



SOUTH ORANGETOWN Central School District

BUDGET EDITION

Dear Community Members,

On April 8, the Board of Education adopted the proposed 2025-26 budget, which totals \$115,289,084 with a tax levy increase that remains within the mandated state cap at 2.31%.

The proposed 2025-26 budget provides for:

- Reduced class sizes with the addition of an elementary teacher at Cottage Lane Elementary School and a secondary physical education teacher;
- Increased support to meet student needs with the addition of a reading teacher at Tappan Zee High School and a special education teacher at South Orangetown Middle School; and,
- \$2M to support new casework and associated electrical and plumbing work for eight classrooms at William O. Schaefer Elementary School; construction of an accessible bathroom in the TZHS nurse's suite; replacement of the entrance to the TZHS school store; and, district-wide security camera and safety enhancements.

This has been a particularly challenging year for budget development. Our District is faced with decreased federal funding, a minimal increase in State Aid, rising costs and revenue shortfalls resulting from a tax cap growth factor which has not kept pace with inflation. Our administrative team remains diligent in looking for efficiencies to slow budget growth while maintaining the quality educational programs and services our community takes pride in.

For 2025-26, the District has made \$1.44M in reductions, which include offsets for new staffing. Reserves and unrestricted fund balance will bridge the remaining gap between anticipated expenditures and revenues.

Meanwhile, South Orangetown has much to celebrate: Our students continue to earn regional, state and national recognition. A few of the many highlights this year: TZHS is home to one 2025 National Merit Scholarship Finalist and five Commended Students; our Girls Cross Country team won its first-ever State Championship; three student-musicians were selected for All-Eastern Honors ensembles; and, the robotics team made it back to the World Championship.

The proposed 2025-26 budget reflects our community's shared commitment to responsible fiscal stewardship and a high-quality educational experience for all students. **Please vote on May 20.**

Sincerely,

Brian Culot, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Steven Finn
President, Board of Education



Elevate. Engage. **Inspire.**

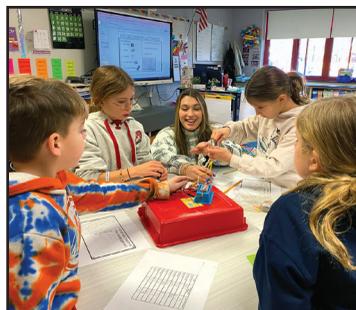
**PROPOSED
2025-26 BUDGET**

TAX LEVY INCREASE
2.31%

BUDGET-TO-BUDGET
INCREASE
4.24%

TOTAL BUDGET
\$115,289,084

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



VOTE

SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE • TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025

VOTE

The South Orangetown Central School District Board of Education asks voters to consider and vote on the following propositions on **May 20, 2025**:

PROPOSITION #1: 2025-26 BUDGET

Shall the sums set forth by the Board of Education of the South Orangetown Central School District in the 2025-26 budget in the amount of \$115,289,084 be approved?

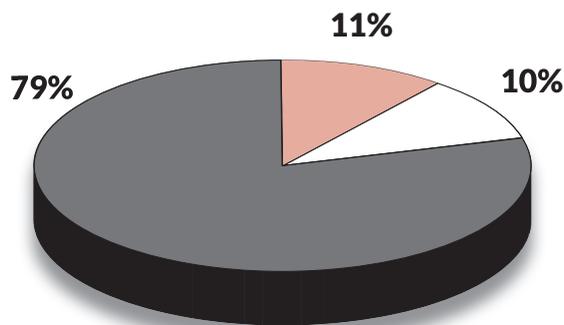
ELECTION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

An election will be held for two (2) Board of Education seats with a three-year term starting July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2028. Following are the candidates for the vacancy in the order they will appear on the ballot:

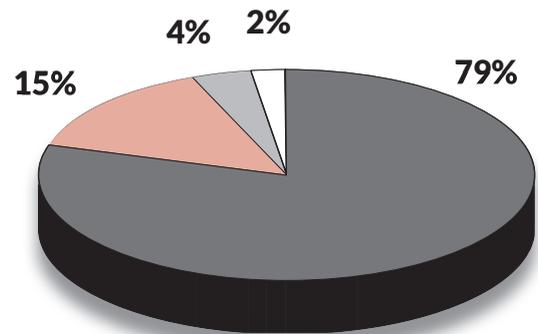
Seat 1: **Steven Finn** (incumbent)

Seat 2: **David Sansone** (incumbent) and **John Savage**

ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES



ANTICIPATED REVENUES



- 79% Tax Levy & PILOTs..... \$91,183,119
- 15% State Aid \$17,825,651
(includes state revenue, federal aid and grants)
- 4% Other Revenue \$4,394,094
- 2% Fund Balance/Reserves.....\$1,886,220

MINOR CAPITAL WORK



The proposed 2025-26 budget contains \$2,000,000 for minor capital projects which include:

- New casework and associated electrical and plumbing work for eight classrooms at WOS
- Construction of an accessible bathroom in the TZHS nurse's suite
- Replacement of the entrance to the TZHS school store
- Security camera and safety enhancements district-wide

FOR DETAILED BUDGET AND VOTING INFORMATION, PLEASE

Budget Q&A

Is the proposed tax levy increase within the cap?

