



# MOUNT PLEASANT

## Central School District

FROM THE HEART

BUDGET ISSUE 2024

### BUDGET VOTE

May 21, 2024  
7am - 9pm

WHS Gym  
825 Westlake Drive  
Thornwood, NY

### SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Three candidates running for three open seats:

- Michael Horan
- Michael Griffin
- Colleen Scaglione Neglia

### VOTER INFORMATION

Visit [www.mtplcsd.org](http://www.mtplcsd.org)  
For all questions, please call the District Clerk at 914-769-5500 x5105

## PRIORITIZING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE & FINANCIAL HEALTH IN THE DISTRICT

With student outcomes front of mind, we built this year's budget using the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Mount Pleasant Learner as our guide. We are pleased to present a budget that creates seamless learning experiences for our students in safe, well-maintained facilities and supports their health and wellness needs.

On May 21, 2024, the community will be asked to vote on a tax-cap compliant budget in the amount of \$79,769,660. The 2024-2025 Proposed Budget represents a 2.81% tax levy increase with an estimated 2.73% tax rate increase. It marks the 13th consecutive year that the District has presented a tax cap compliant budget to taxpayers.

Community input is critical to the budget process each year. Thank you to our Citizens Budget Advisory Committee for their annual participation. Their collective financial expertise and dedication to the budget process is invaluable.

This year's budget continues the momentum across disciplines we piloted and implemented over the past several years and positions us for the future in the following important ways:

- Implementation of Spanish and Italian instruction in Grades 4-5 and the expansion of American Sign Language to level 3 at WHS.
- Addition of a strings program through a unit of study in Grade 2. All students will receive

instruction on the violin as we plan for the future implementation of an orchestral program.

- Math program updates in Grades K-5, a comprehensive program review and staff development in Grades 6-12, and expansion of enrichment opportunities in mathematics at WMS.
- Part-time Coordinator of Safety and Security will be increased to full-time, a security guard will be added to the Westlake campus, and interior swipe access with audible alarms are being installed in the elementary schools.
- Targeted replacement of athletic uniforms for boys and girls, purchase of shot clocks for boys and girls lacrosse, weight room upgrades and updated gym banners will be installed.

Guided by our mission *Educating Each Student Today for Endless Possibilities Tomorrow*, together, we will continue to uphold the values of excellence and innovation that define our district. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the success of our students. Sincerely,

Dr. Peter Giarrizzo,  
Superintendent of Schools



### WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

#### Revenue Sources

	2023-2024 Budget	2024-2025 Budget	% Change
Property Tax Levy	\$60,666,873	\$62,372,908	2.81%
State Aid	\$12,099,246	\$12,954,169	7.07%
Sales Tax	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	0.00%
Other Revenue	\$454,100	\$1,091,180	140.30%
Appropriated Fund Balance*	\$0	\$2,051,403	100.00%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$74,520,219</b>	<b>\$79,769,660</b>	<b>7.04%</b>

\*\$1,851,403 appropriated from the Tax Certiorari Reserve to release funds in excess of exposure. Funds will be transferred to the Capital Projects Fund to invest in infrastructure and core instructional program.

### WHERE THE MONEY GOES

#### Expenditure Summary

	2023-2024 Budget	2024-2025 Budget	% Change
General Support	\$3,100,936	\$3,209,435	3.50%
Buildings & Grounds**	\$4,331,100	\$4,921,706	13.64%
Instruction	\$38,324,740	\$39,652,178	3.46%
Transportation	\$4,333,125	\$4,462,048	2.98%
Employee Benefits	\$16,012,121	\$17,263,448	7.81%
Debt Services & Transfers	\$8,418,197	\$10,260,845	21.89%
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$74,520,219</b>	<b>\$79,769,660</b>	<b>7.04%</b>

\*\*These expenditures are a continued investment in our infrastructure, safety & security, and core instructional program.

## BY THE NUMBERS

2024-2025 Budget  
**\$79,769,660**

2023-2024 Budget: \$74,520,219  
Budget Increase: \$5,249,441

Tax Levy Increase: 2.81%  
Est. Tax Rate Increase: 2.73%\*

\*Tax rate will be set by the town in August 2024

## SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

The following candidates are running for three open seats on the Board of Education. The three year term begins July 1, 2024.



