

ELWOOD HIGHLIGHTS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ELWOOD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Budget Below Tax Levy Cap; Preserves and Enhances Program for Students

The Board of Education and administration are proud to present a proposed budget for the 2017-18 school year that carries a tax levy increase of 1.99 percent, which is below the district's allowable tax levy cap of 2.11 percent. At the same time, the proposed spending plan preserves and enhances the academic program for students.

PROPOSED 2017-18 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS:

- Represents a tax levy increase of 1.99 percent, which is below the district's tax levy cap.
- Maintains all current programs and services for students.
- Preserves full athletic, art and music programs.
- Includes the addition of the AP Capstone program at the high school.
- Includes an additional class section in the sixth grade to assist with Middle School transition.
- Allows for the continued expansion of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative for ninth-grade students, as well as other technology enhancements.

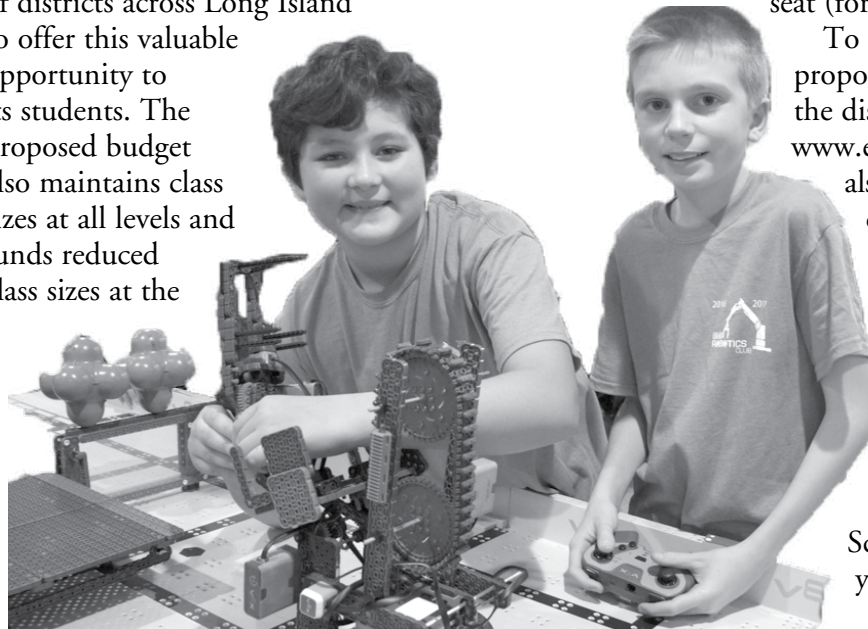
The budget, developed after months of input by administrators and members of the Citizens Finance/Budget Advisory Committee, not only addresses the immediate needs of the district, but also plans for the long-term financial health of our school system. The district anticipates receiving a one-time revenue payment of \$500,000 from the Seasons at Elwood (the senior citizen development being built in the community) and also \$1.1 million in state aid owed to the district from several years ago. These factors have allowed the district to look ahead, improve its fiscal status and stabilize the budget.

The proposed spending plan includes the addition of the AP Capstone program at the high school (highlighted in detail on page 2). Through the addition of this college-level program, Elwood joins a growing list of districts across Long Island to offer this valuable opportunity to its students. The proposed budget also maintains class sizes at all levels and funds reduced class sizes at the

sixth-grade level. The costs to operate certain co-curricular clubs, temporarily funded through the Booster Club, PTA, Elwood Education Endowment and Elwood Athletic Club units, will be maintained within the district's operating budget. The Chromebook initiative, now fully implemented at the middle school level, will be expanded to include the freshman class at the high school. Additional technology enhancements are also planned at Harley Avenue and Boyd Intermediate schools.

In addition to the proposed budget, residents will have the opportunity to vote on an additional proposition that seeks to change how trustees are elected to the Board of Education, beginning in May 2018. The proposition proposes transitioning to an at-large election process from the current system where candidates run for a particular seat (for details, see page 3).

