



SOUTH ORANGETOWN Central School District

BUDGET EDITION

Dear Community Members,

On April 18, the South Orangetown Central School District Board of Education adopted the proposed 2024-25 school budget in the amount of \$110,595,035. This spending plan balances the cost of providing a comprehensive, quality education for our community's children with a keen sensitivity to the impact on our taxpayers.

To reduce the burden on taxpayers, the District is proposing a tax levy increase of 1.5%, which is less than the allowable tax cap. Fund balance will be used to cover the reduction in revenues from taxpayers, balance the budget and enable us to fully fund our reserves to safeguard the District's financial stability long-term. Although levying taxes below the cap should not be done year after year, SOCSO is in a unique position—due to State Aid and other revenue increases—to propose this strategy for 2024-25.

Our administrative team remains diligent in looking for efficiencies to slow budget growth by reviewing enrollment, class sizes and vacancies due to retirement. On the revenue side, grant writing efforts have generated funding to support grade-wide, K-5 field trips this spring and the opening of a Universal Pre-Kindergarten classroom at William O. Schaefer Elementary School in September.

In addition to the budget, this year's ballot also includes two propositions pertaining to capital reserve funds. Proposition 2 asks voters to approve the establishment and funding of a new capital reserve fund which would enable the District to save surplus funds for major capital projects in the future. Proposition 3 asks voters to authorize the use of existing capital reserve funds to remove and replace two boilers at Tappan Zee High School. The proposed boiler work would be aligned with Phase 2 of the District's Capital Improvements Project which was approved by voters in March 2022.

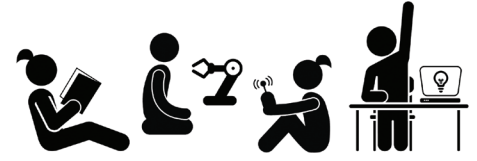
We are just a few short weeks away from end-of-the-year celebrations and the launch of Phase 1 classroom renovations at both WOS and Cottage Lane Elementary School. Stay tuned to our social media feeds for coverage of these exciting, upcoming events!

As always, thank you for supporting robust educational programs and services for all South Orangetown students. **Please vote on May 21.**

Sincerely,

Brian Culot, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Steven Finn
President, Board of Education



Elevate. Engage. **Inspire.**

**PROPOSED
2024-25 BUDGET**

TAX LEVY INCREASE
1.5%

BUDGET-TO-BUDGET
INCREASE
1.63%

TOTAL BUDGET
\$110,595,035

*Si hablas español visita
www.socsd.org/budget*



VOTE

SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE • TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024

VOTE

The South Orangetown Central School District Board of Education asks voters to consider and vote on the following propositions on **May 21, 2024**:

PROPOSITION #1: 2024-25 BUDGET

Shall the sums set forth by the Board of Education of the South Orangetown Central School District in the 2024-25 budget in the amount of \$110,595,035 be approved?

PROPOSITION #2: CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

Shall the South Orangetown Central School District establish a capital reserve fund to fund the partial reconstruction of, and construction of improvements to, various District buildings and sites, including all original furnishings, equipment, machinery, apparatus, and all ancillary and related site, demolition and other work required in connection therewith; such reserve fund to be designated "Capital Reserve Fund-2024"; the probable term of which will not exceed ten (10) years from the date of its establishment; the ultimate principal amount therein to total not to exceed \$20,000,000 plus interest earnings thereon; such amount is expected to be provided from the District's fund balance as well as other sources available therefor?

