

The Compass

Special Budget Edition 2026-2027



Dear NSCSD Community,

As we approach the 2026-2027 school year, we are pleased to present our proposed budget, which once again remains within the New York State tax levy cap. Our goal is to ensure that every student has access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. We are also excited to share that Phase 1 of the capital project will begin at the end of this school year.

The 2026-2027 budget continues to focus on four key priorities identified last year: Literacy and Numeracy, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), Student Leadership and Independence, and District Operations and Oversight. Within these areas, the budget supports the implementation of Wit & Wisdom and Arts & Letters literacy programs, along with funding for the necessary supplies, materials, and professional development. It also includes funding for math curriculum exploration and pilot programs in grades K-5 and 6-8, as well as resources for instructional stations, manipulatives, and related training.

Targeted investments at PQ include the creation of a "Grab and Go" intervention library and a shift to more in-house professional development. Additionally, the reclassification of the Coordinator of Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) position to a School Psychologist (NSTA) results in a reduction of one administrative position.

Beyond the classroom, this proposed budget supports a wide range of enrichment opportunities. From their participation in athletics to extracurricular activities in music and the arts, students are able to build leadership skills and apply their learning in meaningful, real-world contexts.

We appreciate your continued support of the North Salem Central School District and believe these investments will help position our students for long-term success. For more information about the proposed budget and capital project, please visit www.northsalemschools.org.

Thank you for being an essential part of our community.

Sincerely, Brandy Keenan
President, Board of Education



Budget Highlights

Proposed 2026-2027 Budget
\$53,839,468

2025-2026 Adopted Budget
\$52,377,964

Tax levy increase of 2.90%
remains tax cap compliant.

**We hope to
see you at the polls on
Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at
Pequenakonck Elementary
School**



School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2025-26 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2026-27 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 52,377,964	\$53,839,468	\$52,546,461
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$1,461,504	\$168,497
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		2.79 %	.32%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.63%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$44,598,468	\$45,891,475	
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)	\$44,598,468	\$45,891,475	\$44,598,468
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$2,005,065	\$2,241,497	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$42,593,403	\$43,649,978	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$42,593,403	\$43,649,978	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$5,849,678	\$5,858,292	\$5,579,866
Program Component	\$38,920,795	\$39,963,365	\$39,040,284
Capital Component	\$7,607,491	\$8,017,811	\$7,926,311
* Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2026-27 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. If the proposed budget is not approved by voters, the contingent budget would not have funding for equipment purchases, certain repairs and community use of the facilities unless the district expenses are fully reimbursed. If necessary, the actual budget reductions would be made by the Administration and the Board of Education pursuant to Education Law.			
** No additional propositions.	Description		Amount
	None		\$0

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings¹	\$1,492

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2026-27 by the qualified voters of the North Salem Central School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at Pequenenkonck Elementary School Gym in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 between the hours of 7:00 am and 9:00 pm, prevailing time at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

¹The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law. Estimate is based on the Town of North Salem.

5-Year Perspective of Budget Increases

2022-2023	4.24%
2023-2024	3.07%
2024-2025	2.44%
2025-2026	3.64%
2026-2027	2.79%

Average: 3.24%

5-Year Perspective of Tax Levy Trends

2022-2023	2.07%
2023-2024	2.57%
2024-2025	2.90%
2025-2026	2.90%
2026-2027	2.90%

Average: 2.67%

On the Ballot

Proposition #1: Basic Budget

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to expend the sum of \$53,839,468 during the 2026-2027 school year?

School Board Candidate Elections

Candidates, as they will appear on the ballot, are:

- Danielle Cylich
- Kurt Guldán

Elected candidates will each serve a three-year term from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2029



District Goals: How We Measure and Support Our Mission

Literacy Instruction

Reading and writing are the gateways to a world of knowledge and opportunity. Our literacy program integrates literature, history, and science to strengthen critical analysis, vocabulary, and writing. PQ teachers are in their second year with the Wit & Wisdom curriculum. At the Middle/High School, sixth-grade teachers are completing the first year of the Arts & Letters curriculum, which will expand to additional grades.



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

A comprehensive, data-driven system helps each student reach their full potential. The Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework provides all students with support that is individualized to their needs. The addition of our new PQ MTSS Coordinator and MSHS Assistant Principal were instrumental in expanding this framework across the district.



Student Independence and Leadership Experiences

Collaborative projects and student-led initiatives foster agency and responsibility that serve our students beyond their school years. These experiences empower students to pursue learning and demonstrate knowledge in meaningful ways. The PQ Capstone Project pairs fifth graders and kindergartners to build teamwork, communication, and mentorship. High school seniors collaborate on their civics projects to address local and global issues, developing critical thinking, leadership, and civic engagement. The O.P.T.I.O.N.S. program is a senior internship that applies acquired skills and knowledge to real-world workplace challenges.



PQ honored local veterans in a heartfelt assembly, welcoming guests from every branch of the military, including parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents of current students.



During the Thanksgiving Food Drive, the Middle School Student Forum collected 11 boxes of donations for local families.



The Model UN Club traveled to Washington, DC, where students demonstrated their research, public speaking, and diplomacy skills on a national stage.



The Middle/High School theater department produces three full productions each year, plus a student showcase, involving students in every aspect of theater, on- and off-stage.



The STEAM course develops critical and creative problem-solving with hands-on projects that challenge PQ students to think like engineers, artists, and innovators.

FAQs About the Budget

Q. How is the Board able to present a budget at the New York State tax levy cap?

A. The Board and administration have made a concerted effort over the past several years to limit expenses and seek cost savings where possible. This careful planning has allowed the Board to present a budget that does not exceed New York State's maximum allowable tax levy cap.