To learn more about the proposed budget in detail, visit the district's website, www.elwood.k12.ny.us. Please also plan to attend the district's budget hearing on Thursday, May 4 at 7:30 p.m. in Elwood Middle School. We look forward to seeing you at the polls on Tuesday, May 16. Polls will be open from 2 p.m.-10 p.m. at Elwood Middle School. Thank you for your participation!



Elwood Union Free School District

100 Kenneth Avenue
Greenlawn, NY 11740-2900

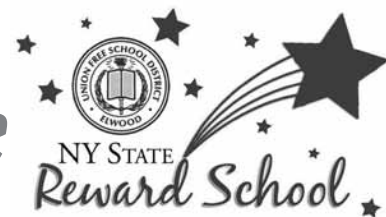
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DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

BUDGET HEARING
THURSDAY, MAY 4
7:30 P.M. AT
ELWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

BUDGET VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 16
POLLS OPEN 2-10 P.M. AT
ELWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

ELWOOD *Points of Pride*



- The New York State Education Department recognized Elwood-John H. Glenn High School as a Reward School for the 2016-17 year.
- The district was included in the College Board's 7th Annual AP District Honor Roll based on increased opportunities for students to take AP courses and for maintaining or improving the percentage of students earning a score of three or higher on AP exams.
- Two seniors were named Finalists in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Four Elwood-John H. Glenn seniors earned the title of Commended Student in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program.
- 84 percent of Advanced Placement students scored a three or above on their AP exams in 2016.
- 95 percent of students in the Class of 2016 planned to attend a two- or four-year college.
- 96 percent of students in the Class of 2016 graduated with a Regents Diploma, an Advanced Regents Diploma or an Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors.

- Elwood graduates are accepted to the nation's top colleges and universities.
- An Elwood-John H. Glenn junior was selected as a National Youth Delegate at the 2017 Washington Youth Summit on the Environment at George Mason University.
- Members of the Elwood Middle School robotics team received the Design Award at the second New York State VEX IQ Championship, qualifying them for the VEX Robotics World Championship.
- Four seniors presented their science projects at the Charles Duggan Long Island Science and Engineering Fair.
- Eight students from James H. Boyd Intermediate School, Elwood Middle School and Elwood-John H. Glenn High School participated in the Long Island String Festival Association's Suffolk County intermediate and secondary festivals.
- Four art students showcased their work at the Art League of Long Island's Advanced Placement 'Go APE' Art Exhibit.
- Two Elwood-John H. Glenn student-musicians were selected as members of the SCMEA 2017 All-County High School Percussion Ensemble.
- Eight student-musicians from Elwood-John H. Glenn High School were selected to represent the district in the NYSCAME All-County music festival.
- A kindergartner at Harley Avenue was one of four winners in TD Bank's annual essay contest, "Take a Duck to Class."

- The Girls Winter Track Team won the Winter League Championship Title at Suffolk County Community College for the first time in Elwood-John H. Glenn High School history.
- Three Elwood-John H. Glenn wrestlers advanced to the National Wrestling Championship after earning top spots during the New York State Wrestling Tournament.
- All eight varsity fall 2016 teams from Elwood-John H. Glenn High School were recognized as New York State Scholar Athlete teams.
- An Elwood-John H. Glenn senior was named a News 12 Long Island Scholar Athlete winner and was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from Bethpage Federal Credit Union.
- Two Elwood-John H. Glenn students were presented with the 2016 Suffolk Zone Physical Education Award for their leadership abilities and dedication in their physical education classes.
- Seven student-athletes each signed a National Letter of Intent to play their sport of choice at the collegiate level.
- PTA cultural arts programs continue to enrich education.



