



Merrick MESSENGER

BUDGET EDITION
2023

Proposed 2023-24 Budget Vote Set for Tuesday, May 16 BUDGET PRESERVES PROGRAMS WITHIN TAX CAP

Dear Community Members,

The district is proud to present a proposed budget for the 2023-24 school year that carries a tax levy increase of 1.52%, which is within the district's allowable cap. This is the 12th consecutive year of developing spending plans within the tax cap, while preserving programs and services for students.

As we celebrate our district's 100th anniversary this year, the district's continued commitment to its students is evident in the many Points of Pride reflected on Page 2 of this newsletter. The proposed budget will allow the district to provide a robust, diverse and comprehensive curriculum and support the initiatives that have been successful. The proposed spending plan also supports the continuation of the district's Universal Prekindergarten program, funded mainly through New York State aid.

In addition to voting on the proposed budget, residents will also vote on a second proposition to spend \$1.3 million from the district's capital reserve fund to replace playgrounds at Birch and Chatterton. Unit ventilators would also be replaced in the Cubs' Cave at Levy Lakeside School. For more information on Proposition No. 2, please see Page 3.

All information related to the proposed budget can be found on the district's website, www.merrick.k12.ny.us. The district will host a budget hearing on Tuesday, May 9, at 7:15 p.m. at Levy Lakeside School. Please plan to attend. We also encourage you to exercise your right to vote on Tuesday, May 16. Polls will be open from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. at Levy Lakeside School.

Thank you for your involvement in our schools!

About the 2023-24 Budget

- Preserves all academic, fine arts and enrichment programs.
- Funds a Universal Prekindergarten program for over 100 students.
- Carries a tax levy increase of 1.52%, which is within the district's allowable tax levy cap.

Budget VOTE:

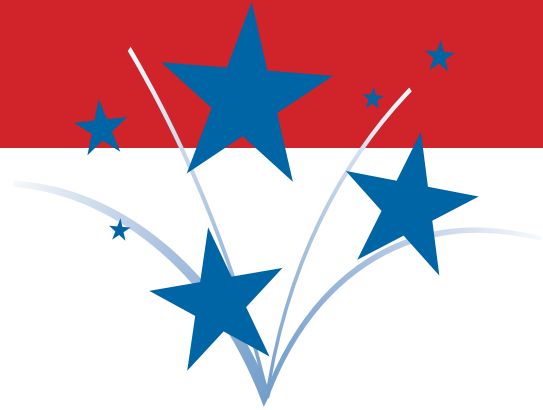
Tuesday, May 16, 2023
7 a.m.-9 p.m.

Administration Center
Levy Lakeside School

For the latest budget news,
visit us on the web at
www.merrick.k12.ny.us



POINTS OF PRIDE



Sixth graders in Melissa Froehlich's Podcast Club at Birch began recording their first episodes in January.



Fifth graders at Chatterton collaborated to code the school's new Tello drones.



The TED-Ed Club at Lakeside is modeled after the popular TED Talks series of online discussions of ideas.

- A full-day, comprehensive kindergarten program.
- Continuously upgrade and acquire new online learning platforms.
- Among Nassau County's lowest class sizes at all grade levels.
- Highly qualified and dedicated educators.
- Comprehensive technology program, including a 1:1 computing initiative in grades K-6 that teaches students robotics, keyboarding and digital citizenship, as well as empowers innovation through interdisciplinary projects.
- Hands-on science, math and STEAM enrichment clubs.
- Dynamic foreign language program that provides students in grades 3-6 with a valuable opportunity to develop communication skills in Spanish. The program incorporates cultural experiences and connections to daily life.
- Social-emotional learning program in each school to build a positive learning community and teach students skills that can be applied to daily life.
- Commitment to the community, with students participating in numerous fundraisers and charitable projects throughout the year, including grade-level service learning projects.
- Activities, lessons and assemblies that celebrate inclusivity and belonging districtwide.
- Building-based cultural arts programs.
- Intramural sports offered in each building.
- A comprehensive fine arts program.
 - Once again awarded Best Community for Music Education by the NAMM Foundation.
- Innovative programs for students with special needs.
- Comprehensive academic support for students through our Academic Intervention Services program.
- Supportive psychologists and social workers at each school.
- Full-time, highly experienced school counselor works with students K-6.
- Full-time literacy coaches and STEAM coach to support the development and innovation of our teachers.
- STEAM Discovery Labs in each school, equipped with 3D printers and 3D computers.
- Updated libraries at each school to include children's books celebrating diversity, acceptance and inclusion.
- Strong partnership with the PTA.
- Exciting and supportive UPK program for Merrick's 4-year-old children.

