



Alfred-Almond Central School District Newsletter

May 2024

**Budget
Hearing**
Tuesday,
May 7
7 p.m.
High School
Auditorium



**Voter
Registration**
Tuesday,
May 7
2-8 p.m.
A-A School



Vote
Tuesday,
May 21
1-8 p.m.
High School
Auditorium

Dear Community Members,

The District has completed the proposed budget for the 2024-25 school year. We invite you to attend the annual school budget presentation to be held at AACSD on May 7, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. For anyone who needs to register, voter registration will take place at AACSD on May 7, 2024, from 2:00-8:00 p.m. The annual budget vote and BOE election will be held at AACSD on May 21, 2024, from 1:00-8:00 p.m.

The AACSD BOE approved a 2024-25 school year budget in the amount of \$17,276,184. The following points highlight some of the factors which will help District residents understand the proposed budget.

- Compared to the 2023-24 budget, the proposed budget is \$762,553 more, approximately a 4.6 percent year-over-year increase. The increase is primarily driven by the District's normal "cost of doing business" and reflects items such as union contracts, health insurance premiums, NYS retirement contributions, necessary materials and supplies, and inflation is also contributing to cost increases, especially for fuel and energy needs. As a point of comparison to the budget increase, inflation increased 4.12 percent over the past year.
- The budget increase is primarily being funded by three sources. First, an increase in NYS funding (\$415,934) for expense-based aid such as BOCES services and District transportation costs as we returned to full services after the COVID pandemic. Second, we are using approximately \$260,000 of our unappropriated fund balance. Third, we are proposing a small increase to the tax levy.
- The proposed budget contains a 1.52 percent increase in the tax levy. (For 2024-25, NYS Education Law allows a tax levy increase of 1.52 percent for AACSD.)

Each year, any proposed changes in a school district's tax levy seems to cause some confusion and misunderstandings among many of a school district's residents. Some elaboration regarding the tax levy may be helpful at this time.

The NYS education law that purports to limit the increase in a school district's tax levy to a maximum of 2 percent is in fact more complicated than that. In any given year, the tax cap of each district is determined through a rather complex NYS formula that is nuanced by NYS annually. Each school district may have a tax levy limit below or above 2 percent.

It is important to understand that the proposed 2024-25 district-wide tax levy increase does not mean that every resident in the District will see a 1.52 percent increase in their school tax bill. Some residents may be above, and others could be below. A proposed tax levy is divided among the municipalities within a school district. The AACSD has six municipalities. The actual tax levy may differ for each municipality to meet their share of the district-wide levy. The outcome for each municipality depends on the status of their assessments (above, at or below value) and the NYS equalization rate for that municipality.

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Again, this is all driven by NYS mandated formulas, computed and applied by the county tax office. An individual school district does not have a role in the process other than proposing a district-wide tax levy for their budget.

- The proposed 2024-25 budget does not eliminate or reduce any academic programs, student support or extra-curricular programs.
- The proposed 2024-25 budget maintains the number of District employees at 126. Potential changes based on projected enrollment and student needs could possibly change this number.

We believe this budget considers the need to be fiscally responsible to our district residents while balancing our commitment to provide a safe and engaging learning environment that offers diverse opportunities for our students.

We appreciate and thank you for your past support of the District and its mission. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future to maintain the educational quality and many opportunities available for students at AACSD.

Sincerely,
Alfred-Almond Central School
Board of Education

Taxes paid on a hypothetical \$100,000 home in our district

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
\$1,678.05	\$1,696.23	\$1,663.75	\$1,674.40

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
\$1,649.20	\$1,662.50	\$1,589.77	\$1,620.37

2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Projected 2024-25
\$1,651.48	\$1,651.48	\$1,663.77	\$1,670.13

NOTE: The average assessment in the Alfred-Almond School District is \$93,809 in 2023-24.

Capital Outlay

This year's Capital Outlay Project will consist of domestic water filtration system upgrades, unit ventilator power actuator replacements, temperature control upgrades and associated HVAC improvements as funds allow.

Propositions to be voted on

Annual Budget

Shall the annual budget for the 2024-2025 school year, as proposed by the Board of Education of Alfred-Almond Central School, be approved in the amount of \$17,276,184?

Proposition 1 – Purchase of two (2) 66-passenger School Buses

Shall the Board of Education of the Alfred-Almond Central School District be authorized to purchase and finance two (2) 66-passenger student transport vehicles, including necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment and all other costs incidental thereto, and expend a total sum not to exceed \$340,000, which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and said amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and, in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District, in the principal amount not to exceed \$340,000, shall be issued?

Proposition 2 – Almond Library and Alfred Box of Books Library

Shall the Board of Education of the Alfred-Almond Central School District, at the request of the Alfred Box of Books Library and the Almond Library, be authorized to levy the following appropriation for the support of the libraries: \$267,630 annually, with annual distribution being \$147,630 to the Alfred Box of Books Library and \$120,000 to the Almond Library?

Member of the Board of Education – Five-Year Term

To elect a member of the Board of Education for a five-year term to fill a vacancy caused by the expiration of term of Earl Pierce.

Candidates:
Earl Pierce (incumbent)
Heather Miller

Compensation Disclosure

Terms and Information for Required Compensation Disclosure Pursuant to Sections 1608(4) and 1716(4) of the Education Law as Amended by Chapter 474 of the Laws of 1996.

