

CAPITAL education

2010 SPECIAL
BUDGET EDITION

District proposes \$1 million cut in spending for 2010-11 school year

The City School District of Albany's annual budget would be reduced by \$1 million from the current fiscal year under a \$202,840,950 plan the Board of Education approved unanimously this spring.

The proposed spending plan carries a 3.87 percent tax-levy increase, though additional state aid would lower that (*see related story at right*). The plan includes the elimination of about 100 positions and a \$4.5 million increase in the use of fund balance and reserve funds.

The proposal, which would reduce spending for the second consecutive year, recognizes the state and nation's continued economic difficulties. However, the budget also would continue to support nearly all educational, social, health and extracurricular programs and services.

Board members agreed on the plan after months of efforts to reduce an initial \$20 million deficit resulting from the governor's proposed \$6.7 million cut in state funding, an increase of \$3.8 million in charter-school payments and a contractually obligated \$9.5 million increase in employee salaries and benefits.

"Tough economic times require tough choices, and the board has had to make many difficult decisions to develop a budget plan that supports our students and recognizes our financial reality," said President Daniel Egan.

"In spite of the financial hardships facing our community, the board views the proposed budget as an investment that

continues to support high-quality core academic programs for all students."

In addition to the proposed staff cuts and the increased use of cash reserves, the district estimates about \$2.8 million in savings due to the closure of the taxpayer-supported New Covenant Charter School.

The district also will save about \$250,000 after all 48 administrators, including Superintendent Raymond Colucciello, Ed.D., and the five members of his senior leadership team, agreed to pay freezes for 2010-11.



The City School District of Albany's annual budget supports a wide range of programs and services for all students, from prekindergarten through high school.



SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 18
7 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Where do I vote?

Check out page 4 for information on polling locations, or call 475-6010.

Taxpayers would see an estimated increase of about \$68 on a property assessed at \$100,000. Households eligible for Basic STAR would see an estimated increase of \$79, and seniors with Enhanced STAR an estimated increase of \$29 (*see related information, page 2*).

Voters will have a variety of opportunities to learn more about the proposed budget and to ask questions during community meetings in the weeks leading up to the May 18 vote.

Possibilities remain for more tax savings

When the Board of Education approved the 2010-11 budget plan, two possibilities remained that could help lower the proposed 3.87 percent tax-levy increase.

State lawmakers missed the April 1 deadline to approve a budget, and still had not come to an agreement when this newsletter went to press in late April.

The City School District of Albany's budget proposal accounts for the \$6.7 million cut in state aid Gov. David Paterson has proposed.

The district is hopeful that legislators will restore some of that funding.

The district also continues to negotiate with its teachers' union for savings that would help reduce the tax burden.

The district's 48 administrators, including Superintendent Raymond Colucciello, Ed.D., and the five members of his senior leadership team, agreed to a pay freeze that helped save about \$250,000.

Because the budget proposal is finalized for next year, the board cannot use additional revenue or savings to restore programs or positions.

If the district gets more revenue from the state or its ongoing negotiations with the teachers, the board will direct at least \$1 million to reduce the tax levy to about 2.87 percent.

If the district gets more than \$1 million, the board has committed to using the extra (in any combination) to further reduce the tax levy and dependence on fund balance, or restore some of the reserves used to balance the proposed budget.

In this decision, the board would weigh short-term financial needs with prudent long-term planning.

Preserving strong programs, fiscal integrity in tough economic times

At its most basic level, crafting a school budget is like crafting a household budget: cover the essentials, add in important extras that you can afford and curb spending when you must.

While providing the best possible educational program for 8,500 students, the premise is the same for the \$202.8 million budget the City School District of Albany has proposed for voters to consider Tuesday, May 18.

Like most families, the district is working to stretch every dollar – especially when the dollars are fewer and the needs are greater in these tough economic times.

The Board of Education unanimously approved the spending plan following months of work to eliminate a \$20 million deficit. The budget proposal would reduce total spending by \$1 million from the current year and eliminate about 100 positions.

