



Budget Drivers and Strategic Investments for Becoming a Beacon of Excellence

BOE Update

February 10, 2026

Mr. Michael Staiger
Business Manager

Dr. Gwendolyn Roraback
Interim Superintendent

The Sawyer Experience



OUR MISSION

We will provide equitable, engaging, inspiring, and holistic experiences that support success and empowerment for students, families, and the community in a diverse and changing world.



**Saugerties Central
School District**



The Sawyer Experience



OUR VISION

We are a beacon of educational excellence, where every individual is inspired to achieve their fullest potential.



**Saugerties Central
School District**



Agenda:

- ***What Drives Our Budget?***
 - *Sawyer Blueprint for Excellence*
 - *NYSED Mandates*
 - *Governor's Budget Proposal*
- ***What is the Budget Process?***
- ***What is the status of our Capital Projects?***
- ***How can we strategically invest our funds?***

Strategic Investments

- **START** planning for the future. Plan for our students' future (*2nd graders will be 28 in 2046*).
- We need to **stop** taking away academic supports.
- We need to **continue** student-driven programming.
- We need to **start** designing programs with the Portrait of a Graduate at the center.



Budget Alignment

Blueprint for Excellence Strategic Plan



Academic Excellence

The Sawyer Experience

Professional Culture

Family & Community Engagement



New York State

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE



We've done a lot of good work, and we will continue to focus on NY Inspires Pathways to Graduation

Portrait of a Sawyer Graduate Draft

1. Global Awareness & Cultural Competence
2. Collaboration & Teamwork
3. Communication & Advocacy
4. Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
5. Empathy, Emotional Intelligence & Social Responsibility
6. Growth Mindset & Lifelong Learning
7. Resilience & Adaptability
8. Ethical Leadership & Community Contribution

NYSED Portrait of Graduate - Draft

1. Global Citizen
2. Cultural Competence
3. Social-Emotional Competence
4. Effective Communicator
5. Critical Thinker
6. Innovative Problem Solver
7. Literate Across the Content Areas



Figure 9. New York State Portrait of a College, Career, and Civic Ready Graduate

NYSED'S PROPOSAL

Graduation Measures Updates - NY Inspires

- Moving from 3 diplomas to 1 diploma
- Creating more pathways to graduation and using NYS's Portrait of Graduate as criteria for graduation
- Redefining credits to emphasize proficiency rather than the completion of time-based units of study
 - PBL - PLAN Pilot
 - Work or service-based learning
- Certain achievements will qualify for seals and endorsements
- Financial literacy and climate education will become required
- All students entering 9th grade in 2027 and beyond will be required to have 1 credit of career and technical education





New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



NYS Literacy Initiative

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the Board of Regents are committed to ensuring that every student has access to high-quality instruction and to fostering a culture of reading and writing excellence across the state.

- [The Science of Reading Literacy Briefs](#)
- [K-3 Literacy Curriculum Review Guide](#)
- [P-3 Literacy Instructional Best Practices](#)
- [P-3 Instructional Guidance Toolkit](#)

By September of 2025, all school districts will need to certify with the State Education Department (SED) that their curriculum, instructional strategies, and teacher professional development align with all elements of the evidenced-based reading instruction.

**GOVERNOR'S
PROPOSAL & NYS Laws**

2025-26

Smartphones - Governor Hochul's [legislative proposal to create a statewide standard for distraction-free schools](#) in New York



Room Temperature - ["Protecting students and teachers from extreme heat"](#) - 88 degrees is the max

Electric Buses-2027 New Buses must be electric. 2025 All Buses must be electric.

2035 All Buses must be electric



GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL & NYS Laws

2026-27

Mathematics - Instructional focus on math specifically numeracy and evidenced based practices.

Electric Buses - 2027 New Buses must be electric.
2035 All Buses must be electric.

UPK - The Governor's budget continues to expand "truly universal UPK" by 2028-29.

