

Irvington Union Free School District

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL BUDGET

WHAT ARE BASIC BUDGET FACTS?

- 2019-20 proposed budget amount: \$62,953,554
- The proposed budget is compliant with the calculated tax levy cap.
- The budget-to-budget increase is 2.6% versus 3.8% last year
- The estimated tax rate \$19.43 per thousand of assessed value an increase of .07%. This is based on a preliminary assessment roll provided by the Town of Greenburgh Assessor.
- A tax calculator is on the District website to assist residents in calculating their school taxes.
- Voter approval: for the budget to be authorized it must receive 50+% majority of the votes on Election Day

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE BUDGET INCREASES?

- District legal or contractual obligations such as employee salaries, pensions, health insurance, and BOCES fees
- Unfunded or underfunded state mandates such as transportation, APPR requirements, Common Core Learning Standards implementation and special education services

WHAT STEPS HAS THE DISTRICT MADE TO CONTAIN COSTS?

- Since 2009, the District has eliminated 34.9 positions: 19.6 teaching positions, 15.3 staff members, 18 High School electives, and some elementary and middle school programs. In recent years, the Board and administration have been committed to restoring these reductions to deliver the highest quality experiences possible.
- In creating the 2019-20 budget, the District analyzed every line of the budget to ensure we are maximizing our budget dollars. In doing so, efficiencies have been realized through supplies and maintenance. Detailed, historical budget information is available on the District website.

WHAT IMPACT WILL THE 2019-20 BUDGET HAVE ON INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE?

There are no instructional programs or staffing cuts in the budget. There ARE additions to expand our current instructional programs, such as the introduction of an elementary world language teacher, an additional .6 FTE music teacher position, increasing the number of technological devices for students use, curriculum materials for Amplify Science, a sorely needed new phone system (leased), providing for afternoon and some evening security guards at our schools and funds for enhancements in Human Resources and Social Work/Social Emotional Learning programs. The proposed budget also supports on-going buildings and grounds maintenance such as painting, carpet replacement, preventive maintenance, and necessary repairs.

WHY IS THE DISTRICT INCLUDING A LEASE FOR THE PHONE SYSTEM? WHAT AMOUNT IS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET FOR PHONES?

The 19-20 Budget includes funds for year 1 of a 3-5 year lease for a new phone system. We have estimates that range from \$350,000 - \$400,000 and this amount is too large to include the full amount in one budget year. Unfortunately, our current phone system is extremely outdated, including relying on unsupported and discontinued Windows 2000 operating system for some aspects of the system. The District has identified this risk to safety and security of not having a reliable phone system and therefore is electing to use the leasing method to accomplish this upgrade. We expect borrowing rates to be between 3-4%. The exact lease terms and number of years for the lease will be determined once bids are received.

Has the Irvington School District Tax Base gone up? How does the assessed value affect the tax rate?

The total assessed valuation increased \$88,853,377 to \$2,902,412,541 or a 3.16% increase. Since the tax levy increase is 3.21% higher (fully compliant with the tax cap with capital exclusions), the resulting increase in the tax rate is .07%

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BUDGET?

The District website has a link for 2019-20 Budget and Voter Information on our home page and all of the community presentations and budget documents are contained in this link. Alternatively, you can email budget@irvingtonschools.org if you require assistance in finding information or have questions.

HOW DO I REGISTER MY CONCERN WITH MY STATE LEGISLATOR REGARDING UNFUNDED OR UNDERFUNDED STATE MANDATES?

To voice your opinion about these requirements on the Irvington schools, you may contact:

NY State Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti: abinantit@assembly.state.ny.us

NY Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins: scousins@nysenate.gov

NY State Commissioner of Education Mary Ellen Elia: commissioner@mail.nysed.gov

NY Governor Andrew Cuomo: govcuomo.office@nygovoffice.gov

DOES MY VOTE MATTER?

Yes. The budget for the public schools impacts all residents of the Irvington school community. Casting your vote makes your voice heard on the budget, which ultimately relates to the type of programming the District is able to provide our students.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS NOT PASSED?

In the event that the budget does not receive the required majority of yes votes on May 21, State law provides the Board of Education with two options: resubmit the budget to voters without any modifications or present a revised budget. If the budget is not approved on the second attempt, the District MUST operate on a contingency budget. When operating on a contingency budget, the total tax levy must be no greater than the current level and must eliminate certain categories of expenditures, such as equipment. This would require a budget reduction of approximately \$1,900,000. To accomplish this would require severe reductions to programs and services provided district-wide.

HOW DO I REGISTER TO VOTE, AND CAN I GET AN ABSENTEE BALLOT?

Residents of the Irvington School District must be registered with **either** the school district or the Westchester County Board of Elections. If you are not registered, you may register for school voting at the District Clerk's Office in the District Office, 6 Dows Lane, from 9:00 A.M. to 3:45 P.M. during regular school days, OR, at the Special Voter Registration Day, THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019 from 4:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. in the lobby of the Main Street School. **Remember, the deadline to register to vote is May 16** in order to vote on TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019.

In order to cast your vote via Absentee Ballot, a resident of the Irvington School District must complete an Absentee Ballot Application prior to receiving the actual Absentee Ballot. Absentee Ballot Applications are available by calling the District Clerk at 591-8501 or going to the District's website: www.IrvingtonSchools.org and clicking on the 2019-20 Budget & Voter Information link.

Important dates to remember when requesting an Absentee Ballot:

- **May 14, 2019** is the deadline for an Absentee Ballot Application to be received by the District Clerk if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter.
- **May 20, 2019** is deadline for an Absentee Ballot Application to be received by the District Clerk if the ballot is to be picked up by the voter.
- **May 21, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.** is the deadline for Absentee Ballots to be received by the District Clerk in the District Office located at 6 Dows Lane.

WHEN IS THE VOTE AND WHERE CAN I REVIEW A COPY OF THE BUDGET?

The Annual School District Budget Vote and Board Member Election is Tuesday, May 21. The polls are open from 7:00 am until 9:00 pm. at the Main Street School, 101 Main Street, Irvington, NY. The budget and other supporting documents can be viewed on the District website www.IrvingtonSchools.org or paper copies of the budget can be picked up in the District office. Specific questions can be directed to budget@IrvingtonSchools.org.