However, it would continue to support a broad range of programs and services critical to the academic, social and emotional growth of our city's children.

"This is the most difficult budget year I have faced in my 50 years in public education," said Superintendent Raymond Colucciello, Ed.D. "Our board has worked hard to present a budget that would maintain programs and services we believe our students need most while also taking into account what our community can afford in this struggling economy."

Maintaining programs and services

The 2010-11 budget plan proposes to spend money on the essentials – including core academic programs in math, English, science, social studies and gym, academic-support services, special-education services, alternative education, and breakfast and lunch programs.

It also would support non-mandated programs such as full-day prekindergarten and kindergarten, magnet schools and the Dual-Language Program, summer school, before- and after-school programs, health-screening services, and Advanced Placement courses and the International Baccalaureate

program at Albany High School.

And it would support electives such as technology, art, music, sports and foreign language.

At the elementary level, next year's budget again would give families the option of sending their children to one of nine neighborhood schools throughout the district or three magnet schools that are focused on specific themes.

In middle school, the district provides three state-of-the-art facilities: Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School and William S. Hackett Middle School (both serving grades 6-8), and North Albany Academy (serving pre-K through grade 8).

Each middle school offers a full range of facilities and services, from swimming pools and fully-equipped science and technology labs to specially equipped resource rooms and social-worker offices to assist academically and emotionally challenged students.

In addition to its AP and IB offerings, and its NanoHigh partnership with the

(continued on page 3)

No-cost plan to improve health and wellness at Albany High School

A resolution on this year's ballot will ask voters to consider a plan to conduct renovations that would address health and wellness issues at Albany High School. **The proposal would not cost any additional tax dollars.**

The plan would renovate bathrooms and locker rooms, and replace carpet throughout the building. The total cost would be about \$7.6 million.

The district would invest \$1.97 million from a lawsuit settlement and the sale of the former Adult Learning Center building.

The balance of \$5.6 million would come from state aid.

About the budget

The City School District of Albany's proposed 2010-11 budget would reduce spending by \$1 million from the current fiscal year. It is the second year in a row that the district has proposed a spending cut, reflecting the desire to minimize the impact of the economic downturn on taxpayers.

The district again faces rising costs in several areas amid the stark financial

realities facing the state and nation, and the proposal includes some cutbacks, including the elimination of nearly 100 jobs, while also preserving most programs and services.

Jobs eliminated would include:

- 3 administrators (7 percent of that workforce)
- 50 teaching positions (6 percent of that workforce)
- 31 staff (5 percent of that workforce)

The budget also would eliminate 15 substitute hall monitors.

Gov. David Paterson has proposed a \$6.7 million reduction in the district's state aid, although a final figure won't be known until the state adopts its 2010-11 budget (*see related story, page 1*).

While expenditures were held flat or decreased in 75 percent of the line items, the district will face higher expenses in areas such as employee salaries and benefits

(about \$9.5 million) and charter-school payments (\$492,000), even with the closure of New Covenant Charter School.

The district anticipates about \$2.8 million in savings from New Covenant's closure, but the city's 11 taxpayer-funded charter schools still will cost the district about \$26.5 million in 2010-11.

The district will be required to file a Contract for Excellence again this year, mandating the fixed expenditure of \$2.2 million to continue educational initiatives implemented under the contract for the current year.

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

	2009-10 Budget	2010-11 Proposed	Dollar Change
Program Budget	\$155,589,502	\$158,034,311	\$2,444,809
Instruction	121,146,060	123,698,436	2,552,376
Charter School Payments	26,008,044	26,500,278	492,234
Pupil Transportation	6,874,509	6,716,119	-158,390
Athletics	860,889	869,478	8,589
Lunch Program Assistance	700,000	250,000	-450,000
Capital Budget	\$33,157,590	\$30,648,567	-\$2,509,023
Debt Payments & Borrowings	14,253,788	12,720,300	-1,533,488
Building Rentals	181,306	176,570	-4,736
Operations/Maintenance/Capital	10,232,840	10,190,697	-42,143
Utilities	6,120,656	5,561,000	-559,656
Tax Refunds & Judgments	2,369,000	2,000,000	-369,000
Administrative Budget	\$15,093,858	\$14,158,072	-\$935,786
School Supervision	13,114,373	12,328,278	-786,095
Property & Liability Insurance	559,050	552,700	-6,350
Printing, Mailing & Data Processing	1,184,033	1,045,412	-138,621
Legal & Other Services	236,402	231,682	-4,720
Total Expenditures	\$203,840,950	\$202,840,950	-\$1,000,000



Earth Day 2010.