### MICHAEL HORAN

**Occupation:** I am currently a Captain in the Fire Dept of New York (FDNY). My wife and I own a local dance studio in Hawthorne where children from the community have been learning dance for the past 20 years.

**Education:** I received my B.S. degree in Business Administration/Finance/Marketing from Fordham University in 2000.

**Community Involvement:** Member of the Board of Education (2018-present), BOE Vice

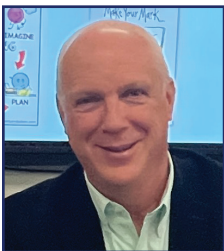
President (2020-21), BOE President (2021-present). I have also been part of different organizations over the years such as Westlake Middle School PTA Secretary (2017-18), Sherman Park Little League TeeBall Director (2021) Manager/Coach (2014-2020), Westlake Wildcats Football Coach (2014-2021); Cookies for Kids Cancer Fundraisers.

**Why are you running?** With two children in the school district, I have a vested interest in the future of our district both academically and financially. I believe the district has an obligation to continue to provide an excellent and enriching education for our children, while at the same time remaining fiscally responsible to all residents.

**What is your overall vision for the school district?** Our district is in a good place right now and continues to head in the right direction. I subscribe to the District's mission statement of "educating each student today for endless possibilities tomorrow." We should encourage a K-12 learning environment where our students are challenged to perform their very best in all areas while realizing that not all students learn the same. I would like to see the district continue to embrace our Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Mount Pleasant Learner in the coming years.

**What do you believe are the most important responsibilities of the Board of Education?** The most important responsibilities of the BOE include collaboratively setting the vision and goals of the school district while ensuring responsiveness to the values and priorities of our entire school community. We must also effectively communicate with our students, parents, administration, and faculty.

**What accomplishments are you most proud of during your time as a Board member?** Hiring our current Chief Wildcat Dr. Giarrizzo; Passing 5 consecutive tax-cap compliant budgets; Passing tax neutral Athletic Fields Bond (2022) and Instructional Bond (2023); Supporting our K-12 Curriculum Alignment, Development of our Strategic Plan & Portrait of a Mount Pleasant Learner; Supporting our Career Research Academy at WHS; Supporting our upcoming Universal Pre-K initiative. We have accomplished so much in these past six years and there's so much more to come!



### MICHAEL GRIFFIN

**Occupation:** I am a Credit & Risk Manager.

**Education:** I graduated from SUNY Albany with a B.A.

**Community Involvement:** AYSO volunteer as coach and Division Coordinator, WYSL coach and youth lacrosse coach for Mount Pleasant Wildcats.

**Why are you running?** Besides the fact that I enjoy being on the Board, I want to ensure that the District continues its work to provide

the best education and opportunities for our kids. After all, it is all about the kids. There is nothing more rewarding than serving your Community with the view/perspective of providing opportunities for the growth/betterment of our children.

**What is your overall vision for the school district?** That our programs, teachers, administrators and all staff continue to work in a manner that allows for the best opportunities and instruction for our kids.

**What do you believe are the most important responsibilities of the Board of Education?** To ensure that the District continues to realize and expand the goals and opportunities for our kids and realize our goals in a mindful manner. We must also ensure that we are operating the District in a mindful and financially responsible manner.

**What accomplishments are you most proud of during your time as a Board member?** That would be assessing our "Vision" for the School district along with the upgrade in outdoor and indoor

facilities. We have been able to make numerous improvements over the last several years, with the support of the Community, which leads me to believe that we have the Community's support and best interests at heart.



