



2025-26 BUDGET NEWSLETTER

Proposed 2025-26 school budget maintains programs and staff

Herkimer Central School District residents will vote on Tuesday, May 20, on the district's proposed \$35,250,696 budget for the 2025-26 school year. The proposed budget would maintain all programs and staff and would stay under the tax levy limit.

The proposed budget would be a 3.88% increase from the 2024-25 spending plan. It includes a tax levy increase of 1.75%, which is below Herkimer's tax levy limit of 4.42%, as calculated using the state's formula. The district has been under the levy limit for 14 of the 15 years since the limit's inception in 2012-13, and the one year over the limit was a 0% increase. Over the past five years, the district has maintained a tax levy increase of below 1.75% – with three of the five years at 0%.

"The proposed budget would allow us to continue to provide the academic, extracurricular, support and safety programs that give our students the opportunity to succeed," Herkimer Superintendent Kathleen Carney said. "The budget process also involves keeping costs in check to ensure we're responsible to our taxpayers, and this budget aims to do that by once again keeping increases to a minimum."

Included in the proposed budget is an amount not to exceed \$250,000 for the purpose of a capital outlay project to complete minor renovations and upgrades and to purchase associated furnishings and equipment at the district's school buildings.

In addition to maintaining programs and staff, the budget would fill or add three special education teacher positions, an academic support teacher and an account clerk, and the district would contract for more part-time occupational therapy services.

"Maintaining programs in a district involves ensuring their sustainability and effectiveness over time," Carney said. "It encompasses strategic planning, regular assessment of



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Proposed 2025-26 budget at a glance:

- ▶ Maintains **student programs and services**.
- ▶ Is a **3.88% increase** from the 2024-25 budget.
- ▶ Carries a **1.75% tax levy increase**, which is under the calculated levy limit. The district has been under the levy limit for 14 of the 15 years since its inception.

Highlights included in the proposed 2025-26 budget:

Safety:

- ▶ Continue security camera upgrades and enhancements

Programs:

- ▶ Maintain all existing staff and programs
- ▶ Preserve smaller class sizes
- ▶ Sustain enrichment opportunities, social emotional supports and academic programming
- ▶ Contract for additional part-time occupational therapy

Support services:

- ▶ Proceed with final year of five-year transportation contract
- ▶ Purchase truck and plow for grounds maintenance

Technology:

- ▶ Fully fund phase two of a five-year replacement plan for classroom technology

Instructional staffing:

- ▶ Add two full-time special education teachers at the Elementary School
- ▶ Add one full-time academic support teacher at the Middle School
- ▶ Add one full-time special education teacher at the Middle-High School

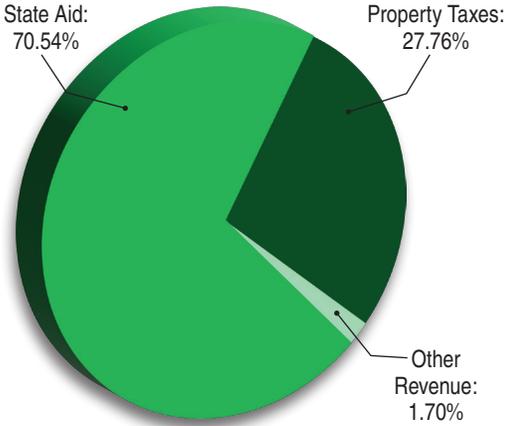
Other:

- ▶ Hire full-time account clerk in district office
- ▶ Continue replacement plan for aging classroom equipment

outcomes, and continuous improvement based on feedback from stakeholders. Key highlights include fostering community engagement to support program goals, allocating resources efficiently to meet diverse needs and adapting initiatives to evolving educational standards and community expectations. We feel this budget provides for all of these things."



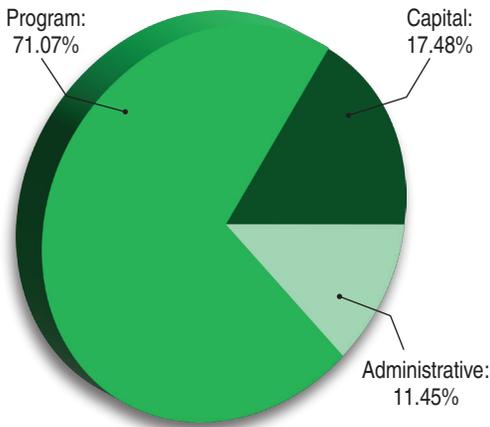
Where the money comes from...