*UPK funding supports a critical service for families and children, but it does not generate surplus revenue for the district. It represents a **significant new service expectation**, more children served, more classrooms, more teachers and more materials.*



Budget Realities & Considerations

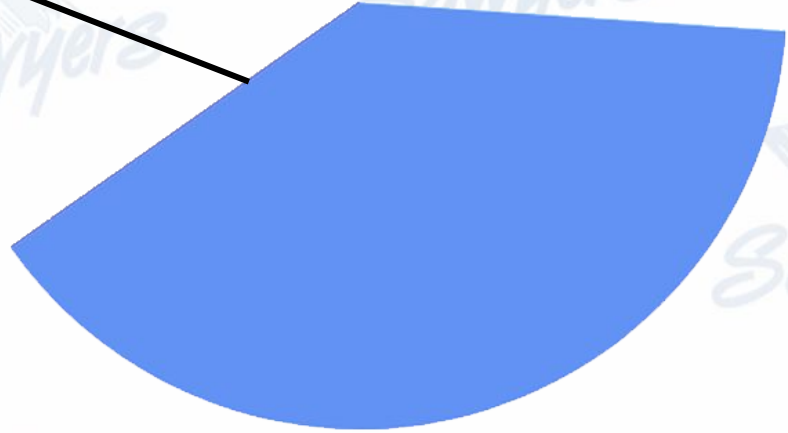


NYS Public Schools Have Over 157 Unfunded Mandates



The Realities of Public School Budgeting 2025-2026 Last Year.....