AP Capstone *Coming Soon*

With the help of Elwood-John H. Glenn High School's Advanced Placement open enrollment policy, the school has seen an increase in the number of students enrolling in AP courses. In an effort to continue to strengthen students' abilities and skills, the high school will introduce AP Capstone Seminar classes for the 2017-18 school year. AP Capstone consists of two classes, AP Seminar and AP Research. The innovative diploma program was designed by College Board in response to what colleges are looking for in prospective students. "It is a way to provide distinction, for a student's transcript to stand out and be more desirable to a college," said Assistant Superintendent for



Curriculum and Instruction Maureen Hull. Unlike AP courses which focus on content, AP Capstone is about honing skills and applying those skills to fit a student's personal interests. Students are required to take AP Seminar before AP Research to give them the necessary tools to move forward. While AP Seminar emphasizes collaboration and team learning, AP Research takes an individual approach and allows students to design, plan and conduct a yearlong research-based investigation to address a topic of individual interest. "We want to encourage students to take this because we know it is going to help them be successful when they are working or in college," said Ms. Hull.

BENEFITS OF AP CAPSTONE:

- ✓ Fosters the research, argumentation, and communication skills that are at the core of college readiness and are essential for lifelong learning
- ✓ Provides a setting to build on the knowledge and rigorous course work of AP in an interdisciplinary format
- ✓ Offers students a unique opportunity to distinguish themselves to colleges and universities

PROPOSITION #3 - CHANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION PROCESS BEGINNING IN 2018

In addition to voting on the proposed 2017-18 budget (Proposition #1) and electing two members to the Board of Education (Proposition #2), residents will have the opportunity to vote on a change on how Board of Education members are elected beginning with the May 2018 budget vote and trustee election. Currently, Board candidates run for a particular seat. For example, if there are two Board seats up for election, a candidate must declare which seat he/she is running for. The candidate that secures the highest vote per seat is elected to the Board.

Proposition #3 proposes that in future elections (beginning with the May 2018 vote), trustees would be elected to the Board through an at-large process, meaning the candidates who receive the highest vote totals overall would be elected to the Board. For example, if there are two board seats up for election, the two candidates that secure the highest vote totals among all the candidates would be elected to the Board.

New York State law provides that all district budgets be identified in three categories:

Administrative Expenses

- Curriculum Development
- Staff Development
- In-Service Development
- Personnel
- District Audit
- Tax Collection
- Central Printing/Mailing
- District Votes

Program Expenses

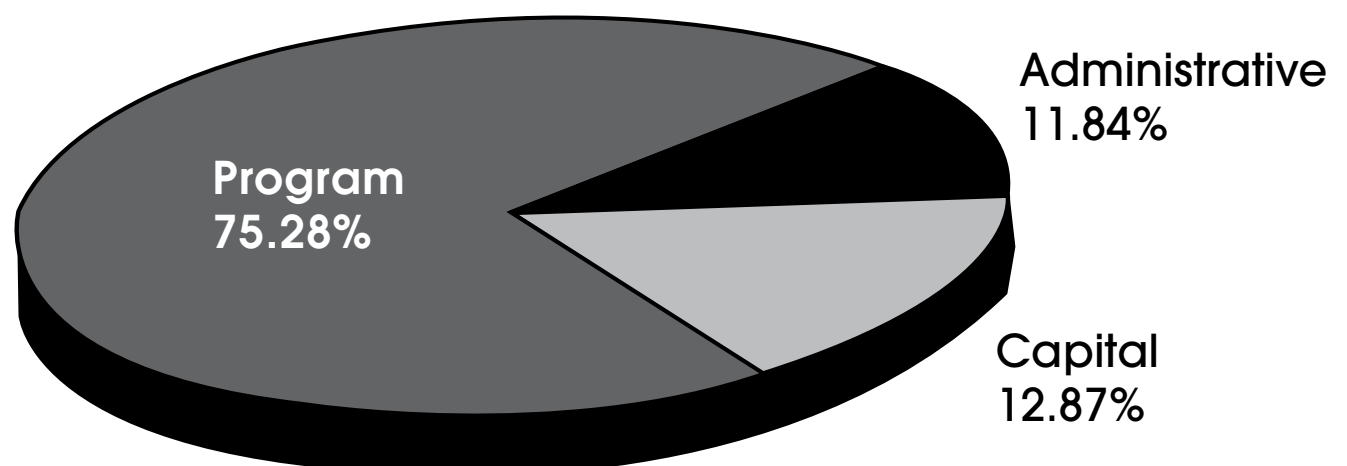
- All Student Services
- Instructional Support
- Transportation Operation
- Instructional Salaries and Benefits

