



APW
2019-2020
Budget Fact Sheet

1. 99.5% of the school districts in New York State who presented budgets under the tax cap passed their budgets.
2. 98.2% of all budgets in New York State passed.
3. The average tax increase among all schools in New York State was 2.39% increase.
4. The Board of Education presented a 1% tax levy increase. At 1% our tax levy increase will not exceed \$60,000. This was always the case and was the number we committed to when we issue the warrant in August. While our presentation in the Rebel Alliance caused unnecessary confusion, our newly worded proposition is intended to clarify our promise “not to exceed \$60,000.”
5. The allowable tax cap at APW for 2019-2020 was 2.9%. The Board elected a 1% increase, not to exceed \$60,000.
6. The 1% tax levy increase proposed for 2019-2020 is only the second time in 11 years where the BOE proposed to raise taxes.
7. Over the past 11 years, the school taxes in our community have been reduced over 30%.
8. Prior to 2008, there was a 5-year period of zero or negative tax increases. In 2008 the school proposed a **+25% school tax levy!** We are now 11 years into a similar trend and are desperately trying to avoid racing back to that 2008 scenario.
9. When contrasting tax levy per \$1000 of home value, homeowners in the APW Central School District pay less today in 2019 than they did in 2008.

2008= \$22.63 per thousand
2019= \$15.03 per thousand

**Homeowners pay \$7.60 cents per thousand less today than in 2008.*

- 10.** The State Comptroller's Office establishes guidelines and makes recommendations on a district's unrestricted fund balance. Prior to the release of their report, APW was already in compliance with under 4% of our reserves in unrestricted fund balance. Restricted fund balance is entirely different and those reserves are only accessible for very specific expenses. Money cannot just simply be removed from restricted funds.
- 11.** The school district has a long history of making long term investments from unrestricted funds in order to limit the tax implications for residents.
- In 2011-2012 \$2,195,799 was paid from fund balance to cover the district's share of expense during the Citi Boces renovation project.
 - In 2012-2013 \$10,220,485 was paid from reserves to fund a portion of a \$30MM school consolidation project.
 - In 2016-2017 \$400,000 was paid from reserves to purchase busses.
 - In 2017-2018 \$2,000,000 was paid from reserves to fund phase 1 of a roofing/ water treatment facility project.
 - In 2018-2019 another \$2,000,000 was paid from reserves to fund phase 2 of a roofing/ water treatment facility project.
 - In 2019 \$1,000,000 was allocated to pay for our school building security project.
 - This year \$729,865 is being used from reserves to reduce our budget gap.

**When you hear people say that we should be using reserves,
please refer to this documented history.*

12. Why are we concerned about our reserves?

In 2018-2019 the district contracted with the Seversky Group to do a fiscal health study. In their investigation they observed that we would likely burn through all of both our restricted and unrestricted reserves in 5 years or less.

13. Why do we have such large reserves to begin with?

When the school district consolidated, we closed 3 community schools. The savings on no longer operating, maintaining, and staffing those buildings was significant. That, coupled with the sale of the buildings, built a very healthy reserve for the district. While much of that has been spent down as outlined above, taxes were also lowered significantly.

*******The fact remains that we have no more schools to close,
and when this money is gone, it is gone forever.

14. When you compare our 2018-2019 budget to our proposed 2019-2020 budget you will see a difference of \$44,663.

$$\mathbf{\$32,854,385 - \$32,809,723 = \$44,663}$$

On a nearly \$33 million dollar budget this is a huge accomplishment.

***Inflation alone last year totaled almost \$1.8 Million dollars for our district and the fact that you don't see that increase represented in the 2019-2020 budget reveals the amount of money we have already been forced to cut.

***Next year we estimate that it will be nearly \$2.2 Million dollars more expensive to run the identical program.

15. State aid comprises the largest portion of our revenue. Each year that number declines as our enrollment declines which again leaves us with less revenue.

16. *Do we need to reduce our overall budget?*

Yes we do. The Board of Education is committed to doing that work in the most humane and least impactful manner to our students and their educational experience. The board also recognizes that as we lose the people who provide the services to our kids, the experience of our students is diminished. Last year we lost a number of positions mostly from the JSHS and we continue to reduce by attrition (retirements). Prior to this we collapsed class sections at each grade in the elementary school and abolished multiple positions including classroom teachers, administrators, instructional coaches and support staff.

As our enrollment continues to decline we will constantly need to be sure that we right size our district while preserving services, opportunities, and a high quality educational experience for all of our students.

17. *What is at stake?*

If our budget is voted down a second time we go immediately to a contingency budget. A contingency budget limits a school district's discretion on how money is spent.

******Our contingency budget calls for nearly \$500,000 to be cut from the 2019-2020 budget. There is no way to accomplish this without significant negative impact to our students and the people and programs here to support them. Personnel is our largest budget line and while we work to avoid reductions, a contingency budget will necessitate significant cuts.***

18. Why go out at 1% again instead of going straight to contingency?

Hopefully in clarifying the Board of Education's reasoning and correcting the misinformation circulating on social media, while also sharing with our community what is at stake for our kids, the voters will support a student focused plan that will allow us to ensure the financial security and success of our schools.

Please share these facts with people in the community and encourage residents to use the school district as the source of reliable information.