ESTIMATED REVENUE

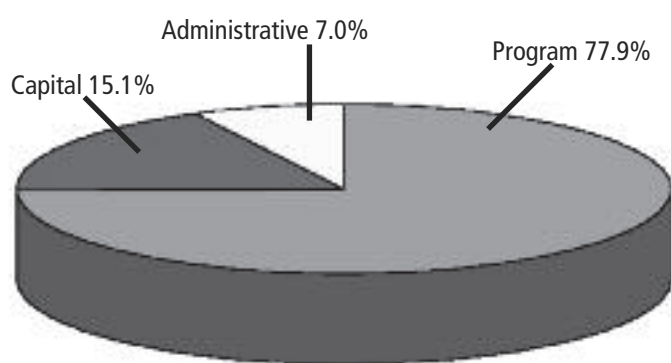
	2009-10	2010-11	Dollar Change
Federal Aid	\$750,000	\$850,000	\$100,000
Fund Balance	3,375,000	6,000,000	2,625,000
Local Revenue	13,346,600	11,804,020	-1,542,580
State Building Aid	6,582,463	6,423,609	-158,854
Other State Aid	77,661,039	71,649,951	-6,011,088
Property Tax Levy	103,125,848	107,113,370	3,987,522
Allowance for Deferred Taxes	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	0
Total Revenue	\$203,840,950	\$202,840,950	-\$1,000,000

Budget Presentations

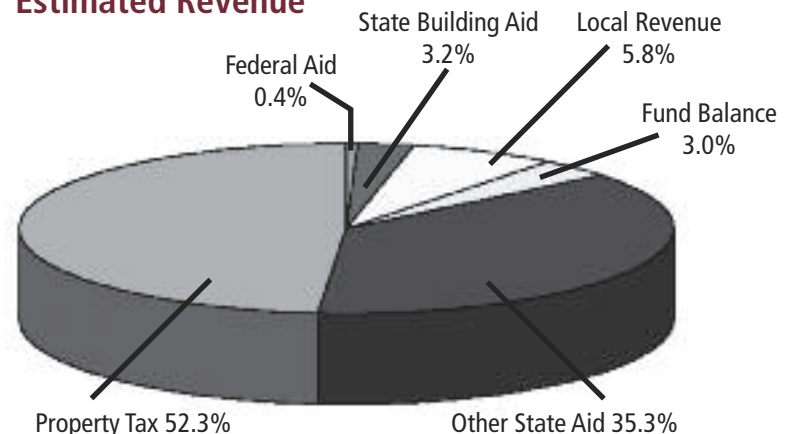
- May 5 – Council of Albany Neighborhood Associations (CANA), Albany Public Library Main Branch, 161 Washington Avenue, 6:30 p.m. (community welcome)
- May 6 – Albany High School, 700 Washington Avenue, 7 p.m. (budget hearing)

If you would like to schedule a budget presentation for your organization, please call 475-6010.

Estimated Expenditures



Estimated Revenue



CAPITAL education

Capital Education is published by the City School District of Albany.

Please direct comments about the newsletter, story ideas and questions to Ron Lesko at (518) 475-6065 or rlesko@albany.k12.ny.us, or Lisa Angerame at (518) 475-6066 or langerame@albany.k12.ny.us.

City School District of Albany
Academy Park
Albany, New York 12207

Estimated tax bill

A property assessed at \$100,000

	2009-10	2010-11	Estimated change
Without STAR exemption	\$1,759	\$1,827	\$68
With Basic STAR for other homeowners	\$1,193	\$1,272	\$79
With Enhanced Star for senior citizens	\$687	\$716	\$29

* These estimates are preliminary and ultimately will be adjusted by final assessment data subject to approval by the state at a later date.