Capital Expenses

- All Facilities Costs
- Debt Services
- Operations/Maintenance
- Supplies
- Utilities
- Personnel
- Security Costs

Expenditures by Component

	Budget 2016-17	Proposed Budget 2017-18	Difference
Administrative Component			
Board of Education	\$27,627	\$17,650	(\$9,977)
Central Administration	326,229	355,924	27,695
Finance	722,048	724,815	2,767
Legal Services	166,180	170,000	3,820
Personnel Services	276,930	209,054	(67,876)
Public Information	65,400	65,975	575
Security	384,860	-	(384,860)
Central Data Processing	270,043	264,957	5,086
District Insurance	306,702	312,836	6,134
BOCES Admin Charges & Other Items	200,257	203,903	3,646
Curriculum Development & Supervision	2,634,914	2,828,022	193,108
Employee Benefits	1,934,600	1,989,149	54,549
Total Administrative Component	\$7,315,790	\$7,142,285	(\$173,505)
Capital Component			
Operation of Plant	\$2,952,207	\$2,982,055	\$29,848
Maintenance of Plant	834,833	871,338	36,505
Security	-	390,500	390,500
Employee Benefits	1,332,099	1,270,566	(61,533)
Debt Service	2,140,764	2,252,014	111,250
Total Capital Component	\$7,259,903	\$7,766,473	\$506,570
Program Component			
Instruction (salaries/supplies/contract/BOCES)	\$30,237,961	\$30,410,634	\$172,673
Transportation	3,716,017	3,828,149	112,132
Employee Benefits	10,818,928	11,042,829	223,901
Transfer to Special Aid Fund	110,000	140,000	30,000
Total Program Component	\$44,882,906	\$45,421,612	\$538,706
TOTAL BUDGET	\$59,458,599	\$60,330,370	\$871,771



Questions and Answers

Q. What percentage of voters needs to approve the budget for it to pass?

A. Elwood's proposed budget represents a tax levy increase of 1.99 percent, which is below the district's tax levy cap. A simple majority of voters is needed to approve the plan.

Q. If the budget is approved, will homeowners continue to receive a property tax relief credit?

A. Yes. Since the district's proposed budget is within the tax levy cap, qualifying homeowners will be eligible for the property tax relief credit. Beginning this year, the property tax relief credit will be a percentage of a homeowner's STAR benefit.

Q. Since the proposed budget represents a tax levy increase of 1.99 percent, does that mean my taxes will only increase by this amount if the plan is approved by voters?

A. No. If the budget is approved, the amount that the Elwood School District can collect in property taxes to operate for the 2017-18

school year is capped at 1.99 percent (this is referred to as the tax levy). Individual tax bills may differ, based on a variety of factors, including the taxable value of the property as determined by the town.

Q. Where can I find more information on the proposed budget?

A. All budget presentations and supporting documents can be found on the district's website, www.elwood.k12.ny.us. All residents are also invited to attend the budget hearing scheduled for Thursday, May 4 at 7:30 p.m. at Elwood Middle School.

Q. What if the budget is defeated?

A. If the proposed budget for 2017-18 is defeated at the polls on May 16, state law allows the school board two options: The Board can either present the same budget or a revised budget to voters for a second vote in mid-June, or it can vote to adopt a contingency budget. As in the past, if the budget is defeated for a second time, the district has no choice but to adopt a contingency spending plan.

VOTING INFORMATION

Registration

Only registered voters can participate in the election on Tuesday, May 16, 2017. If you have voted in school or general elections during the past four years, you are already registered and eligible to vote this May. Residents may register to vote in the district's business office, located in the Elwood Middle School at 100 Kenneth Ave., Greenlawn, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. any day school is in session, up to five days before the annual election. The district will also hold a special voter registration session on Wednesday, May 10, from 4-8 p.m. at Elwood Middle School.

