

AT A *glance*

PROPOSED BUDGET
\$67,825,000

BUDGET INCREASE
\$3,355,000 / 5.20%

TAX LEVY INCREASE
\$571,507 / 1.84%

Proposed budget preserves all programs and focuses on student mental health

Mohonasen at or below the tax levy limit for 13th straight year

On Tuesday, May 21, Mohonasen voters will head to the polls to decide on a proposed \$67.8 million budget for the 2024-25 school year. The budget proposal includes a tax levy increase of 1.84%, which is at the district's state-mandated limit. As a result, a simple majority of voters is needed for it to be approved.

Residents will also elect three candidates to the Board of Education, each to a three-year term, and decide on a bus proposition to purchase four 70-passenger full-sized buses for \$760,000. (See bus proposition, page 4.)

Voting will take place in the Mohonasen High School Gym from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21. Please note the date change from the printed calendar.

The proposed budget includes provisions for maintaining all student programs and activities, and continues Mohonasen's priority of lower class size targets for grades K-6.

The proposed spending plan represents an increase of \$3.36 million, or 5.20%, over

the current year. The district remains committed to providing a high-quality education and resources for all students. The majority of the spending increase (approximately \$2 million) is attributed to a rise in instructional costs to maintain and support the District's academic excellence.

The budget also supports the District's commitment to student mental health. This includes expanding the number of social workers, by turning the current part-time post at Bradt Elementary into a full-time position. The District is also expanding its partnership with Northern Rivers by bringing in an elementary-level clinician, adding to the two secondary clinicians.

"Our district maintains one of the lowest per pupil expenditures in New York State, reflecting our fidelity to local taxpayers. Simultaneously, we prioritize providing

our students with a high-quality education, ensuring their academic growth and success," said Superintendent Shannon Shine. "The community has voiced their support for our good fiscal management in approving past budgets and it is my hope that they will once again give our proposed budget their seal of approval," he added.

Residents are invited to learn more and ask questions about the budget proposal at the public budget hearing and meet the candidates night starting at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 13, in the high school LGI (large group instruction room).

BUDGET VOTE

TUESDAY,
MAY 21
7 A.M. – 9 P.M.
HIGH SCHOOL
GYM

ALSO ON THE BALLOT

Bus purchase proposition and Board of Education election

MEET THE CANDIDATES/ BUDGET HEARING

Monday,
May 13,
6 p.m.
High School LGI



THE THREE-PART BUDGET

All public schools in New York state are required to report appropriations in three categories: administrative, program and capital. The following data show how Mohonasen’s budget breaks down under this formula:

PROGRAM BUDGET

2024-25	\$51,051,811	75.27%
2023-24	\$48,202,346	74.77%

The Program Budget includes: the salaries and benefits of all teachers, guidance counselors, aides, monitors, psychologists, nurses, social workers and speech therapists.

Also included is in-service training, library costs, transportation, co-curricular programs and interscholastic athletics.

CAPITAL BUDGET

2024-25	\$10,140,590	14.95%
2023-24	\$10,000,171	15.51%

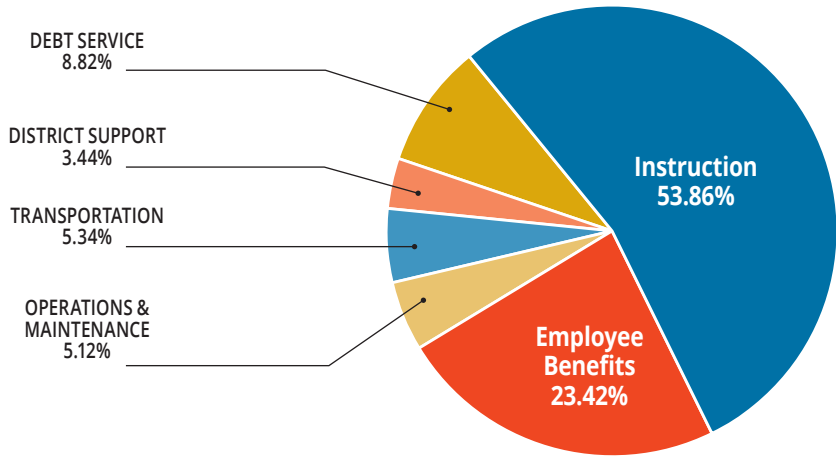
The Capital Budget includes: debt service on buildings, bus purchases, tax certiorari and court-ordered costs, and operations and maintenance costs, including custodial staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

2024-25	\$6,632,599	9.78%
2023-24	\$6,267,483	9.72%

The Administrative Budget includes: the salaries and benefits of all professional staff members who spend 50% or more of their time in administration and supervision. Also included are: clerical staff, public information, curriculum development and supervision, research, planning and evaluation, legal services, and school board-related costs.

