

# Irvington Union Free School District

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL BUDGET

#### WHAT ARE BASIC BUDGET FACTS?

- 2020-21 proposed budget amount: \$64,556,500
- The proposed budget is compliant with the calculated tax levy cap.
- The budget-to-budget increase is 2.5% versus 2.6% last year
- The estimated tax rate \$20.10 per thousand of assessed value, an increase of 3.37%. This is based on a preliminary assessment roll provided by the Town of Greenburgh Assessor.
- Voter approval: for the budget to be authorized it must receive 50+% majority of the votes on Election Day

#### WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE BUDGET INCREASES?

- District legal or contractual obligations such as employee salaries, pensions, health insurance, and BOCES fees
- Unfunded or underfunded state mandates such as transportation, new curriculum standard implementation, guidance counselor requirements, and ELL mandates and special education services

#### WHAT STEPS HAS THE DISTRICT MADE TO CONTAIN COSTS?

- Since 2009, the District has eliminated 34.9 positions: 19.6 teaching positions, 15.3 staff members, 18 High School electives, and some elementary and middle school programs. In recent years, the Board and administration have been successful in restoring these reductions to deliver the highest quality experiences possible.
- In creating the 2020-21 budget, the District analyzed every line of the budget to ensure we are maximizing our budget dollars. In doing so, efficiencies have been realized through supplies and maintenance. Detailed, historical budget information is available on the District website.
- Due to the expectation of receiving less state aid in 2020-21, the push ahead budget was cut by \$370,000 in the following areas:
  - Technology purchases
  - Facility projects
  - Instructional supplies
  - Reduction of 2 bus monitors (routes with lower ridership)

#### WHAT IMPACT WILL THE 2020-21 BUDGET HAVE ON INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE?

There are no instructional programs or staffing cuts in the budget. The only additions in this budget are to add a much needed social worker, assist the district with required security management and expand a few clubs that began this year. The proposed budget also supports on-going buildings and grounds maintenance such as painting, carpet replacement, preventive maintenance, and necessary repairs.

#### WHAT IF THE STATE ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL STATE AID CUTS DURING THE YEAR?

During the May 5th Budget presentation, the administration outlined additional areas that could be considered for reductions in expenses. [Please see the presentation linked here.](#) These areas include Professional Development, Human Resources consulting, athletics busing, technology purchases, more facility projects, the remainder of the bus monitors, the security management addition and possibly teacher and teacher aide positions. If these cuts were necessary, discussion would occur at a board meeting prior to making the cuts. Additionally, the District will utilize surplus from the 19-20 school year to offset revenue shortfalls where possible, potentially reducing the need to make such cuts and to sustain challenges in future years.

#### Has the Irvington School District Tax Base gone up? How does the assessed value affect the tax rate?

Based on the most recent valuation from the Assessor's office, the total assessed valuation increased \$11,768,991 to \$2,911,363,432 or a .4% increase. Since the tax levy increase is 3.77% (fully compliant with the tax cap with capital exclusions), the resulting increase in the tax rate is 3.37%.

### **WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BUDGET?**

The District website has an exclusive page for 2020-21 Budget and Voter Information on our home page and all of the community presentations and budget documents are contained in this link. Alternatively, you can email [budget@irvingtonschools.org](mailto:budget@irvingtonschools.org) if you require assistance in finding information or have questions.

### **HOW DO I REGISTER MY CONCERN WITH MY STATE LEGISLATOR REGARDING UNFUNDED OR UNDERFUNDED STATE MANDATES?**

To voice your opinion about these requirements on the Irvington schools, you may contact:

NY State Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti: [abinantit@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:abinantit@assembly.state.ny.us)

NY Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins: [scousins@nysenate.gov](mailto:scousins@nysenate.gov)

NY State Interim Commissioner of Education Shannon Tahoe: [commissioner@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:commissioner@mail.nysed.gov)

NY Governor Andrew Cuomo: [govcuomo.office@nygovoffice.gov](mailto:govcuomo.office@nygovoffice.gov)

### **DOES MY VOTE MATTER?**

Yes. The budget for the public schools impacts all residents of the Irvington school community. Casting your vote makes your voice heard on the budget, which ultimately relates to the type of programming the District is able to provide our students. Property values are also often affected with school budget vote outcomes. In the challenging times facing all entities during the current pandemic, your vote is more critical than ever.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS NOT PASSED?**

In the event that the budget does not receive the required majority of yes votes on June 9th, State law provides the Board of Education with two options: resubmit the budget to voters without any modifications or present a revised budget. If the budget is not approved on the second attempt, the District MUST operate on a contingency budget. When operating on a contingency budget, the total tax levy must be no greater than the current level and must eliminate certain categories of expenditures, such as equipment. This would require a budget reduction of approximately \$2,100,000. Because there have been state aid and other revenue reductions in this budget, the contingent budget would actually result in a decrease of \$524,163 from the 19-20 Budget. To accomplish this would require severe reductions to programs and services provided district-wide.

### **IF SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED, HOW IS THE VOTE BEING HELD THIS YEAR?**

The budget and school board trustee vote will be held entirely via mail this year. The date is now June 9th. All qualified, registered voters will be mailed a ballot with a postage paid return envelope. All ballots must be received by June 9th to be included in the vote tally.

### **HOW DO I REGISTER TO VOTE, AND CAN I GET AN ABSENTEE BALLOT?**

Residents of the Irvington School District must be registered with **either** the school district or the Westchester County Board of Elections. If you are not registered, you may register online with the Department of Motor Vehicles <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application> by Friday May 29th in order to receive a ballot by mail. You do not need to complete an application for an absentee ballot this year as all ballots will be collected via mail. See question above.

### **WHEN IS THE VOTE AND WHERE CAN I REVIEW A COPY OF THE BUDGET?**

**The Annual School District Budget Vote and Board Member Election is Tuesday, June 9.** This will be conducted entirely through the mail as stated above. The budget and other supporting documents can be viewed on the District website [www.IrvingtonSchools.org](http://www.IrvingtonSchools.org). There are no paper copies of the budget this year. Specific questions can be directed to [budget@IrvingtonSchools.org](mailto:budget@IrvingtonSchools.org).