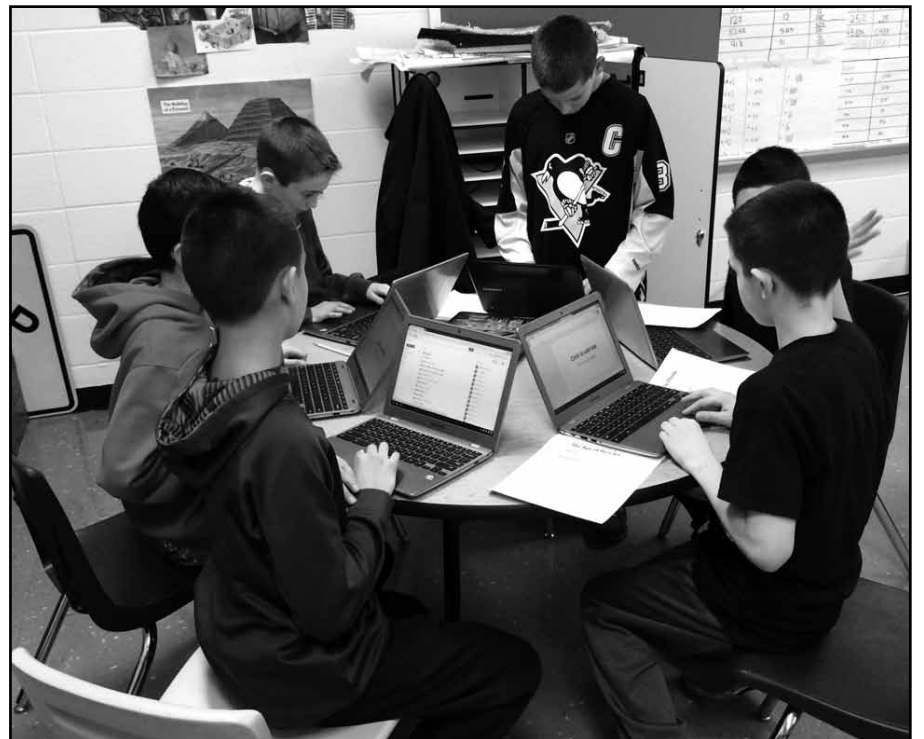
Voter Qualifications

Under New York State Education Law, you are eligible to vote in school elections if: 1) you are a United States citizen, 2) you are 18 years of age or older, 3) you are a resident of the district for a period of 30 days prior to the date of the vote, and 4) you are registered with the Suffolk County Board of Elections and have voted in a general election within the past four years, or you are registered with the school district and have voted in a district election within the past four years, or you register through May 11, 2017 with the school district in the manner set forth above. Voter registration forms can be obtained from the Suffolk County Board of Elections, post office, public library or district office. Forms can also be downloaded from the New York State Board of Elections website at www.elections.ny.gov.

Absentee Ballots

Qualified, registered voters may obtain applications for absentee ballots for the school budget vote and board trustee election at the district's business office between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. any day school is in session. If you need an absentee ballot, please allow enough time for processing. Applications must be received by the district clerk's office by Tuesday, May 9 for ballots that are mailed to voters and Monday, May 15 for ballots that are picked up by voters. All ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on May 16.

If you would like more information about voter registration or would like to obtain an absentee ballot, please visit the Elwood website at www.elwood.k12.ny.us under "Board of Education>Voter Information;" call District Clerk Nancy Mancini at 631-266-5400, ext. 453; or email nmancini@elwood.k12.ny.us.



CANDIDATES FOR THE BOARD

This year, voters will elect two members to the Board of Education for three-year terms commencing on July 1, 2017. Two candidates are running for the seat currently held by Michael LaMena. As the result of the withdrawal of a petition for the seat currently held by Julia Fried, the deadline for a prospective candidate to file a nominating petition for that seat is automatically extended to 5 p.m. on May 2, 2017. After that date, candidates' names will be posted on the district's website, www.elwood.k12.ny.us.



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Dr. Kenneth Bossert, Superintendent of Schools

www.elwood.k12.ny.us