



# Eastchester Eagle

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTCHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**A Spanish version of this newsletter is available upon request at the District Clerk's office.  
Please contact Lori Perrotta at (914) 793-6130 ext. 4201**

**Una versión en español de este boletín está disponible a solicitud en la Oficina del Secretario del Distrito. Comuníquese con Lori Perrotta al (914) 793-6130 ext. 4201**

## Dear Eastchester Community Members,

We are very excited about next year's school budget "For Our Children."

For the first time in more than a quarter century, the Board of Education and our leadership team are proposing a zero percent tax levy increase. This is the last year for New York State to fulfill its obligation to increase Foundation Aid. Eastchester is receiving a one-time \$3.5 million increase, bringing total state aid to \$16,116,485. Now is the moment to say "Thank You" to each taxpayer resident for your generosity over the decades supporting our school budgets and capital projects.

This zero tax levy increase will reduce the current tax rate to an estimated \$1,580/\$1,000 of assessed value. It is coupled with a generous package of innovative programs that will keep our students safe, provide greater academic opportunities and support college, career and counseling services in our schools.

### **Strategic Priority One: Strengthen School Security**

On the first day of school for students, every campus from Waverly to Anne Hutchinson, Greenvale and EHS/EMS, will have a full time School Resource Officer from the Eastchester Police Department. Through our relationship with the town, our District will budget three full-time SROs and our Town Board/Supervisor will budget one full-time SRO.

Additionally, we are strengthening our security at all campuses to protect staff and students every day they attend regular classes or after school athletics and extracurricular activities. Notably, Anne Hutchinson and Greenvale will now have full security coverage until 6 p.m., while EHS/EMS will enjoy security guard protection until 10 p.m. each school night.

The safety of our children and staff are non-negotiable. We are spending \$786,000 more next year for SROs and additional security coverage.

### **Strategic Priority Two: Improve Academic Performance**

Our Waverly K-1 students will benefit from a Foreign Language Elementary School (FLES) Spanish program. The goal is both functional language proficiency in Spanish and exposure to the rich cultures and traditions of Spanish-speaking people.

The K-5 Literacy Program will be strengthened by incorporating extensive reading/writing materials. Literacy and math coaches will work directly with all of our teachers to model instruction, assist with lesson planning and provide professional support in both English Language Arts and Math.

The current K-5 What I Need (WIN) periods will be expanded to provide a structured, more challenging curriculum for students not eligible for special education and Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

**Continued on page 2**

## BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget  
**\$101,856,200**

Budget to Budget Increase  
**5.9%**

Tax Levy Increase  
**0.0%**

## SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE

**Tuesday,  
May 16, 2023  
6:00am – 9:00pm**

**Eastchester  
Middle School Gym  
(Enter on Lincoln Ave.)**

**Garth Road residents  
must vote at Eastchester  
Middle School**



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Sixth graders will receive a cafeteria-style Global Language program to expose them to the richness of Italian, French and Spanish. Additionally, every sixth grader will be scheduled for a study skills curriculum that reinforces note-taking, testing, and related skills.

Algebra for More in Grade 8 should increase student participation from 45-50% this year to 70% or more next year. Opening the doors to more students means that parents may opt to enroll their children in Algebra if not selected, and they may opt their child out, if selected. These efforts should improve student performance on New York State's ELA and Math tests, Grades 3-8. The purpose is to move the proficiency needle from 68% today to 80% in the future across all student demographics in ELA and Math.

We are also introducing a Flexible Support Program that includes one class at the Middle School and one at the High School, each staffed by a school psychologist and teaching assistant. This therapeutic support structure will provide the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students returning from out-of-district placements and offers opportunities for in-district students who need specialized attention.

### **Strategic Priority III: Strengthen College, Career, and Counseling Services**

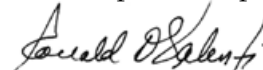
The District will support both in- and after-school study skills programs intended to improve PSAT, SAT and ACT scores.

We are recruiting for a Director of College, Career and Counseling to establish close bonds with a broader range of institutions and to work with our guidance staff to enable graduating seniors to make the wisest career and college choices.

The budget also includes \$1.7 million dollars for elementary school playgrounds, improvement to athletic fields, LED message boards, retaining wall and HVAC repairs and more.

Please review our budget on the District website at [www.eufsdk12.org](http://www.eufsdk12.org). In addition to voting on the budget you will be asked to vote for three members to serve on the Board of Education.