PROPOSED 2023-24 BUDGET

EXPENDITURES

	2022-23 Current Budget	2023-24 Proposed Budget	Dollar Difference	Percent Difference
Board of Education	\$68,418	\$69,630	\$1,212	1.77%
Chief School Administrator	378,625	386,791	8,166	2.16%
Finance	791,914	817,926	26,012	3.28%
Legal, Personnel and Public Relations	303,837	314,628	10,791	3.55%
Central Services	4,323,341	4,742,569	419,228	9.70%
Insurance and Special Items	470,902	553,000	82,098	17.43%
Instruction, Admin, Improvement	1,912,576	1,914,607	2,031	0.11%
Teaching and Instructional Programs and Support	30,614,162	31,641,339	1,027,177	3.36%
Transportation Services	1,686,230	2,162,683	476,453	28.26%
Community Services	155,000	180,000	25,000	16.13%
Employee Benefits	12,753,168	13,933,887	1,180,719	9.26%
Debt Service – School	1,420,581	1,419,831	(750)	-0.05%
Debt Service – Library	685,000	685,000	-	0.00%
Interfund Transfers	55,000	101,000	46,000	83.64%
TOTAL BUDGET	\$55,618,754	\$58,922,891	\$3,304,137	5.94%

REVENUES

	2022-23 Current Budget	2023-24 Proposed Budget	Dollar Difference	Percent Difference
State Aid	\$7,840,765	\$10,234,014	\$2,393,249	30.52%
Tuition – Day School	400,000	350,000	(50,000)	-12.50%
Summer Registration Fee	150,000	115,000	(35,000)	-23.33%
Interest Earnings	35,000	350,000	315,000	900.00%
Other Income (including LIPA PILOT)	1,012,062	1,027,230	15,168	1.50%
Debt Service Fund Transfer	126,000	126,000	-	0.00%
Public Library – Debt Service	685,000	685,000	-	0.00%
Appropriated Fund Balance	1,500,000	1,500,000	-	0.00%
Real Property Taxes	43,869,927	44,535,647	665,720	1.52%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$55,618,754	\$58,922,891	\$3,304,137	5.94%

What Is Proposition No. 2?

In addition to voting on the proposed budget for 2023-24, the community will be asked to vote on a second proposition that will allow the district to use \$1.3 million in capital reserve funds to replace playgrounds at Birch and Chatterton elementary schools. The proposition also allows for the replacement of unit ventilators in the Cubs' Cave at Levy Lakeside School.

As you may recall, the main Chatterton playground was recently renovated as part of the voter-approved bond in 2016. Last year, voters approved the replacement of the main playgrounds at Birch and Levy Lakeside. If Proposition No. 2 is approved, the rear playground at Birch and the kindergarten playground at Chatterton would be scheduled for replacement during the summer of 2024, thus completing the renovation of *all* district playgrounds.

It is important to note that since the money is being drawn from the capital reserve fund, there will be **no additional tax impact** for residents if the proposition is approved. Voter approval is required, however, for the district to expend monies from this fund.

If approved, the new playgrounds would likely be ready for the start of the 2024-25 school year.



BUDGET Q&A

Q: What is the tax levy limit?

A: For school districts, the tax levy limit is the highest allowable property tax levy that can be approved by a simple majority vote of the public (50% plus one). The proposed budget carries a tax levy increase of 1.52%, which is within the district's calculated cap for this year.

Q: Does the tax cap mean that the amount of taxes that individual homeowners pay will only go up by 1.52%?

A: No. The tax cap limits how much money the district can levy from the community. The tax rate is set by Nassau County and is determined by additional factors, including the value of real estate. However, this year's low levy increase will be reflected in property taxes.

Q: If I have questions about the proposed budget, where can I go to find more information?

A: Please visit the district's website, www.merrick.k12.ny.us, for all budget presentations. In addition, you may contact the district at 516-992-7260.



Voting Information

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

To register to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old, a district resident for 30 days before the vote, and have not claimed the right to vote elsewhere.

WHO NEEDS TO REGISTER

If you are a new resident and last registered or voted in a county other than Nassau, you must reregister. Registration will be held on Tuesday, May 2, from 12-4 p.m. at the Katherine A. Reif Administration Center, 21 Babylon Road, Merrick. You may also register between 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on days that school is in session. The last day to register is Thursday, May 11. You do not need to register if you have voted in a general election in the Merrick Union Free School District or if you have recently registered with Merrick UFSD.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Absentee ballots are available from the Merrick district clerk in the Katherine A. Reif Administration Center, 21 Babylon Road, Merrick or on the district's website. The deadline for returning absentee ballots by mail or in person is Tuesday, May 16, at 5 p.m.

ON THE BALLOT

Proposition No. 1: Merrick School District (Elementary Schools) Budget

Proposition No. 2: Merrick School District (Elementary Schools) Expenditure from Capital Reserve Fund

Proposition No. 3: Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Budget

Proposition No. 4: Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District Expenditure from Capital Reserve fund

Proposition No. 5: Merrick Public Library Budget

In addition to voting on the above propositions, voters will have the opportunity to cast their votes for the election of two Merrick School District Board of Education trustees to three-year terms beginning July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026. The election is at-large. Candidates are Jill Levine and Nicole Venditti.

**Merrick Board
of Education**

Jill Levine, *President*

Dr. Nancy Kaplan

Nicole Venditti

Dr. Dominick Palma, *Superintendent of Schools*

Linda Wilk, *Vice President*

Jennifer Schatzman

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