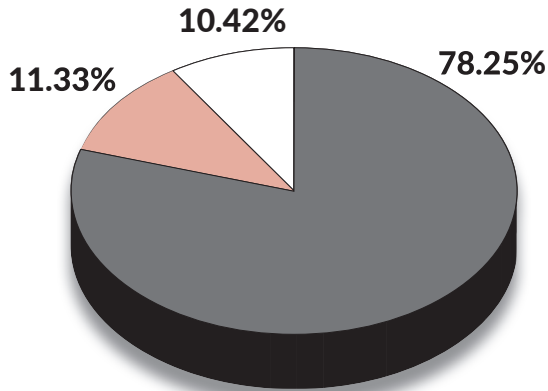
PROPOSITION #3: CAPITAL PROJECT REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF BOILERS AT TAPPAN ZEE HIGH SCHOOL

Shall the Board of Education of the South Orangetown Central School District, Rockland County, New York be authorized to remove and replace two (2) boilers at Tappan Zee High School, including associated mechanical, electrical, and other work and incidental expenses at a maximum cost of \$1,700,000, with the amount of up to \$1,700,000 to be transferred from the "District-wide Renovations and Reconstruction Reserve Fund" to the capital fund to pay for the costs of such project?

ELECTION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

An election will be held for one (1) Board of Education seat with a three-year term starting July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2027. Following are the candidates for the vacancy in the order they will appear on the ballot: **Marissa Squitieri, Dawn Kitz and Jenny Liz Sanchez.**

ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES



■ 78.25% Program.....	\$86,544,063
■ 11.33% Capital	\$12,523,901
□ 10.42% Administrative	\$11,527,071
TOTAL	\$110,595,035



MINOR CAPITAL WORK

The proposed budget contains \$2,000,000 for minor capital projects which include:

Renovations of: accessible bathrooms at South Orangetown Middle School; weight room at TZHS; and, administrative wing at TZHS

Completion of: new clock, public address and lockdown system installations District-wide



QUESTIONS about the budget?

Email budget@socsd.org.

FOR DETAILED BUDGET AND VOTING INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT www.socsd.org

Budget Q&A

Is the proposed tax levy increase within the cap?

Yes. In fact, for 2024-25, the District is proposing a tax levy increase of 1.5%, which is **less than** the maximum allowable levy increase. Fund balance will be used to cover the reduced revenue from taxpayers.

How does the proposed budget support students?

- Preserves high-quality academic programs, support services and staffing to meet the diverse needs of all students;
- Maintains enhanced security staffing at all four schools and includes safety and security camera upgrades and additions at all buildings;
- Maintains full-time teaching assistants for kindergarten;
- Provides seats for all students who wish to attend career and technical education programs;
- Sustains K-12 extracurricular and enrichment programming, including local field trips, Summer STEAM Camp; and,
- Maintains current transportation services, late buses (SOMS/TZHS), extracurricular and athletics busing.

What is driving the budget-to-budget increase?

The proposed budget is 1.63% higher than the current year budget, which included the transfer of \$1.70 million to the Capital Reserve Fund to renovate the eight (8) WOS classrooms not originally included in the Capital Improvements Project. The difference in actual expenditures is approximately \$3.48 million for which transportation, health insurance and contractual obligations continue to be key cost drivers.

What is the District doing to contain costs?

- Evaluating each position to determine whether or not it needs to be filled as staff members retire;
- Competitive bidding and cooperative purchasing;
- Participating in an energy purchasing service and Workers' Compensation Consortium;
- Utilizing BOCES programs and services; and,
- Outsourcing services, such as food service, transportation and cleaning.

What is Proposition 2?

Capital reserve funds are established with voter approval and must be used by a school district within a certain time period for capital work. School districts use these savings to reduce the tax impact of needed major capital projects on their communities and decrease interest and other costs for the bond issuance.

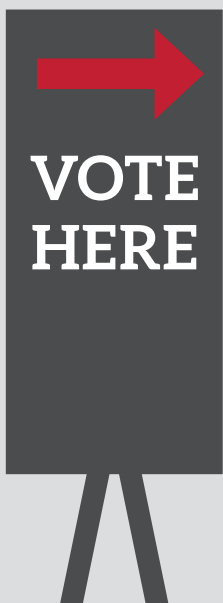
On May 21, 2024, SOCS D will ask voters to authorize the establishment of a new capital reserve fund for a term of ten (10) years to be funded from budget surpluses and other revenue up to \$20 million.

What is Proposition 3?