Yours in partnership,



Ronald D. Valenti, Ph.D.,  
Superintendent of Schools



Class of 2023 Valedictorian Zhuoyi Zou (left) and Salutatorian Theodore Jeliakov.

## Valedictorian, Salutatorian Reflect on Academic Careers

When Zhuoyi Zou and Theodore Jeliakov look back on their academic careers at Eastchester, their fondest memories won't necessarily be of their numerous triumphs, but of those moments in which they were truly challenged.

For Zou and Jeliakov—who were named Eastchester High School Class of 2023's Valedictorian and Salutatorian, respectively—learning how to overcome obstacles and still excel academically provided valuable lessons about the importance of perseverance.

Zou will study engineering at Carnegie-Mellon University next year. He cited some of the difficult classes he took—including English courses and AP Calculus among others—with providing him with a blueprint for navigating challenges. According to Zou, his academic success throughout the years ultimately hinged on his ability to recognize areas where he needed extra help and the willingness of Eastchester faculty members to provide extra instruction.

"For me, the most meaningful part was to realize that I was struggling at times but still being able to succeed," said Zou. "Overall, there were probably more extra help opportunities than I was even able to make time for."

Jeliakov, who has not made his final college decision yet, but hopes to study applied mathematics, concurred with Zou's sentiments and lauded Eastchester's teachers for their ability to make even difficult ideas accessible to students.

"I had [Paul] Precnis for AP Calculus and I think about his ability to use real-world applications in lessons where those connections weren't obvious," said Jeliakov. "The teachers here are very supportive and a lot of teachers and staff stay after school for a really long time to help their students."

As Jeliakov and Zou prepare for the next chapter of their lives, they hope that the lessons they learned at Eastchester can help inspire younger students.

"One of the most important things I learned was how important it is to challenge yourself," said Jeliakov. "You have to get out of your comfort zone sometimes."

"My first two years of high school, I felt like I was just here for school and disregarded the social aspect," added Zou. "But in my junior year, I joined extra-curricular clubs and that was a great experience."

## 2023-24 Revenue Summary

REVENUE CATEGORY	2022-23 BUDGET	2023-24 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
Property Taxes	\$79,308,000	\$79,308,000	\$0	0.0%
Other Revenues	\$4,410,000	\$4,856,715	\$446,715	10.1%
State Aid	\$12,490,000	\$16,116,485	\$3,626,485	29.0%
Assigned Fund Balance	\$0	\$1,575,000	\$1,575,000	NA
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$96,208,000</b>	<b>\$101,856,200</b>	<b>\$5,648,200</b>	<b>5.9%</b>

## 2023-24 Expenditure Summary

BUDGET CATEGORY	2022-23 BUDGET	2023-24 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
Administration	\$3,553,775	\$3,707,668	\$153,893	4.3%
Facilities/Operations/Security	\$7,038,318	\$8,199,650	\$1,161,332	16.5%
Instruction	\$52,563,724	\$55,961,931	\$3,398,207	6.5%
Transportation	\$3,908,892	\$4,552,846	\$643,954	16.5%
Employee Benefits	\$21,612,617	\$23,048,754	\$1,436,137	6.6%
Debt Service	\$5,230,674	\$4,485,351	(\$745,323)	-14.2%
Transfers to Other Funds	\$2,300,000	\$1,900,000	(\$400,000)	-17.4%
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$96,208,000</b>	<b>\$101,856,200</b>	<b>\$5,648,200</b>	<b>5.9%</b>

This transportation expense item includes approximately \$1,285,000 for out-of-district home-to-school transportation to nonpublic schools, special education placements, and summer transportation, which is based upon the District's current usage of such transportation, and upon the District, as part of the BEPT Consortium awarding five-year contracts (Sept. 1, 2023 to June 30, 2028) for these transportation services to Royal Coach Lines, Inc. The approval of this budget will constitute approval for the Board of Education to enter into a five-year contract with Royal Coach Lines for these transportation services. The rate for each subsequent year shall be the rates of the immediately preceding year increased by three percent (3%).

## Projected Tax Bill Impact

**NOTE:** The budget-to-budget increase is \$5,648,200. The tax levy increase, which reflects the impact on a homeowner's tax bill, is 0.0%, which is tax compliant.

**NOTE:** This projection assumes a total static assessment base. A change in assessments as calculated by the Town of Eastchester may have an impact on this estimate of the tax impact. Lower assessments in the town may raise the tax rate. Final rates are set by the Town of Eastchester in August.