Yes. The District is proposing a tax levy increase of 2.31%, which is within the state-mandated cap.

How does the proposed budget support students?

- Preserves high-quality academic programs and services;
- Reduces class sizes with the addition of an elementary teacher at CLE and a secondary physical education teacher;
- Increases support to meet student needs with the addition of a reading teacher at TZHS and a special education teacher at SOMS;
- Provides seats for all TZHS students who wish to attend career and technical education programs;
- Maintains enhanced safety and security upgrades and additions at all schools; and,
- Maintains current transportation services, late buses (SOMS/TZHS), extracurricular and athletics busing.

What is driving the budget-to-budget increase?

The proposed 2025-26 budget is 4.24% higher than the current year budget. Transportation, health insurance and contractual obligations continue to be key cost drivers.

How has the District reduced budget growth?

To reduce budget growth, the District has made \$1.44M in reductions, which includes offsetting new staffing, with an effort to preserve core programming and services. They include:

- Staffing efficiencies achieved through retirements;
- Reallocation of existing staff to meet clerical support needs at our elementary schools and Athletics Department; and,
- Reductions to non-mandated areas, such as: field trips, enrichments and extracurriculars, communications service, custodial and maintenance budget, furniture, IT service and consultants.

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 proposed 2025-26 budget by a minimum of \$2,085,000. As a result, the minor capital project amount of \$2,000,000 and all district-wide equipment expenditures would be eliminated. Community use of facilities would be restricted, support staff and instructional positions would be reduced, along with various administrative costs, athletic and extraclassroom activities, per New York State Education Department guidelines.



QUESTIONS? Email budget@socsd.org.



POLLS OPEN TUESDAY, MAY 20, 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 20, 2025;
- 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.

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



SOUTH ORANGETOWN Central School District

| OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL | Budget Adopted for the 2024-25 School Year | Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year | Contingency Budget for the 2025-26 School Year* |
|--|---|--|--|
| Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions | \$ 110,595,035 | \$ 115,289,084 | \$ 113,204,084 |
| Increase/Decrease for the 2025-26 School Year | | \$ 4,694,049 | \$ 2,609,049 |
| Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget | | 4.24% | 2.36% |
| Change in the Consumer Price Index | | 2.95% | |
| A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount | \$ 89,097,439 | \$ 91,158,847 | |
| 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) | \$ 89,097,439 | \$ 91,158,847 | \$ 89,097,439 |
| F. Total Permissible Exclusions | \$ 3,009,652 | \$ 3,193,058 | |
| G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions | \$ 86,363,264 | \$ 87,965,789 | |
| H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E-B-F+D) | \$ 86,087,787 | \$ 87,965,789 | |
| I. Difference: G-H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) ** | \$ 275,477 | \$ 0 | |
| Administrative Component | \$ 11,527,071 | \$ 11,610,814 | \$ 11,610,814 |
| Program Component | \$ 86,544,063 | \$ 90,839,909 | \$ 90,839,909 |
| Capital Component | \$ 12,523,901 | \$ 12,838,361 | \$ 10,753,361 |

The proposed 2025-26 budget as adopted by the Board of Education reflects the appropriated use of fund balance as follows: Use of \$500,000 from the ERS Reserve, use of \$500,000 from the TRS Reserves and \$886,220 from unrestricted fund balance.

* Assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2025-26 school year should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law include the following: Contingency budget at minimum = proposed budget less difference between prior year tax levy and proposed tax levy. A contingency budget would require the District to reduce the proposed 2025-26 budget by \$2,085,000. As a result, the minor capital project and equipment expenditures would be eliminated. Community use of facilities would be restricted and additional expenses considered non-contingent by the Board of Education can be further reduced.

** 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 |
|-------------|--------|
| | |

| Under the Budget Proposed for the 2025-26 School Year | |
|---|-------|
| Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹ | \$916 |

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-26 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 20, 2025 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**
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*
J. Robert Coleman
Katie Gravino
Diana Korabel

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

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SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025 • 7:00AM – 9:00PM