



MILLBROOK

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BLAZER BULLETIN | SCHOOL BUDGET ISSUE 2026



Dear Community Members,

I am writing to share an overview of the school district's proposed annual budget and the process used to develop it under challenging circumstances.

The 2026-27 school year budget was created without the benefit of a finalized New York State budget, which was not yet available at the time of our District budget's adoption. As a result, we relied on the best available projections for state aid and carefully monitored legislative developments throughout the process. At the same time, we were committed to adhering to the district's maximum allowable tax levy cap, ensuring that we remain fiscally responsible while continuing to support our students and programs.

Developing a budget within the tax cap required us to address a budget deficit of approximately \$1,000,000. To close this gap, the district utilized a combination of strategies, including the appropriation of additional fund balance and targeted reductions in expenses. These decisions were made thoughtfully, with a focus on minimizing the impact on educational opportunities and maintaining the quality of our programs.

While we are able to present a balanced budget for the coming year, it is important to understand the broader financial context. State aid has failed to keep pace with inflation which has a significant impact on school districts statewide. Over the past five school years, the district has experienced an average annual increase in state aid of approximately \$53,000. During that same period, recognized inflation has exceeded 16%, significantly increasing the cost of operations.

Several key expense areas highlight this challenge. Health insurance costs for contractual employees have increased by over \$491,000. Special education expenses have risen by more than \$600,000, reflecting both growing needs and mandated services. Transportation costs have also increased by over 14%, while projected transportation aid has decreased by over 35%, further compounding the financial strain on the district.

In response, the district continues to actively pursue new revenue streams and cost-saving opportunities. We are working in partnership with BOCES on space utilization plans, allowing them to rent space within our buildings to operate programs and help offset district costs. Additionally, we are participating in the Early College Access CoSer, which enables certain expenses to qualify for BOCES aid and brings additional revenue back into the district for programs we are already providing.

We will continue to explore partnerships with neighboring school districts and organizations as part of our commitment to fiscally responsible and sustainable budgeting, despite the challenging economic environment facing public education in New York.

The District's leadership is also firmly committed to advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels. We have met and will continue to meet with elected officials to communicate the financial realities facing our schools. We are actively engaged in organizations such as the Lower Hudson Education Coalition, the Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents, and the Legislative Liaisons Committee to advocate for increased state and federal funding. Through these efforts, we will continue to champion more supportive funding packages, push for a reduction in unfunded mandates, and advocate for more responsible budgeting practices at levels beyond our direct control.

Although the use of fund balance and spending reductions has allowed us to close this year's gap, these are not long-term solutions. We remain committed to advocating for adequate and sustainable funding while continuing to manage district resources responsibly.

We appreciate your ongoing support and engagement as we work to provide a high-quality education for all students while maintaining financial stability.

Sincerely,

Caroline Hernández Pidalá



DYLAN VASQUEZ
VALEDICTORIAN

My name is Dylan Vasquez and I have attended Millbrook School District since Kindergarten. Throughout my time in this school I have tried to make the most of every opportunity given to me. I've participated in as many clubs as I can, eventually becoming the president of Student Government, Students Against Destructive Decisions, and Environmental Club. I've tried to take all the classes I can, even if that means taking them outside of school or doubling up classes for a single period.

Over the summer, I work in excavating and have participated in various youth climate conferences, such as LCOY USA. Following graduation, I intend on studying Architecture and Environmental Design. I'm grateful for all the support I've been given from my friends, family, and staff at Millbrook High School. I would never have made it so far without any of them.



LYDIA KASCSEK
SALUTATORIAN

My name is Lydia Kascsak and I have attended the Millbrook School District since Kindergarten. During this time, I have been dedicated to both my academics and my extracurricular activities. I have played Varsity Basketball and Varsity Volleyball all four years of my high school career. I am also involved in clubs as the President of the National Honor Society, Vice President of Student Government and Treasurer of my class. Outside of the high school, I work at the Bank of Millbrook as a part-time teller. I also previously worked at the Town of Washington Recreational basketball league as a referee. I have also volunteered for organizations in town including the Rotary Club, Angels of Light, St. Joseph's Church and Uncle Al's Thrift Shop.

I will continue my academic career at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ majoring in Biomedical Engineering. I will always cherish my time at Millbrook. This district and community has helped me become the person I am today. I will forever be grateful for the teachers, counselors and our Principal who have helped me throughout the years, both academically and personally. I am proud to have been raised in such an exceptional community and I know that it has prepared me for the next chapter of my life.

CHILDREN WHO MAY BE IN NEED OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Scan the link below for more information



SCHOOL BUDGET NOTICE

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2025-2026 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-2027 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2026-2027 School Year*
Total Budget Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$35,649,651	\$37,992,751	\$36,041,650
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$2,343,100	\$391,999
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		6.57%	110%
Change in Consumer Price Index		2.63%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$27,782,136	\$29,733,237	
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 Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C + D)	\$27,782,136	\$29,733,237	\$27,782,136
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$1,449,923	\$2,423,809	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$26,332,213	\$27,309,428	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$26,332,213	\$27,309,428	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions)	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$3,708,169	\$3,806,616	\$3,755,323
Program Component	\$27,252,946	\$28,417,075	\$28,221,338
Capital Component	\$4,688,536	\$5,769,059	\$5,574,105

* Provide a 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.

Assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2026-2027 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to section 2023 of the Education Law, are the elimination of all equipment items from the budget; the elimination of several positions, and the possible elimination of various student supplies, sports teams. The total contingency budget shown above reflects the full amount of reductions required by the capped tax levy. Separate components will require additional reductions estimated to total \$1,509,115. This will include no increase to Board appointed positions amounting to a total reduction of combined program, capital, and administrative expenses of \$1,951,101.

** 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)

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings¹

\$484

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2026-27 by the qualified voters of the Millbrook Central school district, Dutchess County, New York, will be held at Millbrook Middle school(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 between the hours of 12:00 and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the school(s), 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.



Under the Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year

WHO MAY VOTE?

- at least 18
- a U.S. citizen
- a primary resident of the Millbrook Central School District for at least 30 days prior to May 19, 2026
- a registered voter with the school district and/or Dutchess County

Last Day to register to vote: May 14, 2026

If you have questions about registration, please contact the District Clerk's Office at (845) 677-4200 x1100 or cheryl.sprague@millbrookcsd.org

ABSENTEE & EARLY VOTING

If you are a registered school district voter and you are unable to vote in person on May 19, 2026, you can apply for an absentee ballot. Early voting is also available. Absentee ballot and early voting ballot applications are available at the District Clerk's Office and on the district website *Board of Education Budget & Voting* page at <https://bit.ly/MillbrookBudget2026>

May 18, 2026, is the last day individual voters may request an absentee and early voting ballot if picked up by the voter by 5:00pm in the District Clerk's Office. To be counted, ballots must be received by the District Clerk by 5:00pm on May 19, 2026.



TOTAL BUDGET: \$37,992,751

WHERE YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO: SCHOOL BUDGET BREAKDOWN

- PROGRAM EXPENSES INCLUDE:**
- Instructional Salaries & Benefits (Teachers, Aides)
 - Instructional Supplies, Materials & Services
 - Interscholastic Sports & Extracurriculars
 - Transportation (First Student Contract)
 - Curriculum, Instruction & Testing
 - Library, Counseling, Health & Psychological Services Programming
 - Academic Intervention & Summer Programming



- ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES INCLUDE:**
- Administration & Staff Salaries/Benefits
 - Supplies for Admin, Central Office & Board
 - Payroll, HR, Benefits & Data Processing
 - Auditing, Legal, Tax Collection & Public Info

- CAPITAL EXPENSES INCLUDE:**
- Custodial, Maintenance & Grounds Salaries/Benefits
 - Supplies for Facilities & Grounds
 - Bonds, Capital Leases & Facility Costs
 - Utilities, Rentals & Improvements
 - Court Judgments & Claims



43 ALDEN PLACE, PO BOX AA
MILLBROOK, NY 12545

Superintendent
of Schools
Caroline Hernández Pidala

BOARD OF EDUCATION

President
Perry Hartswick

Vice President
Chris Rosenbergen

Board Members
Jennifer Carnecchia
Dena Ghobashy
Chris LaBelle
David LaVarnway
Howard Shapiro

POSTAL PATRON

BUDGET VOTE MAY 19, 2026

12:00 pm - 9:00 pm | Millbrook Middle School Band Room (next to Auditorium)

Board Candidates

There are two seats open on the Board of Education. Board members serve for a period of three years. The term begins July 1, 2026, and ends June 30, 2029

HOWARD SHAPIRO

Dear Friend of Education,
I have been honored to have been elected to this Board of Education for the past 9 years. For three of these years, I served as the Board's Vice President. When first elected, I used my skills as a retired state investigator to review past school district contracts and uncovered one hundred thousand dollars in overcharges. Every single penny of these overcharges were returned to the school district for educational use by our students.

My goal continues to see that every student receives the best education possible. We owe it to our children to prepare them for tomorrow's world, their world, by giving them the skills necessary for them to be the best individuals that they can be. Please continue your support for public education by voting.

Thank you,
Howard Shapiro



CHRISTOPHER ROSENBERGEN

Hello. My name is Chris Rosenbergen, and I am running for reelection for the Millbrook Central School District's Board of Education. I have been a school board member for approximately 6 years. I currently live in Pleasant Valley with my wife and two daughters.

The students of Millbrook are truly amazing and deserve the best learning options, best safety available, a great support system and top-notch educators. We should continue to focus on higher education without losing touch with those students who are struggling. While we look to get the best programs for our high honor students, we need to find better ways to raise up those who are having difficulties each day.

I have worked in the financial field for the past 33 years, and I'm currently the 1st Vice President of Retail Lending and Financial Services at Uster Savings Bank. I have sat on boards with the United Way, Millbrook Educational Foundation and the American Bankers Association. This experience has taught me how to work with others to get things done. I truly enjoy educating, managing and growing success. I firmly believe that my personal achievements have come from the ability to listen, have an open mind and do what's best for those involved.

I hope you will grant me this wonderful opportunity to continue my service on the Board of Education so I can use my background to fix what's broken, enhance what's not and to prepare our children as individuals. I'm a parent who simply wants to make a positive difference in the lives of our children.
Sincerely,
Christopher Rosenbergen



2026-27 BUDGET AT A GLANCE

2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Budget (Proposed)	Budget-to-Budget Difference (\$)	Budget-to-Budget Difference (%)
\$ 35,649,651	\$ 37,992,751	\$ 2,343,100	6.57%
2025-26 Tax Levy	2026-27 Tax Levy (Proposed)	Levy-to-Levy Difference (\$)	Levy-to-Levy Difference (%)
\$ 27,782,136	\$ 29,733,237	\$ 1,951,101	7.02%

The proposed 2026-27 Millbrook CSD Tax Levy is within the NYS Tax Cap.

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