### AVERAGE

ASSESSED VALUE	\$5,000	\$7,000	\$8,500	\$11,000	\$13,000
2022-2023 School Tax Bill*	\$7,929	\$11,100	\$13,479	\$17,444	\$20,615
Estimated 2023-2024 Tax Bill*	\$7,902	\$11,063	\$13,434	\$17,385	\$20,546
<b>REDUCTION FROM PREVIOUS YEAR</b>	<b>\$27</b>	<b>\$37</b>	<b>\$45</b>	<b>\$59</b>	<b>\$69</b>

\*Does not include STAR impact.

<b>2022-2023 Tax Rate per \$1,000 of Assessed Valuation.....</b>	<b>\$1,585.78</b>
<b>Estimated 2023-2024 Tax Rate per \$1,000 of Assessed Valuation .....</b>	<b>\$1,580.44</b>

**★ VOTE May 16, 2023 6:00am – 9:00pm ★**

# Strengthening Security at Eastchester's Schools

**The day after a recent school shooting** in Nashville, TN, Eastchester parents may have been heartened to see Eastchester Police Department officers greeting children as they made their way into district buildings.

That could become a routine sight if voters approve the Eastchester School District's proposed 2023-2024 budget, which calls for hiring School Resource Officers for all three elementary schools. The district currently employs two SROs, one stationed permanently at the Eastchester High/Middle School campus, and another who rotates among the district's three elementary schools.

At a joint meeting between the School and Town Boards on March 28, Eastchester Police Chief Sgt. Joseph Rodriguez acknowledged that school security is a top concern among community parents and that expanding the use of SROs in the district should help give them some peace of mind.

"The tragedy in Nashville highlights the need to hopefully put an officer in every school," said Sgt. Rodriguez. "We're hoping that the presence of the officers in the building is a deterrent, and if the deterrent is not enough, they will be there to mitigate any threat."

The additional officers would be made possible, in part, by a partnership with the Town of Eastchester, which has agreed to cover the cost of one of the SROs. School Board Trustee Laurie Giacobbe said the ongoing partnership between the schools and the town should strengthen security district-wide.

"Safety has been a top concern for us, both as parents and as board members," said Giacobbe. "Our continued partnership with the community and the town is proof that everyone is working together to make our schools safer for our students, our faculty and our staff."

And although providing security may be the most visible function of SROs, EUFSD Security Coordinator John Kugler believes they also play a vital role within the district as youth outreach specialists.

"Aside from working closely with

school administrators to provide a safe environment for students and staff, they assist administrators in developing emergency response plans and being part of threat assessment and incident response teams," said Kugler. "They create a positive relationship with educators and students, and provide student referrals to youth agencies and programs."



*Eastchester School Resource Officer (SRO) Adam Said oversees a fundraising event at on the middle school campus in October of 2022. Said is currently one of two SROs working in the district, but that number will double next school year under the proposed budget.*

## BROADENING HORIZONS:

### Eastchester Explores Elementary Language Instruction

Children who learn a second language at a young age tend to be better at planning, focusing, critical thinking and achieving goals. For these reasons, and more, Eastchester's proposed 2023-2024 school district budget calls for introducing a foreign language program in the elementary schools.

The Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) program could dramatically reshape the way language is taught in Eastchester by providing language instruction to students beginning in kindergarten.

The proposal calls for a gradual three-year rollout of the FLES program, beginning with the curriculum being introduced to K-1 students next fall, students in grades 2-3 in the fall of 2024, and those in grades 4-5 in 2025.



*Next fall, Waverly students may receive world language instruction as part of a newly-implemented Foreign Language in Elementary School (FLES) program.*

Dr. Lori de Ramirez, an educator who serves on the Executive Committee of the World Language Content Advisory Panel, has been advising Eastchester administrators on the most effective ways to implement FLES instruction.

By focusing on three main areas—language, culture and content—de Ramirez explained that FLES instruction is designed to help students achieve language proficiency while also expanding their worldviews from an early age.

"We want students to be able to communicate in the target language, but they also need to be able to understand the culture of the native speakers of the language they're going to be learning," she said. "That's really crucial for developing global citizens, and it's a way for students to learn, through the language, what other perspectives look like."

For a more in-depth look at FLES programs, please visit the "Budget/BOE Information 2023-2024" section at [www.eufsdk12.org](http://www.eufsdk12.org).

# Voting Information

## What You Will See on the Ballot

### Proposition #1

Shall the Eastchester Union Free School District of the Town of Eastchester, Westchester County, New York, adopt a budget for the school year 2023-2024 for the schools comprising said Eastchester Union Free School District, in the gross sum of \$101,856,200 and raise the necessary taxes required for said budget in one sum by tax upon the taxable property of the District?