### COLLEEN SCAGLIONE NEGLIA

**Occupation:** In addition to having served as a Board of Education (BOE) member for the last 9 years, including 3 years as BOE

President, I am also a stay at home mom. Previously, I worked for 18 years as an Assistant Vice President in the corporate controller's group for an S&P 500 company.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree from the University at Albany, Major: Political Science, Minor: Business

**Community Involvement:** I have served as a member of our BOE for the last 9 years, during which time I served as the BOE's Vice President for one year, and President for three years. While on the board I have served on the Curriculum Instruction Assessment Committee (CIAC) and the Audit Committee as well as the liaison between the BOE and the Education Foundation and PTA. Prior to being elected to the BOE, I was the Co-President of the WMS PTA, parent member of the CIAC, on the parent committee to interview candidates for the WMS Principal, parent member of the WMS International Baccalaureate (IB) Committee, class parent for each of my three children, member of the Westlake Athletic Club (WAC) and assisted my husband to start Westlake's Jr. Wildcat basketball program.

**Why are you running?** I believe in our district's ability to provide the resources for our students to achieve greatness. Since I was elected to the Board in 2015, I have contributed to the positive educational developments at our schools, as well as the enhancements made to our facilities and fields. I would like to continue serving our community and working with this great BOE, administration and faculty to build on our recent successes.

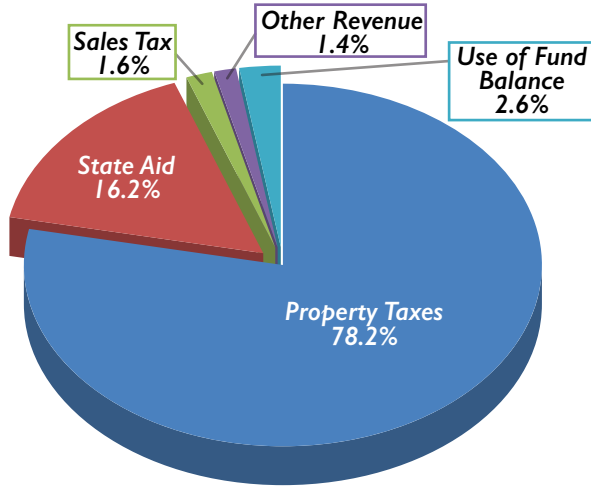
**What is your overall vision for the school district?** Continue to implement and strengthen our academic programs in line with our strategic plan of educating each student today for endless possibilities tomorrow. Prepare our students to succeed in a competitive workforce by challenging our students through rigorous curriculum, while offering differentiated instruction to support the needs of each student.

**What do you believe are the most important responsibilities of the Board of Education?** The most important responsibility of a board member is to listen to the needs of the students, our community and the district staff in making the decisions that shape our schools, while maintaining a fiscally responsible school budget. Additionally, we are responsible to have districtwide policies that provide the safest environment for all.

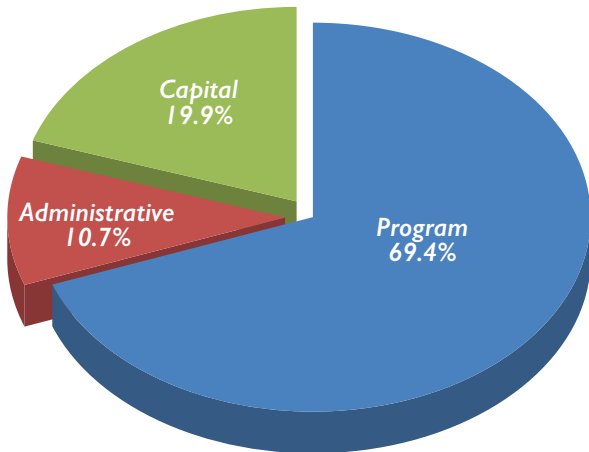
**What accomplishments are you most proud of during your time as a Board member?** During my time as a BOE member, I am most proud of my involvement in:

- Developing the size and scope of the 2023 Instructional Bond referendum, the 2022 Field Bond referendum and the 2016 Facilities bond referendum which allowed for many improvements made throughout our schools over the past nine years.
- In addition we have made a commitment to an annual appropriation to the capital line to make improvements to our facilities as to not rely on bond referendums for improvements.
- Led the search in hiring two incredible Superintendents Dr. Peter Giarrizzo and Dr. Kurtis Kotes to lead our district forward.
- Proposing a tax cap compliant budget while providing important components for safety and security,
- Implementing and strengthening our academic programs in mathematic enrichment, STEAM, reading and literacy while enhancing our instructional alignment K-12,
- Developing several new programs including: foreign language at the elementary level, sign language, a career research academy, a full implementation of the STEMScopes science curriculum in grades K-5, a comprehensive review of the elementary writing program, new courses of study in science and engineering at the high school level, selecting Advanced Placement Capstone Project for Westlake High School.

## WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



## WHERE THE MONEY GOES



The proposed budget includes the following multi-year transportation contracts: Home-to-School - Second year of a five-year contract, the total five-year estimated cost of which is \$16,910,625, Field and Sports Trips - Second year of a five-year contract, the total five-year estimated cost of which is \$1,334,717, MVP Consortium Home-to-School - Third year of a five-year contract, the total five-year estimated cost of which is \$2,991,036.

## IMPACT ON HOME VALUES IN THE MOUNT PLEASANT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

2024-2025 (vs. last year)

Full Value	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000
Annual Increase in Taxes	\$223.29	\$334.93	\$446.58

Please note: These numbers may vary based on the actual assessed value of your house.

## Q: IS THIS BUDGET COMPLIANT WITH THE TAX CAP?

A: YES. The proposed budget is tax cap compliant for the thirteenth consecutive year. Mt. Pleasant Central School District's proposed tax levy increase is 2.81%, which is the maximum amount allowable under the tax cap formula. When a budget is tax cap compliant, a "simple majority" of voters (50% plus one) is required for the budget to pass. If the District proposed a tax levy that exceeded the tax cap, it would require approval by a "supermajority" (60% or more) of voters.

## Q: HOW DOES OUR TAX RATE COMPARE WITH SURROUNDING DISTRICTS?

A: Per \$1000 of assessed value, Mount Pleasant tax payers have a lower tax rate than five other surrounding towns including Tarrytown, Chappaqua, Briarcliff Manor, Pleasantville, and Valhalla. This has been consistent for several years.



# INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE

## ACADEMICS

- Class of 2024 submitted 1236 applications to 250 schools in 30 different states
- WHS offers 19 AP courses, 11 honors and 12 college credit courses
- In 2023, 88% of graduates attended 4 year colleges and 12% attended 2 year colleges
- 45% of students in grades 10-12 are enrolled in AP courses
- 76 AP scholars in 2022-23

## ATHLETICS ACCOLADES

- 54 athletic teams modified to varsity
- 14 of 16 teams qualified for the Fall and Winter Season's NYSPHSAA's Scholar-Athlete Team Award (90% or better team average)
- 4 Athletes committed to College/ University Athletics in Football, Soccer and Baseball.
- Varsity Football - Class C League Champions, NYS Regional Semi-Finalists, Golden Dozen Winner - **Nicholas Castellano**, All State Football Players - **Christopher Kalle**, **Nicholas Castellano**, **Raphael Savino**
- Varsity Cheerleading Fall - 11 All American Cheerleaders
- Varsity Wrestling - Section One Champions, All State Wrestlers - **Vincenzo Mannello**
- Varsity Girls Basketball - Section 1 League Coach of Year - **Sean Mayer**
- Varsity Boys Basketball - Section 1 League Coach of the Year - **Chad Charney**, Section 1 League Player of the Year - **Nicholas Castellano**, Court of Excellence Award - **Nicholas Castellano**, Con Ed Scholar Athlete of the Week - **Nicholas Castellano**
- Varsity Indoor Track & Field - 2 Athletes advanced to NY State Qualifier
- Varsity Girls Ice Hockey - Section 1 Champions; NYS Regional Finalist Student Leadership Conference Attendees - **Kolby Moody** & **Luan Celaj**
- LoHUD Players of the Week - **Thomas Lyden**, Soccer, **Vincenzo Mannello**, Wrestling