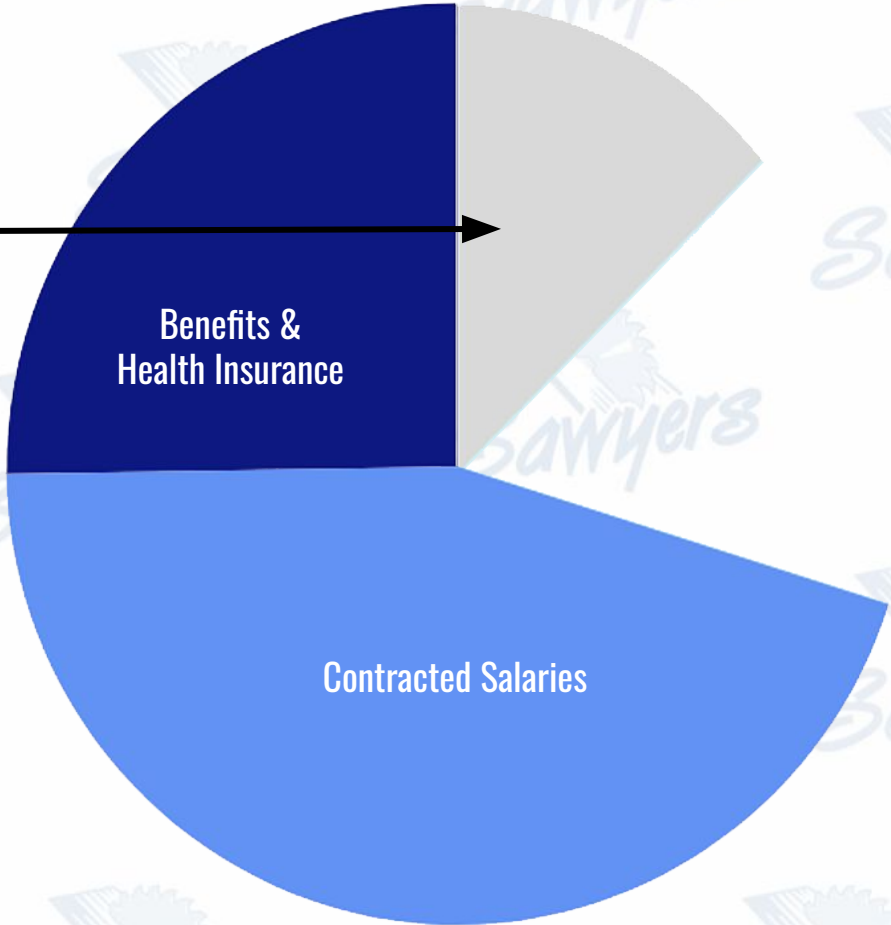
Contracted Salaries



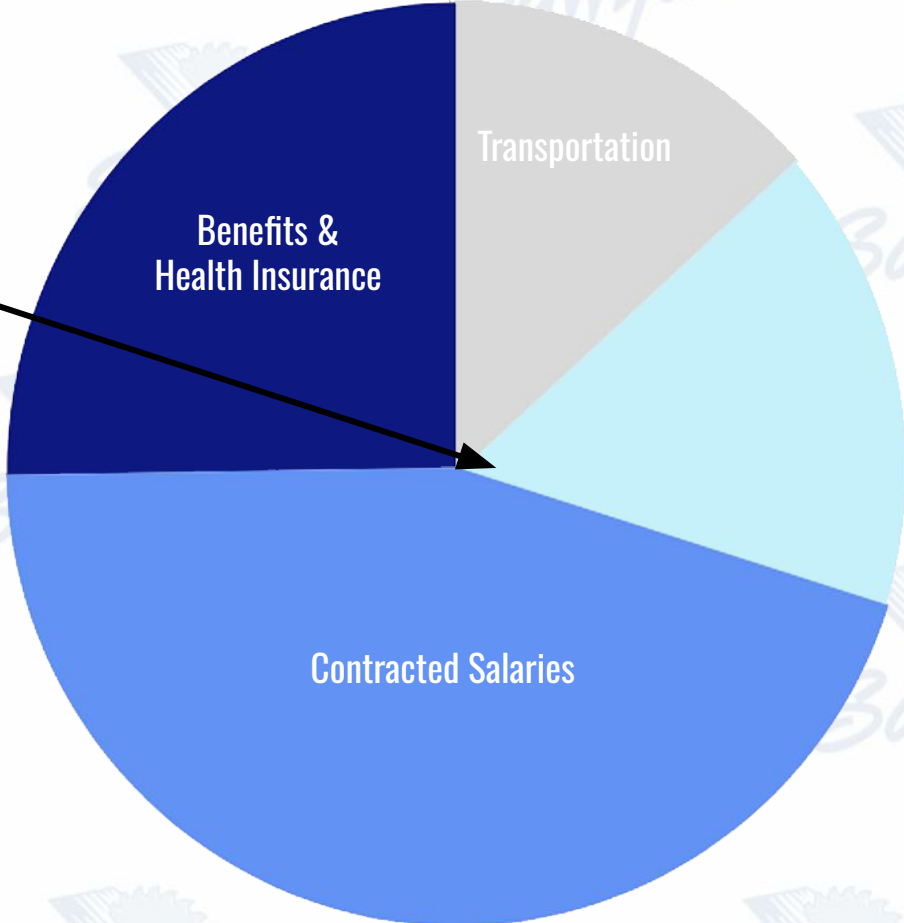
Benefits & Health Insurance

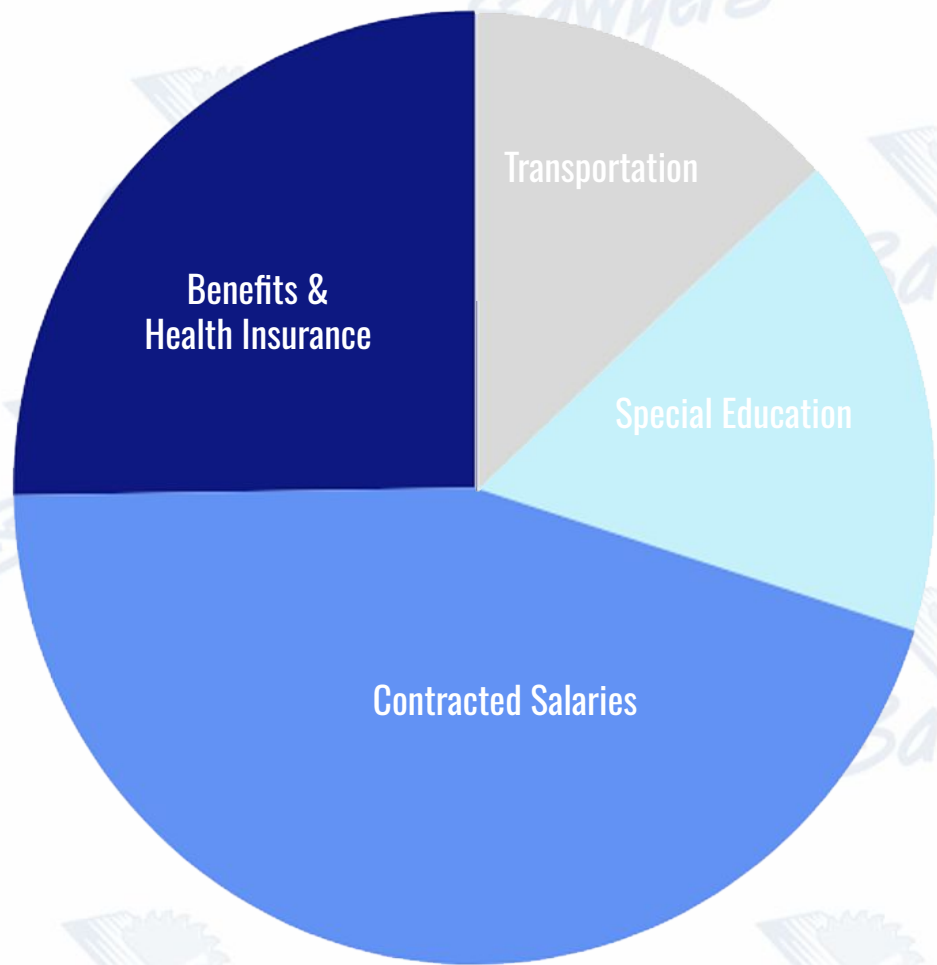


Transportation



Special Education





Budgeting Process:



- Saugerties CSD Blueprint for Excellence
- Met with Building and Department Administrators
- Initial Service Request with Ulster BOCES and MHRIC
- Projected 16% increase in health insurance premiums
- Reviewed staffing. All collective bargaining agreements are current.
- Preliminary Tax Cap calculation
Limited to lower of 2% or the inflation factor (2.63%)
- Reviewed enrollment trends and student needs
- Retirement employer contribution rates:
 - TRS 9.59% decreasing to 8.24% *Anticipated
 - ERS 16.5% increasing to 17.6%

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL

Aid Descriptions	2025-2026	2026-2027	Change	Percent