The district's plan for how it will obtain every dollar in the proposed budget:

REVENUES	2024-25 BUDGETED	2025-26 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE '24-'25 TO '25-'26	% CHANGE '24-'25 TO '25-'26
State Aid	\$23,366,364	\$24,866,016	\$1,499,652	6.42%
Property Taxes	\$9,616,392	\$9,784,680	\$168,288	1.75%
Other Revenue	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$0	0.00%
Fund Balance	\$350,000	\$0	-\$350,000	NA
Total Revenues	\$33,932,756	\$35,250,696	\$1,317,940	3.88%

Where the money is spent ...



The district's plan for how money will be spent within the proposed budget:

EXPENDITURES	2024-25 BUDGETED	2025-26 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE '24-'25 TO '25-'26	% CHANGE '24-'25 TO '25-'26
Program	\$23,605,852	\$25,051,372	\$1,445,520	6.12%
Capital	\$6,132,014	\$6,161,265	\$29,251	0.48%
Administrative	\$4,194,890	\$4,038,059	-\$156,831	-3.74%
Total Expenditures	\$33,932,756	\$35,250,696	\$1,317,940	3.88%

CATEGORY	2024-25 APPROVED BUDGET	2025-26 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE	% OF TOTAL
Payroll	\$10,094,356	\$10,459,329	\$364,973	3.62%	29.67%
Benefits	\$6,669,923	\$6,974,332	\$304,409	4.56%	19.79%
BOCES	\$8,117,315	\$8,742,230	\$624,915	7.70%	24.80%
Contractual	\$3,938,470	\$4,008,285	\$69,815	1.77%	11.37%
Debt service	\$3,494,192	\$3,632,420	\$138,228	3.96%	10.30%
Equipment	\$631,000	\$631,000	\$0	0.00%	1.79%
Supplies	\$452,500	\$468,100	\$15,600	3.45%	1.33%
Transfer to capital	\$450,000	\$250,000	-\$200,000	-44.44%	0.71%
Textbooks	\$85,000	\$85,000	\$0	0.00%	0.24%
TOTAL	\$33,932,756	\$35,250,696	\$1,317,940	3.88%	100%

Capital projects progressing with various upgrades

Capital Project 2018:

The final phase of Capital Project 2018 was finished during the 2024-25 school year. The final cost report was submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in December 2024, and the project came in \$290,000 under budget.

Capital Project 2024:

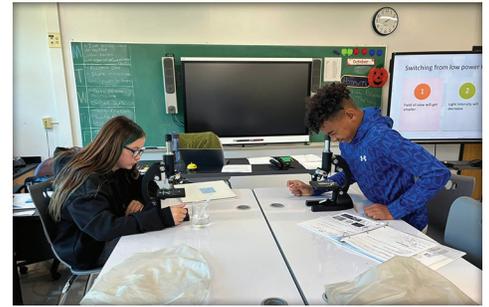
The proposed 2025-26 budget includes payments for the first round of borrowing for Capital Project 2024.

District residents voted 124-13 on Jan. 16, 2024, to approve the \$35.35 million Capital Project 2024. The project came with no additional tax impact for residents due to using state Building Aid, capital reserve funds and a drop-off of debt from previous projects.

The project will address health and safety, accessibility and programmatic needs and aging infrastructure. Some highlights of the project are noted below.

Health and Safety: A vehicular bridge will be added by the Middle-High School to provide secondary emergency and bus access to the campus for the first time. At both schools, emergency alert lighting will be installed in large group assembly areas, and outside public address systems will be improved.