Total Salary	\$148,500
Annualized Fringe Benefits	\$29,650
Teachers' Retirement, Workers' Compensation, Social Security, Medicare, Health, Unemployment & Association Dues	

Proposed 2024-25 tri-part budget by function

FUNCTION OR ACCOUNT	SBM CODE	2024-25 TOTAL BUDGET	ADMIN.		PROGRAM		CAPITAL	
			24-25	23-24	24-25	23-24	24-25	23-24
Board of Education	1099	67,919	67,919	68,247				
Central Admin	1299	190,866	190,866	187,370				
Finance	1399	336,729	336,729	371,355				
Legal Services	1420	47,900	47,900	46,183				
Personnel	1430	550	550	550				
Op. & Maint. Of Plant	1620	982,360					982,360	967,130
Sec of Plant	1622	64,334					64,334	61,395
Other Cent. Serv.	1699	563,110	563,110	473,523				
Refund of Taxes	1964.4							
Other Spec. Items	1998	349,655	349,655	332,622				
Curr. Dev. & Sup.	21	184,200	184,200	179,135				
Sup. Reg. Schl.	2020	303,572	303,572	284,980				
Instruction (Net of supervision)	2999	7,712,695			7,712,695	7,745,166		
Other Dist. Trans.	5510	820,596			820,596	717,168		
Garage Bldg.	5530	34,000			34,000	33,500		
Community Service	8998	1,150			1,150	1,150		
Employee Benefits	9098	3,399,433	357,530	346,945	2,761,248	2,633,294	280,655	278,484
Debt Service	9898	2,117,115					2,117,115	1,585,434
Trans. to Capital	9950.9	100,000					100,000	200,000
		17,276,184	2,402,031	2,290,910	11,329,689	11,130,278	3,544,464	3,092,443

Candidates for the Alfred-Almond Board of Education

One school board position is up for vote, with a term of five years. Below are biographies of the candidates.

Earl Nierce

I have had the privilege of serving on the AACSD Board of Education since 1999 and as its BOE president since 2002. Frequently I am asked why I do so; in an unpaid volunteer position, which at times can be very time-consuming. The answer to that question is that I believe every citizen of a community should do something which contributes to and supports the community in which they reside.

My family relocated to the Village of Alfred in 1989 after I accepted an administrative position at Alfred University. In 1991 We moved to Alfred Station. Prior to being on the AACSD BOE, my community service revolved around our two sons, both AACS alumni. I was a coach in the youth soccer, T-ball and little league programs, as well as a Cub Scout and a Boy Scout leader. Once my sons moved on to college and employment, I remained on the AACS BOE to continue my personal commitment to community service.

Over the past 25 years, I have been fortunate to work alongside many very capable and dedicated individual BOE members and four different superintendents. Together, and with the professionalism and dedication of all employees, we have been able to sustain a quality school district which is student focused in its academic and extracurricular opportunities.

My most significant personal contributions while a BOE member have been as the primary architect of financial strategies to put and keep our district in strong financial position so we may continue the district's successes.

In closing, I wish to thank the district's residents for their past support and ask for your continued support in the upcoming BOE election.

Heather Miller

Hi there! My name is Heather Miller, and I am running for the Alfred-Almond school board. I graduated from AACS in 2004 and went on to attend Alfred University where I received a bachelor's degree in arts and fine arts in 2008. I was raised in the Alfred-Almond area and have owned a home in the community since 2016, when I moved back to Alfred Station. I've been working on the Alfred University campus since 2017 and love being a part of a creative and innovative team and working with the next generation.

I'd like to join the school board and become a part of the educational decision-making process in our community as well as help Alfred-Almond advance in academic excellence and supply a parental perspective. As a mother of two boys who currently attend Alfred-Almond, I appreciate the dedication that the teachers, staff and board have provided to our children in the district and would be honored to serve on the board and help equip these students with the tools they need to become contributing members of our society and confident individuals ready to change the world.

Alfred-Almond Central School
6795 Route 21
Almond, New York 14804

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Voter qualifications

A person is entitled to vote in the annual school district election if he or she is:

- A citizen of the United States.
- Eighteen (18) years of age on or before the election.
- A resident of the district for 30 days prior to the vote.
- Registered as a qualified voter.

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the Alfred-Almond School District, Allegany County, New York, will be held at Alfred-Almond Central School in said district on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, between the hours of 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., prevailing time in the Alfred-Almond school, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot.

Ballot information

Voters will have the opportunity to vote on the budget, to elect one candidate for a five-year position on the Board of Education, the purchase of two (2) 66-passenger school buses on a library proposition on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 between 1:00 and 8:00 p.m. in the High School auditorium.

Absentee and/or early mail ballots available

Absentee and Early Mail ballots are available for voting purposes. Qualified voters must fill out an Application for Absentee and/or Early Mail Ballot. Applications for absentee and early mail ballots will be obtainable and are returnable no earlier than April 21, 2024 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, from the District Clerk.

Completed applications for absentee and early mail ballots must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days prior to the vote if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, May 14, 2024; or the day before the election, if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter, May 20, 2024. Absentee and early ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 21, 2024.