FOUNDATION AID	\$18,027,532	\$18,207,807	\$180,275	1.00%
HIGH TAX AID	\$342,714	\$342,714	\$0	0.00%
TRANSPORTATION INCLUDING SUMMER	\$2,721,192	\$2,935,533	\$214,341	7.88%
BUILDING AID	\$1,593,625	\$1,612,549	\$18,924	1.19%
BOCES AID	\$2,059,709	\$2,190,802	\$131,093	6.36%
PUBLIC EXCESS HIGH COST AID	\$790,586	\$535,694	-\$254,892	-32.24%
PRIVATE EXCESS COST AID	\$1,209,227	\$1,184,571	-\$24,656	-2.04%
SOFTWARE AID	\$33,963	\$37,780	\$3,817	11.24%
LIBRARY MATERIALS AID	\$13,455	\$15,763	\$2,308	17.15%
TEXTBOOK AID	\$121,834	\$141,839	\$20,005	16.42%
HARDWARE & TECHNOLOGY AID	\$30,331	\$26,976	-\$3,355	-11.06%
SUPPLEMENTAL PUBLIC EXCESS COST	\$617	\$617	\$0	0.00%
General Fund Total Aid	\$26,944,785	\$27,232,645	\$287,860	1.07%



Universal Prekindergarten (UPK Aid)

Aid Descriptions	2025-2026	2026-2027	Change	Percent
UNIVERSAL PRE-K AID	\$422,221	\$710,000	\$287,779	68.16%