Propositions on the May 18 ballot

Albany voters will be asked to consider the following propositions on the May 18 ballot. Three are directly related to the City School District of Albany.

The first proposition asks voters to consider the proposed \$202.8 million school budget for 2010-11. Here is what will appear on the ballot:



Proposition #1

Shall the resolution adopted by the Board of Education on April 13, 2010, authorizing the City School District of Albany to expend the sum in the amount of \$202,840,950 during the 2010-2011 school year and levy a tax therefore be approved?

YES NO

The second proposition authorizes the sale of the former Philip Livingston Magnet Academy. Here is what will appear on the ballot:



Proposition #2

Shall the Board of Education of the City School District of Albany be authorized to sell the real property commonly known as Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, located at 315 Northern Boulevard, Albany, N.Y., for a selling price not less than \$4,500,000?

YES NO

Voters also will be asked to consider a \$5.2 million tax levy proposed by the Albany Public Library. **This proposition is unrelated to the school district budget and therefore has no impact on school taxes.** Here is what will appear on the ballot:



Proposition #4

Shall the sum of \$5,196,339 be raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the City School District of Albany for the purpose of funding the operating budget of the Albany Public Library?

YES NO

The third proposition authorizes the district to spend existing dollars on minor renovations at Albany High School, including replacing lockers, bathrooms and carpets throughout. **The proposition will have no impact on school taxes.** The district needs taxpayer authority to spend \$7.6 million, \$1.97 million of which came from the sale of the Adult Learning Center property and a lawsuit settlement, and \$5.6 million of which comes from state building-aid grants. Here is what will appear on the ballot:



Proposition #3

Shall the bond resolution adopted by the Board of Education on March 30, 2010, amending a bond resolution previously adopted by the Board of Education on April 1, 2003, and authorizing (a) an amendment to the purposes previously authorized to include Phase 1 reconstruction projects at Albany High School, including necessary site work, and acquisition of original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus required for the purpose for which such reconstructed building is to be used; (b) an increase in the maximum aggregate cost of the purposes of \$7,650,000; (c) the expenditure for such purposes of an additional \$7,650,000, including the expenditure of \$1,974,000 of available funds; (d) the levy of the necessary tax therefore taking into account state aid received and the expenditure of available funds, to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education as provided in Section 416 of the Education Law; and (e) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, the issuance of bonds and notes at one time or from time to time in the additional principal amount not to exceed \$5,676,000, be approved?

YES NO

There also will be a vote for two open seats on the Albany Public Library Board of Trustees. This vote also is unrelated to the school district. For more information about the library, please call Stephanie Simon at 427-4344.

Preserving strong programs...

(continued from page 1)

University at Albany College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, Albany High will expand its Academy of Engineering. In its second year in 2010-11, the academy will include sophomores and also will add the "Smart Scholars" program, which will give academy students the opportunity to earn college credits at Hudson Valley Community College.

Restructuring Albany High

The 2008 strategic plan, "A Vision for Tomorrow," will remain a focus, with special emphasis on two components.

The Alternative Education Think Tank, comprised of 36 members from the district and community, will continue working to restructure those programs for students at all levels. The outcomes will be critical to the second significant undertaking: restructuring Albany High.

The High School Restructuring Committee has proposed dividing Albany High into four smaller learning communities for the 2011-12 school year. The district hopes to seed this effort with a three-year, \$7.5 million federal magnet grant, although restructuring the high school irrespective of that funding is a state mandate due to the school's subpar performance in math and English language arts in recent years.

Program changes

The budget proposal would replace school nurse teachers in all 12 elementary schools.

Nursing services would be provided by registered nurses. The components of the Know Your Body health curriculum currently taught by school nurse teachers would continue and be covered by students' regular classroom teacher. This would save about \$350,000.

Nursing services and health classes will be unchanged at the middle- and high-school levels, with certified health teachers providing instruction and RNs providing nursing services.