SCHOOL SPENDING BREAKDOWN



APPROPRIATIONS SUMMARY

	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Proposed	Dollar Increase/Decrease	% Change 2023-24 to 2024-25
Instruction	\$34,369,500	\$36,529,000	\$2,159,500	6.28%
Employee Benefits	\$15,112,000	\$15,887,000	\$775,000	5.13%
Operations & Maintenance	\$3,294,000	\$3,471,000	\$177,000	5.37%
Transportation	\$3,431,000	\$3,620,000	\$189,000	5.51%
District Support	\$2,228,500	\$2,335,500	\$107,000	4.80%
Debt Service	\$6,035,000	\$5,982,500	-\$52,500	-0.87%
Total	\$64,470,000	\$67,825,000	\$3,355,000	5.20%

REVENUE SUMMARY

	2023-24 Budget	2024-25 Proposed Budget	Dollar Increase/Decrease	% Change 2023-24 to 2024-25
State Aid	\$31,750,000	\$34,255,000	\$2,505,000	7.89%
*Property Tax Levy	\$31,157,240	\$31,815,898	\$658,658	2.11%
Fund Balance Appropriation	\$500,000	\$650,000	\$150,000	30.0%
Reserve Appropriation	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0	0%
BOCES Rental/Services	\$26,250	\$26,250	\$0	0%
Other Revenue	\$536,510	\$577,852	\$41,342	7.71%
Total	\$64,470,000	\$67,825,000	\$3,355,000	5.20%

*Note : Due to payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) payments the overall tax levy will only increase by 1.84%.

A report of tax exemptions, showing how much of the total assessed value on the final assessment roll or rolls used in the budgetary process is exempt from taxation, is included with the budget document, which is available in the district's business office at 2072 Curry Road, Schenectady, NY 12303 and on the district website at www.mohonasen.org.

Budget Q&A:

Q. Can I vote early or by absentee ballot?

A. Absentee ballot voting is available. The new Early Mail Voter Act, effective Jan. 1, 2024, also allows for early voting via mail without any reasons needed for voting early. You must fill out an application to vote early or by 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 518.356.8200.

If you would like a ballot mailed to you, your application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 14, 2024. If you plan to pick up your ballot, your application must be received by 5 p.m. on May 20, 2024. The completed ballot must be received by 5 p.m. on May 21, 2024.

Q. How will this budget affect individual tax bills?

A. The budget proposal includes a 1.84% tax levy increase. The tax levy is the total amount to be collected from all taxpayers; however, this does not mean that individual tax bills will go up by 1.84%. Factors that affect individual tax bills include assessment levels and equalization rates between the towns. Assessments and equalization rates are finalized in the summer and then tax rates are set in August. Based on preliminary information, the district estimates a tax bill increase of approximately \$40 for a home in Rotterdam with a full assessed value of \$150,000 and approximately \$65 for a home in Rotterdam with a full assessed value of \$250,000.

Q. If the district is receiving state aid, why is there still a need for a tax levy increase?

A. Mohonasen's main sources of income are state aid and local school taxes and these combine to pay for programs and services

for Mohonasen students. The state aid increase enables the district to continue to make investments in programs and services, including lowering class sizes, while keeping the tax levy at or below the state cap for the 13th consecutive year.

Q. What happens if voters do not approve the budget on May 21?

A. Under state law, if voters defeat a school budget proposal, districts can either hold another budget vote in June (on the same budget proposal or a revised plan) or adopt a contingent budget. If a second budget vote is not successful, a school district must adopt a contingent budget. Under a contingent budget, there are restrictions in spending in certain areas, including community use of school facilities, and there can be no increase in the tax levy. If a contingent budget were required, the district would need to reduce spending in areas such as staffing. This means that not all of the positions needed to lower class sizes and address learning loss and social and emotional needs would be added.



Board of Education

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BUDGET EDITION NEWSLETTER 2024-2025

For more information about the 2024-2025 proposed budget

A copy of the complete budget proposal is available at the district office at 2072 Curry Road, Schenectady, NY 12303.

Tuesday, May 21

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.
in the Mohonasen High School Gym

VOTER ELIGIBILITY

You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years old or older and a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS AND EARLY VOTING AVAILABLE

Applications for early mail ballots and absentee ballots will be obtainable during school business hours from the District Clerk. Applications will be accepted by the District Clerk beginning April 21, 2024. Completed applications must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election, if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter.

Early mail and absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m., prevailing time, on May 21, 2024.

A list of persons to whom early mail and absentee ballots are issued will be available for inspection to qualified voters of the District in the office of the District Clerk during each of the five days prior to the day of the election, except Saturday and Sunday, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.



Bus Proposition

On May 21, Mohonasen residents will be asked to decide on a proposition to purchase four 70-passenger full-sized buses at a total cost of \$760,000. Of this amount, 79.3% (\$602,680) would be reimbursed through state aid, leaving the district responsible to pay \$157,320, or \$31,464 per year for five years. The purchase of these vehicles would have no impact on next year's budget, and since the district pays off previous bus purchases each year, the net impact to Mohonasen taxpayers will be minimal in 2025-26. Mohonasen follows a regular bus replacement schedule based on mileage, age of vehicles, repair history and condition.

Board candidates featured in future brochure and online

Three of the seven seats on Mohonasen's Board of Education are up for election on May 21. Candidate information will be included in a budget brochure to be mailed out after the Budget Hearing on May 13. Their biographies will also be online at www.mohonasen.org.

The brochure will include the state-required budget notice. Learn more at the Budget Hearing and Meet the Candidates events, starting at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 13, in the Mohonasen High School LGI.