## PERFORMING ARTS

- Music Department named 2024 Best Communities for Music Education by the NAMM Foundation
- 75 students in Westlake High School Concert Band
- 20 in Westlake High School Jazz Band
- 70 in Westlake High School Chorus
- 32 in Westlake High School Blendors
- 177 in Westlake Middle School Band
- 34 in Westlake Middle School Jazz Band
- 219 in Westlake Middle School Chorus
- 40 in Westlake Middle School Meistersingers
- 33 (cast and crew) in High School Drama, Noises Off
- 63 (cast and crew) in High School Musical, Addams Family
- 137 (cast and crew) in Middle School Musical, Matilda
- 73 music students are participating in the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Solo Festival
- All-State Chorus: **Gabriel McCabe**
- Area All-State: Band: **Melania Petriccione**, flute; **Tycho Force**, tuba
- Area All-State Chorus: **Daniella Clarke**, **Jade Soto**, **Susanna Palumbo**, **Veronica Rubio**, **Alyssa Occhiogrossi**, **Gianna Benz**, **Adriana Escobedo**, **Gabriel McCabe**
- Intermediate All-County Band: **Chloe Kim**, flute; **Duncan Force**, trumpet; **Ethan Rinaldi**, Oboe; **Martina Salomone**, flute; **Andrew Swirsky**, baritone horn
- Elementary All-County Band: **CJ Daglieri**, alto sax; **Sophia Delli Carpini**, percussion; **Owen Farrell**, flute; **Nicolette Fiskaa**, flute; **Kieran Fitzpatrick**, baritone horn; **Kiera Lavelle**, flute; **Joseph Stallone**, bass clarinet; **Crystal Zhang**, flute



## FINE & MEDIA ARTS

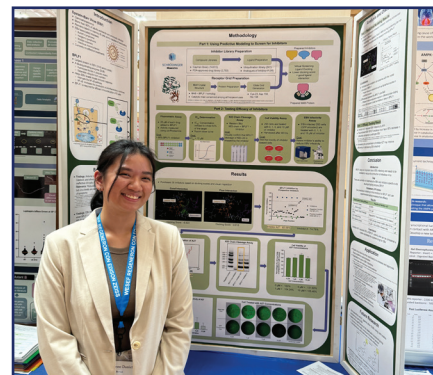
- 500+ students K-12 participated in the district art festival
- 12 seniors participated in the Katonah Museum of Art "Young Artists" exhibit
- 3 seniors participated in the KMA "Young Artists" installation of artwork
- 110 students participated in "Dare to Dream" the Peace Poster competition sponsored by the Thornwood Lions Club
- 110 7th graders will attend the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum in Hartford, CT
- 40 Ceramic students participated in the "Plates for Peace" fundraiser, making and selling their own hand-built artwork. (All proceeds were donated to Children International)

- 48 students participated in the Greenburgh Library Photography Contest
- 17 students will participate in a field trip to MoMA
- 65 student participants in the NYS Media Arts show
- 367 students enrolled in HS art electives for the 2023-24 school year
- 92 students enrolled in HS foundational art courses
- 143 students enrolled in MS and HS art clubs
- 5 graduating seniors will be enrolling in college art programs 2024-25
- 32 Students participated in the 10 Day Film Challenge submitting 9 films

## SCIENCE RESEARCH WINNERS

### Westchester Science and Engineerin Fair (WESEF)

- **Keishanne Bernal**: 4th Place in Microbiology
- **Samantha DiPaolo**: Society for In Vitro Biology Award for outstanding research in plant or animal in vitro biology or tissue culture
- **Alexa DiSalvo**: 2nd Place in Animal Sciences and qualified to compete against 1200 students from 75 countries and 39 states at the international level at the International GENIUS Olympiad for a week at the Rochester Institute of Technology in June!
- **Riya Joji**: Innovations in Biological Sciences Research Award for innovative projects in the life sciences
- **Sukhsimran Kaur**: 4th Place in Behavioral & Social Sciences
- **Patricia Keating**: 2nd Place in Cellular and Molecular Biology.



### Upstate New York Junior Science & Humanities Symposium (JSHS)

- **Keishanne Bernal**: 2nd Place in Biomedical Sciences as a regional speaker
- **Westchester-Rockland Junior Science & Humanities Symposium (JSHS)**
- **Keishanne Bernal**: 1st Place in Biochemistry & Cellular Molecular Biology as a regional speaker

## PROGRAM AND BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

As we worked to build the 2024-2025 budget, our main areas of focus were academic programming for all learners, high-level professional development for faculty and staff, resources that support student health and wellness, safety and security, and maintenance and upgrades to our facilities. Each line of the operating budget tells a story that reflects our values while staying focused on preserving the short-term and long-term financial health of the District.



