected Revenues

The district's plan for how it will obtain every dollar in the proposed budget:



REVENUES	2023-24 BUDGETED	2024-25 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25	% CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25
State Aid	\$22,808,874	\$23,366,364	\$557,490	2.44%
Property Taxes	\$9,451,000	\$9,616,392	\$165,392	1.75%
Other Revenue	\$516,669	\$600,000	\$83,331	16.13%
Fund Balance	\$0	\$350,000	\$350,000	NA
Total Revenues	\$32,776,543	\$33,932,756	\$1,156,213	3.53%



What am I voting on?

On May 21, 2024, Herkimer Central School District voters will decide on the district's \$33,932,756 proposed budget for the 2024-25 school year.

Residents will also elect one Board of Education member, decide whether to authorize a capital reserve fund of up to \$5 million over 10 years and vote on the public library budget and library Board of Trustees.

What is included in the proposed budget?

In addition to maintaining existing programs and services, the proposed budget includes highlights in the areas of safety, programs, support services, technology, hiring for unfilled positions, adding a full-time licensed teaching assistant and more. See "Highlights included in the proposed 2024-25 budget" on page 1 for more information.

What capital improvements are planned in the 2024-25 budget?

There is \$450,000 budgeted in the transfer to capital line of the proposed budget, and there are two phases of work planned for these funds.

First, the district would utilize \$100,000 to replace aging flooring and do other related work in the Jr./Sr. High School. The district has traditionally completed these \$100,000 projects to address health, safety and technology needs in our school buildings. These projects are authorized by the state to receive building aid in the following year, unlike traditional capital projects, which are reimbursed over time.

The remaining \$350,000 is a one-time appropriation to address minor sitework and infrastructure needs at the newly acquired Harmon Field and Harmon Park, to provide improved storage for maintenance equipment and to complete other related work.

This funding will come directly from fund balance and will receive building aid over the traditional 15-20 years depending on how it is classified by the state. The district currently receives reimbursement of approximately 83% for approved capital expenditures.

What happens if the budget is voted down?

If the proposed budget is defeated on May 21, the Board of Education can put the same or a revised budget up for a vote in June, or it can immediately adopt a contingent budget. After two unsuccessful budget votes, Herkimer would have to adopt a contingent budget. State law mandates that under a contingent budget, a school district must adopt a budget with no tax levy increase and eliminate all non-contingent expenses, such as certain student supplies, certain equipment purchases and community use of school facilities that results in a district expense. In other words, the district would likely need to make budget cuts to decrease spending.

Proposed capital reserve fund

During the school budget vote, residents will also vote on whether to authorize the district to create a capital reserve fund of up to \$5 million over 10 years.

Capital reserve funds established and utilized through voter approval are used to maintain the district's buildings and grounds. The district has used these types of reserves for the last several projects.

In January 2024, voters approved the use of \$5 million from the capital reserves established in 2017 and 2022 for Capital Project 2024, which is currently in the design phase.

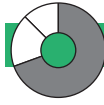
The district is proposing the establishment of the new 2024 capital reserve to help fund future capital improvements.

The proposed capital reserve would be funded annually with unallocated fund balance and other reserves as determined by the Board of Education.



Proposed Expenditures

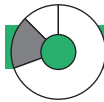
The district's plan for how money will be spent within the proposed budget:



Program \$23,605,852 | 69.57%

Includes expenses for curriculum development, instructional programs, supplies, district transportation, athletic programs, community services, most employee benefits and transfers of funds.

EXPENDITURES	2023-24 BUDGETED	2024-25 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25	% CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25
Subtotal	\$22,736,304	\$23,605,852	\$869,548	3.82%



Capital \$6,132,014 | 18.07%

Includes expenses for plant operations, maintenance, debt service principal and interest on all building projects and some employee benefits.

EXPENDITURES	2023-24 BUDGETED	2024-25 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25	% CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25
Subtotal	\$5,569,486	\$6,132,014	\$562,528	10.10%



Administrative \$4,194,890 | 12.36%

Includes expenses for Board of Education, central administration, financial and legal services, personnel, supervision of regular school, BOCES administrative expenses including a BOCES capital project and administrative employee benefits.