### Board of Education Candidates

Two (2) Board seats for a full, three-year term commencing on July 1, 2023 and one (1) Board seat for a three-year term commencing May 17, 2023. Each of the available Board seats will be held for a three-year term that will expire on June 30, 2026. To vote for a candidate whose name is printed on this ballot, fill in the oval below or next to the name of the candidate.

Vote for up to three (3) candidates:

- Jill Cosentino
- Sean Fellin
- Robert Krukowski
- Vito Catania

Information about the Board of Education candidates can be found in the Important Information section of our website at [www.eufsdk12.org](http://www.eufsdk12.org).

## Am I Eligible to Vote?

In order to vote in the district election, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States of America.
- A resident of the Eastchester School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote date.
- At least 18 years of age by the vote date.
- A registered voter with either the school district or with the County Board of Elections.

You are registered to vote if:

- You are on the Westchester County voter list AND have voted at least once during the last four years, OR
- You are registered with the school district.

## Registration Applications

### School District Voter Registration Applications

Applications for School District Voter Registration are available at the District Office and on the website at [www.eufsdk12.org](http://www.eufsdk12.org). This registration allows you to vote only in School District votes (Budget/BOE Trustee, Bond, or Referendum). Deadline for school district registration for the Annual Budget and Trustee Vote is Thursday, May 11, 2023.

### Westchester County Voter Registration Applications

Qualified voters who register with Westchester County can vote in school district elections as well as other local and national elections. Registration applications are available locally at Eastchester Town Hall and Tuckahoe Village Hall. Applications can be downloaded at <http://www.elections.ny.gov/> Call 1-800-FOR-VOTE for additional information.

## Absentee Ballots

Obtaining an absentee ballot is a two-step process.

An Application for an Absentee Ballot must be filed first with the District Clerk. Applications for absentee ballots may be obtained by contacting the District Clerk's office at 580 White Plains Road, Eastchester, NY 10709; Phone: 793-6130, ext. 4201, or by going to the website at [www.eufsdk12.org](http://www.eufsdk12.org). Look under the Budget Information section of the Business Department or the Absentee Ballot section of the Board of Education page.

### Deadlines

Applications must be obtained from the District Clerk at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter or by 5:00pm on the day before the election if the ballot is to be given personally to the voter. The completed ballot must be returned to the District Clerk no later than 5:00pm on the voting day, May 16, 2023.

# SCHOOL BUDGET

# VOTE

## Tuesday, May 16, 2023

### Poll Hours: 6:00am - 9:00pm

Eastchester Middle School Gym  
(Enter on Lincoln Ave.)

Garth Road residents must vote at  
Eastchester Middle School



Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
White Plains, NY  
Permit NO. 825

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Chrissy Geagan, *President*

Dr. Jackie DiMarco, *Vice President*

Judah Holstein, *Secretary*

Vito Catania, *Trustee*

Christine Civitano-Lombardi, *Trustee*

Matthew Fanelli, *Trustee*

Laurie Giacobbe, *Trustee*

Robert Krukowski, *Trustee*

Christie McCloskey, *Trustee*

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Ronald D. Valenti, Ph.D.

**For more 2023-24 Budget Information, go to [www.eufsdk12.org](http://www.eufsdk12.org)**

## 2023-24 School Budget Notice

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2022-23 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2023-24 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$96,208,000	\$101,856,200	\$99,675,970
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-24 School Year		\$5,648,200	\$3,467,970
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		5.9%	3.6%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$79,308,000	\$79,308,000	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$79,308,000	\$79,308,000	\$78,702,770
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$4,744,457	\$3,635,202	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$74,563,553	\$76,273,228	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$74,563,543	\$75,662,798	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$10	\$610,430	
Administrative Component	\$10,692,417	\$10,984,012	\$10,984,012
Program Component	\$69,805,073	\$75,132,437	\$75,132,437
Capital Component	\$15,710,510	\$15,739,751	\$13,559,521

\*Pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law, should the District enact a contingency budget which does not allow for any increase in the maximum allowable tax levy from the current year, the following items will be eliminated: Assistant Principals at the elementary schools; teacher professional development and training for new curriculum that will not be implemented, facilities maintenance projects will be deferred, and all outside groups must be charged the full cost for use of District facilities.

\*\* List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
Not applicable	

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

**Under the Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year**

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings \*\*\* \$1,373

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the qualified voters of the Eastchester Union Free School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at the Eastchester Middle School in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 between the hours of 6:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the Eastchester Middle School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.