- **Important Context**

- **Projection based on state per-pupil funding, not actual enrollment**
- **District operates a half-day UPK program, and half-day students generate only 50% of the full per-pupil aid**
- **District currently serves 64 UPK students**
- **Full-day UPK must be available to any 4-year-old child whose parents or guardians have requested by 2028-2029**
- **UPK funding is a State grant and does not impact the General Fund budget that voters will consider in May**

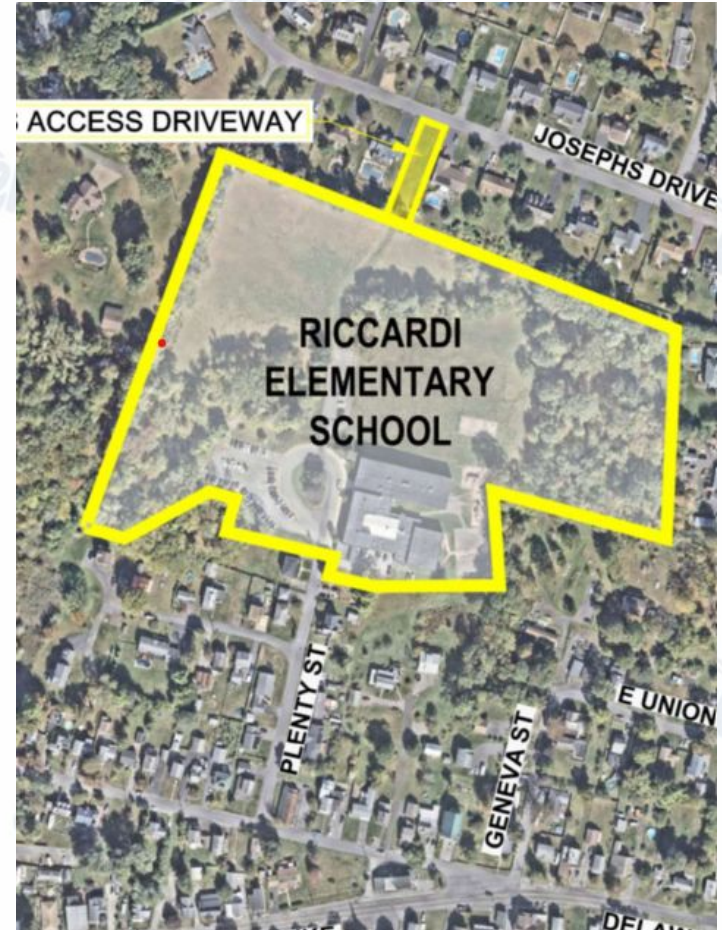


Capital Project: Planning and Updates



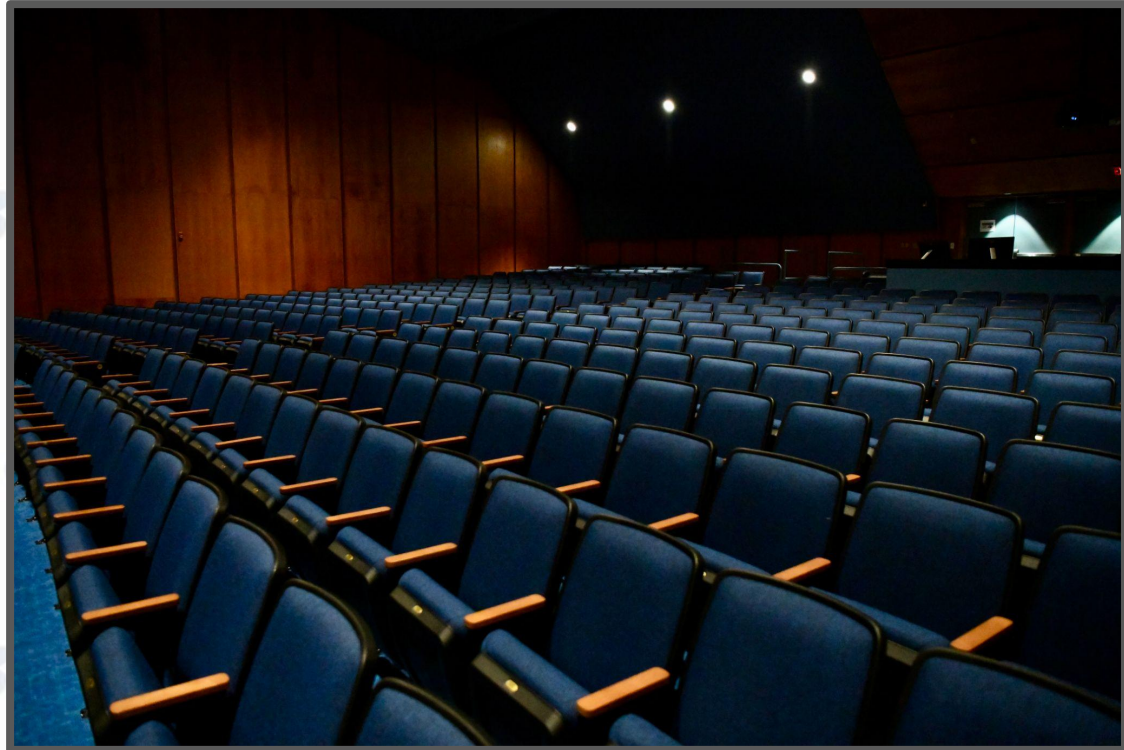
Riccardi Easement

- **Purpose**
 - Improve safety
 - Reduce congestion on Plenty Street
 - Increase efficiency of arrival and dismissal
- **Tetra Tech traffic study completed**
 - Traffic observations
 - Traffic data reviewed
- **Wetlands study scheduled for Spring 2026**