EXPENDITURES	2023-24 BUDGETED	2024-25 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25	% CHANGE '23-'24 TO '24-'25
Subtotal	\$4,470,753	\$4,194,890	-\$275,863	-6.17%

	2023-24 BUDGETED	2024-25 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
Total Expenditures	\$32,776,543	\$33,932,756	\$1,156,213	3.53%

CATEGORY	2023-24 APPROVED BUDGET	% OF TOTAL	2024-25 PROPOSED BUDGET	% OF TOTAL	% CHANGE
Payroll	\$9,913,465	30.25%	\$10,094,356	29.75%	1.82%
Benefits	\$6,322,617	19.29%	\$6,669,923	19.66%	5.49%
BOCES	\$8,261,946	25.21%	\$8,117,315	23.92%	-1.75%
Contractual	\$3,836,672	11.71%	\$3,938,470	11.61%	2.65%
Debt service	\$3,375,713	10.30%	\$3,494,192	10.30%	3.51%
Supplies	\$441,000	1.35%	\$452,500	1.33%	2.61%
Equipment	\$443,130	1.35%	\$631,000	1.86%	42.40%
Transfer to capital	\$100,000	0.31%	\$450,000	1.33%	350.00%
Textbooks	\$82,000	0.25%	\$85,000	0.25%	3.66%
TOTAL	\$32,776,543	100%	\$33,932,756	100%	3.53%



HERKIMER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

801 West German Street
Herkimer, NY 13350

Bulk Rate
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Herkimer, NY
13350

Board of Education

- Brian Crandall, **President**
- Michele Gilbert, **Vice President**
- Diann Fischer
- Joseph Lamanna
- Robert Mihevc
- Scott Petucci
- Aleksander Verenich

Superintendent

Kathleen Carney

School Business Manager

Chad Hess

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Region BOCES Communications Service.*

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Voting Information

Who can vote?

In order to vote, a person must be at least 18 years old, a United States citizen and a resident of the Herkimer Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the May 21, 2024, vote. Voter registration is not required.

When and where is the vote?

The school budget vote will take place from noon to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21, in the Herkimer Jr./Sr. High School Library Media Center.

Can I vote early or vote by absentee ballot?

Absentee ballot voting is available, and the new Early Mail Voter Act effective Jan. 1, 2024, allows for early voting via mail with no reasons needed. You must fill out an application to vote by early voting or absentee ballot. There are separate applications for voting by early voting or absentee ballot, but the application process and deadlines are the same for both.

To obtain an application or for more information, call the district office at 315-866-2230, ext. 1304. If you would like a ballot mailed to you, your

application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 14, 2024. If you plan to pick up your ballot, your

application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 20, 2024. The completed ballot must be received by 5 p.m. on May 21, 2024.

What exactly am I voting on?

- **Vote on the school budget:** School district residents are voting on a proposed \$33,932,756 budget for the 2024-25 school year. The budget calls for a 3.53% spending increase and a 1.75% tax levy increase.
- **Vote on creating a capital reserve fund:** School district residents will vote on whether to authorize the district to create a capital reserve fund of up to \$5 million over 10 years. For more information, see page 2.
- **Elect one Board of Education member:** One seat is up for election on the Herkimer Board of Education. It carries a three-year term. Incumbent Michele Gilbert is running unopposed for re-election to the seat.
- **Vote on library budget/trustees:** School district residents will decide on the Frank J. Basloe Public Library's proposed tax levy of \$360,921 to fund the library's annual budget.



Herkimer earth science students viewing the eclipse in Boonville.

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Residents will also vote on one library Board of Trustees seat, which has a five-year term.

How can I learn more?

A budget hearing will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 7, in the Herkimer Jr./Sr. High School Library Media Center. More budget details are also available online at www.herkimercsd.org.

 **VOTE**
May 21, 2024 – Noon-8 p.m.
Herkimer Jr./Sr. High School
Library Media Center