To benefit more students in need of intensive reading support, the Reading Recovery program will change. With the reduction of 5.5 positions, there would remain 29 reading teachers working with elementary students farthest away from the standards. This would save about \$398,000.

The budget also proposes a schedule change from nine periods to eight at Albany High, with an estimated savings of about \$520,000.

This proposal would reduce the number of electives available for some students; student choice will dictate which electives will be offered. It also would reduce the number of study halls students can schedule each day while also increasing each class period by five minutes – a total of 15 hours per subject over the course of a school year.

The budget would eliminate the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education and Teachers College professional-development contracts at a total savings of about \$612,000.

The district would continue to invest in professional development through NUA-trained staff leaders, math and

literacy coaches, and other programs led by district personnel.

The district's 48 administrators, including Dr. Colucciello and the five members of his senior leadership team, agreed to pay freezes for 2010-11, which will save about \$250,000.

A proposal to close the former Philip Livingston Magnet Academy and relocate students and staff to other facilities would save about \$255,000.

Eliminating separate art and music classes for prekindergarten students would save an estimated \$143,000, with those subjects taught by the regular classroom teacher.

Starting instrumental music instruction in fourth grade rather than third would save about \$65,000.

Planned staff reductions

The proposed budget would eliminate about 100 positions district-wide at a total savings of about \$5.3 million.

The reductions would include 50 teaching positions (6 percent of the district's 833 total teachers). Other reductions would include 31 support staff (5 percent of 605 total support staff) and three administrators (7 percent of 42 total administrators).

The reductions also would include 15 substitute hall monitors.

"Despite some severe financial restrictions, Albany's public schools will continue to provide students with programs and services that prepare them with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success," said Board President Daniel Egan.

Albany's public schools by the numbers

- **0** – Area high schools offering an Academy of Engineering besides Albany High
- **1** – Place the Albany High boys' and girls' soccer teams, girls' swimming team and girls' indoor track team finished in the conference this school year (*spring TBD!*)
- **2** – Nights each week the Myers Middle School pool is open to the public
- **3** – Themes of magnet elementary schools in the district
- **3.87** – Percent of the proposed tax-levy increase for 2010-11
- **4** – National Merit Scholarship commended students from Albany High
- **6** – Members of the Albany High indoor track team competing in this year's national championships
- **12** – Elementary schools offering full-day prekindergarten (*all of them!*)
- **13** – Public schools newly built or renovated during the past decade
- **14** – Inductees in the first Hall of Fame class last fall (*stay tuned for the Class of 2010!*)
- **18** – The May date of this year's budget vote (*don't forget!*)
- **20** – Members of the state-champion Marching Falcons Winter Guard
- **23** – Awards received by the Albany High Theatre Ensemble in the past five years
- **32** – Languages spoken by district students
- **36** – Members from the district and community on the Alternative Education Think Tank
- **48** – Administrators who accepted a pay freeze to help balance the budget (*all of them!*)
- **85** – Percent of students in the Class of 2009 attending college
- **100** – Percent of elementary schools offering after-school programs
- **200** – Shared years of K-12 experience among the superintendent and five Cabinet members
- **380** – Students registered to take AP exams in May (*among the most in the state!*)
- **591** – Spots for prekindergarteners starting school this fall
- **810** – Responses to an online survey about Albany High's future configuration
- **1,112** – Albany High's rank on the 2009 *Newsweek/Washington Post* list of the top 1,500 U.S. high schools (*#2 in the Capital Region!*)
- **1,140** – Students playing a band or string instrument
- **49,049** – Hits to the Albany High Media Center Web site last year
- **475-6010** – Phone number to schedule a presentation for your organization to learn more about the 2010-11 budget proposal

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Polling locations

7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Find your voting location below, or use the searchable directory online at www.albanyschools.org. Visit the 2010-11 Budget News section. If you have additional questions, please call 475-6010.

