

Merrick MESSENGER

BUDGET EDITION
2025

Proposed 2025-26 Budget Within Tax Levy Cap of 2.11%

PLEASE REMEMBER TO VOTE ON TUESDAY, MAY 20

Dear Community Members,

On Tuesday, May 20, we are asking for your participation in the annual budget vote and trustee election. The proposed spending plan preserves all programs and services, ensuring that students continue to receive the high-quality education they deserve, despite economic challenges.

The proposed budget represents a tax levy increase of 2.11%, which stays within the district's allowable tax levy cap for the 2025-26 school year. We have worked hard to balance fiscal responsibility with the needs of our students and are proud to continue providing excellent academic and extracurricular opportunities.

In addition to the budget, there is an additional proposition to authorize the use of funds from the Capital Reserve to repair the roofs at Birch and Lakeside. If approved, there would be no additional tax impact for residents. This proposition will support essential projects to maintain and enhance our school facilities. Full details can be found on Page 3.

Please plan to vote on Tuesday, May 20. Polls will be open from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. in the administration center at Levy Lakeside School. Your participation ensures that our schools remain a strong and vibrant place for learning. For more information, please visit the district's website, www.merrick.k12.ny.us.

About the 2025-26 Budget

- Preserves all current curricular, cocurricular and extracurricular activities for students.
- Preserves class sizes within district guidelines.
- Carries a tax levy increase of 2.11%, which is within the district's allowable tax levy cap.

Budget Hearing
Tuesday, May 6 at 7:15 p.m.
Levy Lakeside School

Budget VOTE

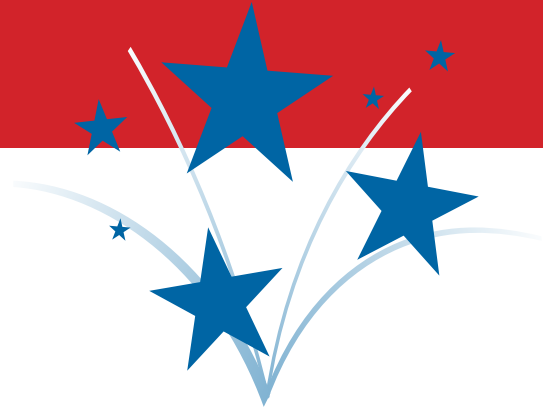
Tuesday, May 20, 2025
7 a.m.-9 p.m.

Administration Center
Levy Lakeside School

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



POINTS OF PRIDE



During science enrichment at Birch, sixth graders put their engineering skills to the test to create roller coasters.



Students at Chatterton performed their winter concert in December after months of preparation.



The annual Veterans Day ceremony hosted at Lakeside opened with the school's color guard presenting the flags.

- Exciting and supportive UPK program for Merrick's 4-year-old children.
- 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.
- A multitude of innovative student clubs including TED Ed, writing, reading, 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 belonging and dignity.
- Building-based cultural arts programs.
- A comprehensive fine arts program.
 - Awarded the 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.
- Updated libraries at each school.
- Strong partnership with the PTA.

PROPOSED 2025-26 BUDGET

EXPENDITURES

	2024-25 Current Budget	2025-26 Proposed Budget	Dollar Difference	Percent Difference
Board of Education	\$77,270	\$61,122	-\$16,148	-20.90%
Chief School Administrator	396,842	416,035	19,193	4.84%
Finance	862,254	923,086	60,832	7.05%
Legal, Personnel and Public Relations	309,951	303,624	-6,327	-2.04%
Central Services	5,053,325	5,059,817	6,492	0.13%
Insurance and Special Items	623,000	681,600	58,600	9.41%
Instruction, Admin, Improvement	2,009,844	2,122,970	113,126	5.63%
Teaching and Instructional Programs and Support	32,467,100	33,473,627	1,006,527	3.10%
Transportation Services	2,577,036	3,239,025	661,989	25.69%
Community Services	178,000	165,000	-13,000	-7.30%
Employee Benefits	14,781,044	14,168,450	-612,594	-4.14%
Debt Service – School	1,416,832	1,416,582	-250	-0.02%
Debt Service – Library	685,000	-	-685,000	-100.00%
Interfund Transfers	1,571,000	154,000	-1,417,000	-90.20%
TOTAL BUDGET	\$63,008,498	\$62,184,938	-\$823,560	-1.31%

REVENUES

	2024-25 Current Budget	2025-26 Proposed Budget	Dollar Difference	Percent Difference
State Aid	\$11,775,450	\$12,036,579	\$261,129	2.22%
Tuition – Day School	350,000	250,000	-100,000	-28.57%
Summer Registration Fee	150,000	150,000	-	0.00%
Interest Earnings	700,000	700,000	-	0.00%
Other Income (including LIPA PILOT)	1,034,429	1,092,430	58,001	5.61%
Public Library – Debt Service	685,000	-	-685,000	-100.00%
Appropriated Fund Balance	2,818,730	1,500,000	-1,318,730	-46.78%
Real Property Taxes	45,494,889	46,455,929	961,040	2.11%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$63,008,498	\$62,184,938	-\$823,560	-1.31%

What Is Proposition No. 2?

In addition to voting on the proposed budget for 2025-26, the community will be asked to vote on one additional proposition. Proposition No. 2 would allow the district to use \$4.8 million in capital reserve funds to replace/recoat the roofs at Birch and Lakeside. If Proposition No. 2 is approved, the district anticipates that this work will be completed during summer 2026. The roof at Chatterton will be replaced/recoated this summer using funds approved through last year's capital improvement proposition.

It is important to note that there will be **no additional tax impact** for residents if Proposition No. 2 is approved. Voter approval is required for the district to expend monies from the capital reserve fund.



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 2.11%, 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 2.11%?

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.

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 6, 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 15. 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 AND EARLY MAIL VOTING BALLOTS

Absentee and early mail voting 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 and early mail voting ballots by mail or in person is Tuesday, May 20, 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, 2025, through June 30, 2028. The election is at-large. Candidates are Gina Piskin and Jennifer Schatzman. Voters will also cast their votes for the election of one library trustee for a five-year term. The candidate is Ben Whitney.

**Merrick Board
of Education**

Jill Levine, *President*

Dr. Nancy Kaplan

Nicole Venditti

Dr. Dominick Palma, *Superintendent of Schools*

Gina Piskin

Linda Wilk, *Vice President*

Jennifer Schatzman

Butch Yamali