Middle-High School: The auditorium will undergo complete renovation from the backstage area to the entrance, seating, lighting, sound booth and more. Upgrades are planned for the chorus and band rooms. The auxiliary gymnasium will be renovated to allow for spectator seating and smaller sporting contests to be played there, in conjunction with removing the aging pool. This area will be used for classrooms and program expansions for our STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) programs. The project also allows for additional classroom spaces through the relocation of offices. Parking will be added to Harmon Field to allow better accessibility for youth sports events.



Elementary School: Highlights include replacing the aging roof and upgrading heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC). The existing sound system in the cafetorium will be replaced, and original bathrooms will be updated. Other work includes renovations to the nurse's office, reconfiguration of office spaces and replacement of the original gymnasium wall pads. Site work includes an upgrade to parking lot lighting, additional lighting at the play areas and an expansion of the smaller primary playground to include age-appropriate equipment for our PreK, kindergarten and first grade students.

Athletic Complex: Improvements include resurfacing the track, reconstructing the field event areas and replacing the baseball dugouts,

Photos above show aspects of school life that will see upgrades during Capital Project 2024 – including the Middle-High School Auditorium, STEAM classrooms, the elementary cafetorium and athletics.

scoreboards and sound system, as well as concession/press box updates.

Capital Project 2024 timeline:

- ▶ **March 2025:** Project drawing submitted to NYSED for approval.
- ▶ **July/August 2025:** Anticipated NYSED approval and bid process.
- ▶ **Fall 2025:** Start of construction.
- ▶ **Fall 2027:** Completion of construction.
- ▶ **Fall/winter 2027:** Project closeout.

What happens if the proposed 2025-26 budget is voted down?

If the proposed budget is defeated on May 20, the Board of Education can put the same or a revised budget up for a vote in June, or it can immediately adopt a contingent budget. After two unsuccessful budget votes, Herkimer would have to adopt a contingent budget.

State law mandates that under a contingent budget, a school district must adopt a budget with no tax levy increase and eliminate all non-contingent expenses, such as certain student supplies, certain equipment purchases and community use of school facilities that results in a district expense. In other words, the district would likely need to make budget cuts to decrease spending.



HERKIMER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Bulk Rate
Non-Profit Org.
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PAID
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Voting Information

Who can vote?

In order to vote, a person must be at least 18 years old, a United States citizen and a resident of the Herkimer Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the May 20, 2025, vote. Voter registration is not required.

When and where is the vote?

The school budget vote will take place from noon to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20, in the Herkimer Middle-High School Library Media Center.

Can I vote early or vote by absentee ballot?

Absentee ballot voting is available, and the Early Mail Voter Act that took effect last year allows for early voting via mail with no reasons needed. You must fill out an application to vote by early voting or absentee ballot. There are separate applications for voting by early voting or absentee ballot, but the application process and deadlines are the same for both.

To obtain an application or for more information, call the district office at 315-866-2230, ext. 1304. If you would like a ballot mailed to you, your

application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 13, 2025. If you plan to pick up your ballot, your

application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 19, 2025. The completed ballot must be received by 5 p.m. on May 20, 2025.

What exactly am I voting on?

Vote on the school budget: School district residents are voting on a proposed \$35,250,696 budget for the 2025-26 school year. The budget calls for a 3.88% spending increase and a 1.75% tax levy increase.

Elect four Board of Education members:

Four Board of Education seats are up for election. Three seats are for three-year terms from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028. The other seat is for a term of two years and six weeks from May 21, 2025, through June 30, 2027, to complete the remainder of the term for the seat originally held by Michele Gilbert, before she resigned. Matthew Collis was appointed to fill that seat through the election. The three candidates who receive the most votes will win the seats with three-year terms. The fourth-place candidate will win the shorter term. The four candidates are all current board members: Aleksander Verenich, Brian Crandall, Matthew Collis and Robert Mihevc.



Vote on library budget/trustees: School district residents will decide on the Frank J. Basloe Library's proposed tax levy of \$371,020 to fund the library's annual budget. Residents will also vote on one library Board of Trustees seat, which has a five-year term.

How can I learn more?

A budget hearing will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 6, in the Herkimer Middle-High School Library Media Center. More budget details are also available online at www.herkimercsd.org.

VOTE
May 20, 2025 – Noon-8 p.m.
Herkimer Middle-High School
Library Media Center