1st Ward, Election Districts 1-3 William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Avenue	8th Ward, Election Districts 1-3, 9, 11 & 12 Albany School of Humanities 108 Whitehall Road
1st Ward, Election Districts 4-10 City Parks & Recreation Building 7 Hoffman Avenue	8th Ward, Election Districts 4-8 & 10 St. Catherine of Siena School 35 Hurst Avenue
2nd Ward, Election Districts 1-3, 5-13 & 15-17 Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl Street	9th Ward, Election Districts 1-9 New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Avenue
2nd Ward, Election Districts 4 & 14 City Parks & Recreation Building 7 Hoffman Avenue	10th Ward, Election Districts 1-8 Albany High School 700 Washington Avenue
3rd Ward, Election Districts 1-15 Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Avenue	11th Ward, Election Districts 1-8 First Lutheran Church 646 State Street
4th Ward, Election Districts 1-5 & 12 North Albany Academy 570 N. Pearl Street	12th Ward, Election Districts 1-3, 5 & 11 Harriet Gibbons High School 75 Watervliet Avenue
4th Ward, Election Districts 6-11 Capital Woods Apartments 200 Lark Drive	12th Ward, Election Districts 4 & 9 North Albany Academy 570 N. Pearl Street
5th Ward, Election Districts 1-12 Philip Livingston Magnet Academy 315 Northern Blvd.	12th Ward, Election Districts 6-8 & 10 Montessori Magnet School 65 Tremont Street
6th Ward, Election Districts 1-7 & 9 William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Avenue	13th Ward, Election Districts 1-6 & 8-9 Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen Street
6th Ward, Election District 8 First Lutheran Church Technology 646 State Street	13th Ward, Election District 7 Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Avenue
7th Ward, Election Districts 1, 4-6, 8 & 9 Delaware Community School 43 Bertha Street	14th Ward, Election Districts 1-10 Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Avenue
7th WARD Election Districts 2 & 3 New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Avenue	15th Ward, Election Districts 1-3 & 8 Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Avenue
7th Ward, Election District 7 Albany School of Humanities 108 Whitehall Road	15th Ward, Election Districts 4 - 7 Teresian House, 200 Washington Avenue

Voting requirements

To vote on the City School District of Albany's proposed 2010-11 budget, you must be:

- Registered to vote with the Albany County Board of Elections **by Tuesday, May 4;**
- At least 18 years old; and
- A citizen of the United States and a resident of the City of Albany for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

You must provide identification at the time of registration and voting. For more information, please contact Catherine Cutting, clerk of the board, at 475-6010.

Absentee ballots

The City School District of Albany automatically will send absentee ballots to individuals designated by the Albany County Board of Elections as having a permanent disability.

Others who require an absentee ballot because of illness, hospitalization, vacation, studies, business or incarceration should contact the district at 475-6010. You also can download the absentee ballot application from the 2010-11 Budget News section of our Web site, www.albanyschools.org.

Applications must be mailed to the district clerk seven days before the vote – Tuesday, May 11 – for an absentee ballot to be mailed to a resident's home. If an absentee ballot is to be picked up personally, the application must be delivered to the district clerk one day in advance of the budget vote, by Monday, May 17.

A completed absentee ballot must be returned to the district clerk, located in the Administration Building in Academy Park, by 5 p.m. the day of the school budget vote, Tuesday, May 18.

What happens if the budget is not approved?

If voters do not approve the proposed budget May 18, under state law the Board of Education has three alternatives:

- Put the same budget up for a re-vote
- Present a revised budget for voter consideration
- Adopt a contingency budget; the board opted for this plan for 2007-08 after voters rejected the proposed budget in May 2007.

If the board presents a revised budget for consideration and it is turned down, a contingency budget must be adopted. The district's contingency cap in 2010-11 is \$202.4 million, \$469,156 below the proposed budget of \$202.8 million. This would carry a tax-levy increase of 3.41 percent, 46-hundredths of a percent below the proposed 3.87 percent tax-levy increase.

State law closely regulates district expenditures under a contingency budget. For example, the district cannot spend money on:

- Student supplies
- Equipment
- Certain raises

And, additionally:

- Community groups would have to pay to use school buildings.