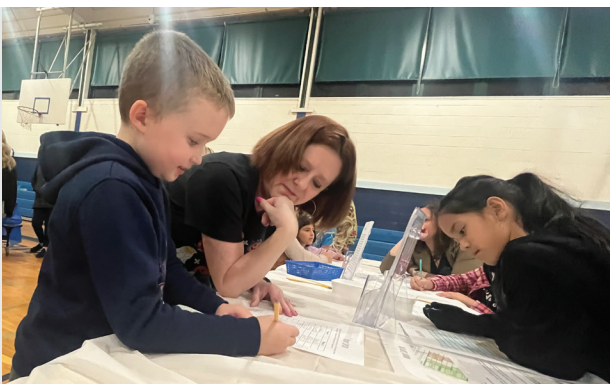
### GENERAL INSTRUCTION ENHANCEMENTS

- Literacy program updates in reading, writing, vocabulary, conventions and grammar usage across all schools and the implementation of a research based program from the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) to support early literacy instruction.
- Implementation of Spanish and Italian instruction in grades 4 and 5 and expansion of American Sign Language to level 3 at Westlake High School
- Expansion of enrichment opportunities in mathematics at Westlake Middle School
- Math program updates in Grades K-5 to ensure alignment with the Next Generation Math Learning Standards as well a comprehensive mathematics program review and staff development in Grades 6-12
- Strings program Grade 2
- Continued growth of our Project STEM, Career and Technical Education, Computer Science, and Career Research Academy.
- Additional half time speech/language therapist to support students K-12
- Targeted replacement of athletic uniforms for boys and girls
- Shot clocks for boys and girls lacrosse, weight room upgrades and updated gym banners



### SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Part-time Altaris Coordinator of Safety and Security increased to a full-time
- Additional security guard added to the Westlake campus
- Anonymous Alerts will be implemented to enable confidential reporting
- Interior swipe access with audible alarms at selected exterior doors to be installed in the elementary schools
- Additional safety training given to the Building Emergency Response Teams



### TECHNOLOGY

- ParentSquare will replace SchoolMessenger as our regular and emergency communication tool

### FACILITIES

- Districtwide infrastructure projects, including interior door replacements, lighting
- Ventilation upgrades
- HVAC upgrades
- Districtwide air cooling and additional funding for PPS relocation project



Mount Pleasant Central School District  
 825 Westlake Drive  
 Thornwood, NY 10594

**Board of Education**  
 Michael Horan, *President*  
 Sara Beaty, *Vice President*  
 Michael Griffin  
 Steven Mastrosimone  
 Laura Michalec Olszewski  
 Christopher Pinchiaroli  
 Colleen Scaglione Neglia

**Superintendent**  
 Dr. Peter Giarrizzo

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## SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2023-24 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2024-25 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 74,520,219	\$79,769,660	\$77,988,083
Increase/Decrease for the 2024-25 School Year		\$5,249,441	\$3,467,864
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		7.04 %	4.65%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$60,666,873	\$62,372,908	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	-	-	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	-	-	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	-	-	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$60,666,873	\$62,372,908	\$60,666,873
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$5,367,302	\$5,534,105	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$55,299,571	\$56,838,803	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$55,299,571	\$56,838,803	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$8,099,507	\$8,547,210	\$8,344,634
Program Component	\$53,014,918	\$55,332,097	\$54,635,096
Capital Component	\$13,405,794	\$15,890,353	\$15,008,353
* Should the proposed budget be defeated, the Board of Education may adopt a contingency budget pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. The contingency budget would eliminate \$1,781,577 from the proposed budget in the areas of general support, general education, equipment, contractual and BOCES services, athletics, transportation, and capital maintenance projects.			

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$1,520

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the Mount Pleasant Central School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at the Westlake High School gymnasium in said district on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.