Voters are being asked to authorize the use of existing capital reserve funds up to \$1.70 million to pay for the removal and replacement of two (2) boilers at TZHS.

What happens if voters reject the budget?

If voters do not approve the proposed budget, the Board of Education may put forward the same or a revised budget for a second vote OR adopt a contingency budget with a tax levy no greater than what was levied in the current year. If voters reject the spending plan twice, SOCS D must adopt a contingency budget which would require the District to reduce the 2024-25 proposed budget by eliminating all minor capital projects and all equipment expenditures not related to safety. Community use of facilities would be restricted.



POLLS OPEN TUESDAY, MAY 21, 7:00AM - 9:00PM

- **DISTRICT #1: Blauvelt residents**
South Orangetown Middle School
160 Van Wyck Road, Blauvelt
- **DISTRICT #2: Orangeburg residents**
Tappan Zee High School
15 Dutch Hill Road, Orangeburg
- **DISTRICT #3: Tappan residents**
William O. Schaefer Elementary School
140 Lester Drive, Tappan
- **DISTRICT #4: Grandview, Palisades, Piermont & Sparkill residents**
Tappan Zee Education Center
(formerly Tappan Zee Elementary)
561 Route 9W, Piermont

VOTING INFORMATION

TO BE A QUALIFIED VOTER, YOU MUST BE:

- a U.S. citizen;
- at least 18 years old by May 21, 2024;
- a School District resident for more than 30 days immediately preceding the vote; and,
- registered to vote with the Rockland County Board of Elections OR registered to vote with the School District and having voted in a School District election/vote during the past four (4) calendar years.

Qualified voters may request an early mail or absentee ballot by calling the District Clerk at **(845) 680-1012**. The application must be received by the District Clerk no more than 30 days and at least seven (7) days prior to a public vote.

For more information, visit www.socsd.org/voting-information.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT: WWW.SOCSD.ORG/BUDGET.



SOUTH ORANGETOWN

Central School District

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	\$ 108,815,021	\$ 110,595,035	\$ 108,091,764
Increase/Decrease for the 2024-25 School Year		\$ 1,780,014	-\$ 2,503,271
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.63%	-2.3%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 87,780,728	\$ 89,097,439	
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)	\$ 87,780,728	\$ 89,097,439	\$ 87,780,728
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 3,162,787	\$ 3,009,652	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 84,617,941	\$ 86,363,264	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E-B-F+D)	\$ 84,617,941	\$ 86,087,787	
I. Difference: G-H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ 0	\$ 275,477	
Administrative Component	\$ 10,627,390	\$ 11,527,071	\$ 11,493,511
Program Component	\$ 84,320,734	\$ 86,544,063	\$ 86,262,969
Capital Component	\$ 13,866,897	\$ 12,523,901	\$ 10,335,284

*Contingency Budget = proposed budget less difference between prior year tax levy and proposed tax levy.

A contingency budget would require the District to reduce the 2024-25 proposed budget by \$2,503,271. As a result, the minor capital project amount of \$2,000,000 and all District-wide non-safety related equipment would be eliminated. Community use of facilities would be restricted.

** 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
Establish Capital Reserve Fund not to exceed	\$20,000,000
Use of Capital Reserve Fund - TZHS boiler replacements, with the amount of up to	\$1,700,000

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$916

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the South Orangetown Central School District, Rockland County, New York, will be held at District #1 - South Orangetown Middle School, District #2 - Tappan Zee High School, District #3 - William O. Schaefer Elementary School, and District #4 - Tappan Zee Education Center on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, 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.



SOUTH ORANGETOWN

Central School District

**SOUTH ORANGETOWN
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**
160 Van Wyck Road, Blauvelt, NY 10913-1299
(845) 680-1000 • Website: www.socsd.org

Brian Culot, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Schools*

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Steven Finn, *President*
David Sansone, *Vice President*
Katie Gravino
Diana Korabel
Dana Stilley, Ph.D.

CURRENT RESIDENT

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*This newsletter was produced in cooperation
with the Rockland BOCES Communications Service.*

SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024 • 7:00AM – 9:00PM