

Scarsdale Public Schools 2013-2014 Proposed Budget Overview

Background

In light of the recent budget defeat, Scarsdale's Board of Education has revised the budget to eliminated the proposed Center for Health, Fitness and Learning and to conform to New York State's tax cap law. The new budget proposes reductions in investment in staff and facilities, but preserves current class sizes and program offerings. The budget growth of 1.49% is the lowest in over 30 years, and can be accounted for almost completely (99.2%) by growth in mandated contributions to New York's retirement programs over which the District has no control.

This year's proposed budget will achieve the following:

Personnel

- Add one English teacher and one part-time science teacher at the High School
- Maintain two librarians at the High School
- Add two technology staff to support the District's technology infrastructure and free computer teachers to help students

Programs/Curriculum

- Maintain favorable class sizes
- Maintain the District's core curriculum
- Maintain diverse array of high school courses and electives
- Maintain wide range of extra-curricular and sports opportunities
- Continue Scarsdale Education for Tomorrow initiatives
 - Critical and creative thinking
 - Global interdependence
 - Research/technology
 - Global benchmarking

Facilities/Security

- Maintain schedule of building/facilities repairs and maintenance
- Improve facilities to address student needs
- Add 80 seats in cafeteria and commons to alleviate crowding
- Add or enhance existing security systems, (e.g. new classroom door locks)
- Add security staff at Middle and High School entrances

Tax Rates / Budget Growth

- Budget growth is 1.49 percent, the lowest in over three decades
 - 99.2% of this growth is due to state-mandated increases in retirement system charges
- Proposed tax levy growth of 2.84% is BELOW NY State tax cap* limit
- A simple majority favorable community vote required to pass this budget
- Scarsdale tax rate growth a projected 2.82 percent
- Mamaroneck tax rate growth a projected 2.91 percent
- The Scarsdale/Mamaroneck difference reflects state and county formulae the District does not control.

* Difference between budget and tax levy growth reflects a decision to rely on less income from surplus, part of a multi-year plan to spend down surpluses at a moderate rate, thereby avoiding sudden spikes in tax growth.