Q. What does the proposed tax levy increase of 2.90% mean for my taxes?

A. An overall tax levy increase of 2.90% means that we will collect \$1,293,007 more from the whole district than was collected last year. It does not mean your tax bill will increase by 2.90% in 2026-2027. How the tax levy affects the amount of your tax is a product of many factors, including your town's portion of the tax levy, the equalization rates, changes in assessments to your property and others', changes in property tax exemptions within your town, tax certioraris and small claim assessment reviews. Your tax assessor is the professional best able to explain the impact on your tax bill. These officials have information that is not available to the NSCSD. Nevertheless, our commitment to meeting the tax levy cap illustrates our desire to exert as little upward pressure on your tax bill as possible. Please remember that tax rates are not the same as tax bills and are often poor barometers of the actual tax due. Put another way, the only item controlled by the district is the total amount of taxes we seek from the community.

Q. What happens if the community does not approve the proposed budget on May 19?

A. If the proposed budget is defeated on May 19, New York State law allows the district to present the same budget or a revised budget for one more vote, or go directly to a contingency budget. If a second proposed budget is defeated, the district must adopt a contingency budget, which would limit the tax levy to that of the current school year. A contingency budget would not have funding for equipment purchases, certain repairs, and community use of the facilities unless the district expenses are fully reimbursed. Areas of the budget such as class size, safety personnel, athletics, and other important extracurricular activities would be most vulnerable to cuts or elimination. If necessary, the actual budget reductions would be made by administration and the Board of Education pursuant to education law.

Q. What were the Board's priorities in developing the proposed budget for 2026-2027?

A. When preparing the spending plan for 2026-2027, the Board had several priorities guiding the planning process, including maintaining low class size, mental health and social well-being, and safety, security and facilities planning.

Q. Has the capital project started yet?

A. Phase 1 of our capital project, approved by the community last year, is scheduled to begin in late May or early June. This phase will include roofing work at both buildings and paving at PQ. We're excited to share additional updates as they become available.



YOUR INVESTMENT IS PAYING OFF

North Salem by the Numbers

87%

OF THE CLASS OF 2025
ATTENDED COLLEGE

95%

OF 2025 GRADUATES
EARNED REGENTS
DIPLOMAS

13%

OF 2025 GRADUATES
EARNED REGENTS
DIPLOMAS
WITH HONORS

203

ADVANCED PLACEMENT
EXAMS ADMINISTERED
IN MAY 2025

7

SEAL OF
BILITERACY
SCHOLARS

90%

OF THE CLASS OF 2025
EARNED THE NYS
SEAL OF CIVIC
READINESS

21

SENIORS EARNED
AP SCHOLAR
AWARDS

BOWLING
AND
CROSS COUNTRY
STUDENT-ATHLETES
COMPETED AT
STATE
CHAMPIONSHIPS

VARSITY GIRLS
VOLLEYBALL WON
THE CLASS C
SECTION ONE

Championship

VARSITY BOYS
BASKETBALL WON
THE CLASS C
SECTION ONE

*Championship
AND
Regional
Championship*

2

BACK-TO-BACK CLASS C
SECTION ONE STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS
FOR VARSITY BOYS SOCCER

4

LEAGUE
CHAMPIONSHIP
ATHLETIC TEAMS

76%

PARTICIPATION RATE
IN THE ATHLETIC
PROGRAM

11

NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION SCHOLAR-ATHLETE TEAMS
WHICH MAINTAIN A CUMULATIVE
AVERAGE OF 90% OR HIGHER

67%

PARTICIPATION RATE IN MUSIC, ARTS
AND OTHER CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

These programs enrich student learning, build leadership skills, and
create meaningful opportunities beyond the classroom.

Thank you for investing in North Salem



North Salem
Central School District
230 June Road
North Salem, NY 10560
(914) 669-5414
www.northsalemschools.org

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Brandy Keenan, *President*
Kurt Guldán, *Vice President*
Elizabeth Bridges, *Trustee*
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Fran Havard, *Trustee*
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Adam VanDerStuyf, Ed.D.

ASSISTANT
SUPERINTENDENT OF
BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS
Lindsay Eidel

EDITOR/DESIGNER
Sarah Divi/Chris Yerkes
with PNW/BOCES

Budget Vote: May 19, 2026, 7 am – 9 pm
In the Pequenakonck Elementary School Gym

Voting Information

Budget Vote & Board Candidate Election

To vote on May 19, 2026 you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age by May 19.
- Have been a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to May 19.
- Not be in jail or on parole for a felony conviction.
- Not claim the right to vote elsewhere.
- Be registered with either the school district's Board of Registration or with your appropriate county Board of Elections. If you previously registered to vote but have not voted in either a school district or general election in the last four years, you must register to vote.

You may register at the office of the District Clerk in the district administration office, 230 June Road, during the hours of 8 am–4 pm. You may also contact the District Clerk to schedule an appointment. The last day to register to vote is Thursday, May 14.

School Trustee Election

There are a total of two trustee seats to be filled for a three-year term ending June 30, 2029.

Requesting Absentee Ballots

- The application for an absentee/early vote ballot may be obtained on the district website under "Board of Education," or by calling the District Clerk at 914-669-5414, ext. 1011.
- The completed application must be received by the District Clerk at least seven days prior to the vote if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter. Applications received after May 16 may not be mailed, but they may be picked up at the District Clerk's office until May 18.
- The District Clerk must receive all ballots by 5 pm on May 19.

Additional Information

For additional information, please contact the District Clerk at 914-669-5414, ext. 1011.