Approved Capital Projects

- **\$22M Capital Project**
 - **Vote-approved in December 2020**
 - **Closeout in progress**
- **Cahill Fire Alarm**
 - **Work 99% complete**
- **Riccardi Capital Outlay:**
 - **ADA door upgrade**



Key Dates for Budget Development

February 27

Submit Data for Property Tax Cap Calculations

March 10

Budget Development and Tax Cap Calculation Presentation

April 21

Budget Development Presentation, Property Tax Report Card Adoption & BOCES Budget Vote

May 5

Budget Hearing

May 19

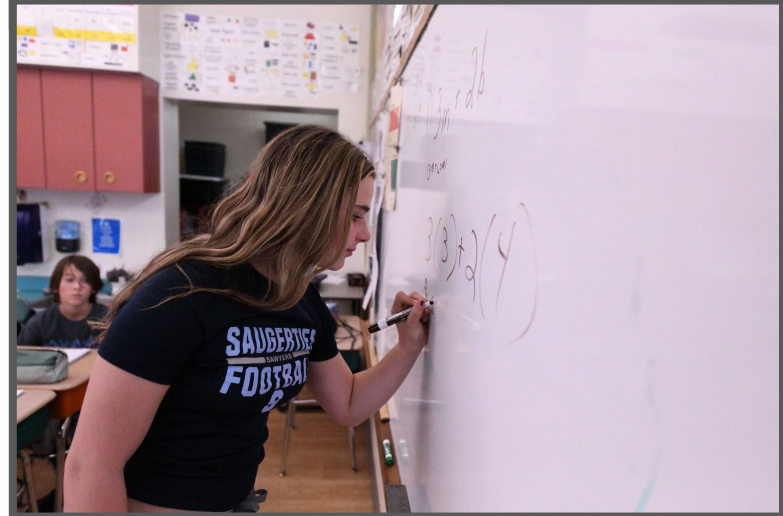
Budget Vote & Annual Trustee Election - Jr. High School

May 26

Affidavit Ballots Counted
Budget Results Accepted

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Coming Up

Next District Leadership Meeting March 18th
Next District Safety Meeting March 25th



Comments, Considerations and Questions

Thank you for your continued support.

