



## 2017-18 proposed budget goes before residents on May 16

On Tuesday, May 16, residents of the Fort Plain Central School District will vote on a proposed \$19,890,000 budget for the 2017-18 school year. The Board of Education adopted the budget proposal on Wednesday, April 12.

The proposed budget carries a 2.00 percent spending increase with a tax levy increase of 1.95 percent, which is below the District's calculated allowable tax levy "cap" of 6.26 percent. A simple majority of voters (more than 50 percent) is required for budget approval.

"The priorities identified by the Board of Education continue to guide budget development in the FPCSD," said Dr. David Ziskin, Superintendent of Schools.

*Fort Plain Central School District priorities that guide budget decisions.*



"A long-term commitment to clearly defined priorities ensures our resource decisions are purposeful and grounded in what we believe will best serve the interests of Fort Plain students and taxpayers. The 2017-18 Fort Plain School District Budget directs resources to our greatest areas of need while again remaining within the allowable tax cap for our District."

### State aid and local revenue

State Aid makes up over 66 percent, or \$13,224,994, of the school district's total budget.

State aid projections include an increase of 2.57 percent in overall aid. While this increased support is welcome, a decrease in local revenue due to the expiration of a 10-year Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) program lessens the positive impact the aid increase could have had on the tax levy. The total tax levy required will increase by 1.95 percent to \$5,580,146 which will be funded through a combination of STAR revenue and local taxes. The appropriation of \$780,000 of fund balance (3.92 percent of the total appropriations) completes the budget.

### Resources directed to identified priority areas

The Board, administrators, and faculty teams at the Junior-Senior High School and Harry Hoag Elementary continue to identify opportunities for improvement and to implement corresponding action plans within each of the priority areas. Highlights of areas supported in the 2017-18 proposed budget include:

#### *Safety and student social and emotional developmental health*

The faculty and staff in the FPCSD have received research-based training designed to create trauma-sensitive environments for students who have been affected by adverse childhood experiences. In 2017-18 efforts will continue to ensure that all students are supported in ways that enhance their potential to learn.

At Harry Hoag, a Student Behavior Intervention Team gathers data and identifies strategic interventions for students struggling with various aspects of the school environment. A key component for this team has been the addition of a Behavior Specialist who supports students and teachers with strategies that correct and prevent behaviors that can disrupt learning.

The Junior-Senior High School also has a team of professional staff, the Child Study Team (CST), which regularly discusses students

### BUDGET VOTE

May 16, 2017

1 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Harry Hoag Elementary  
Gymnasium

### VOTER ELIGIBILITY

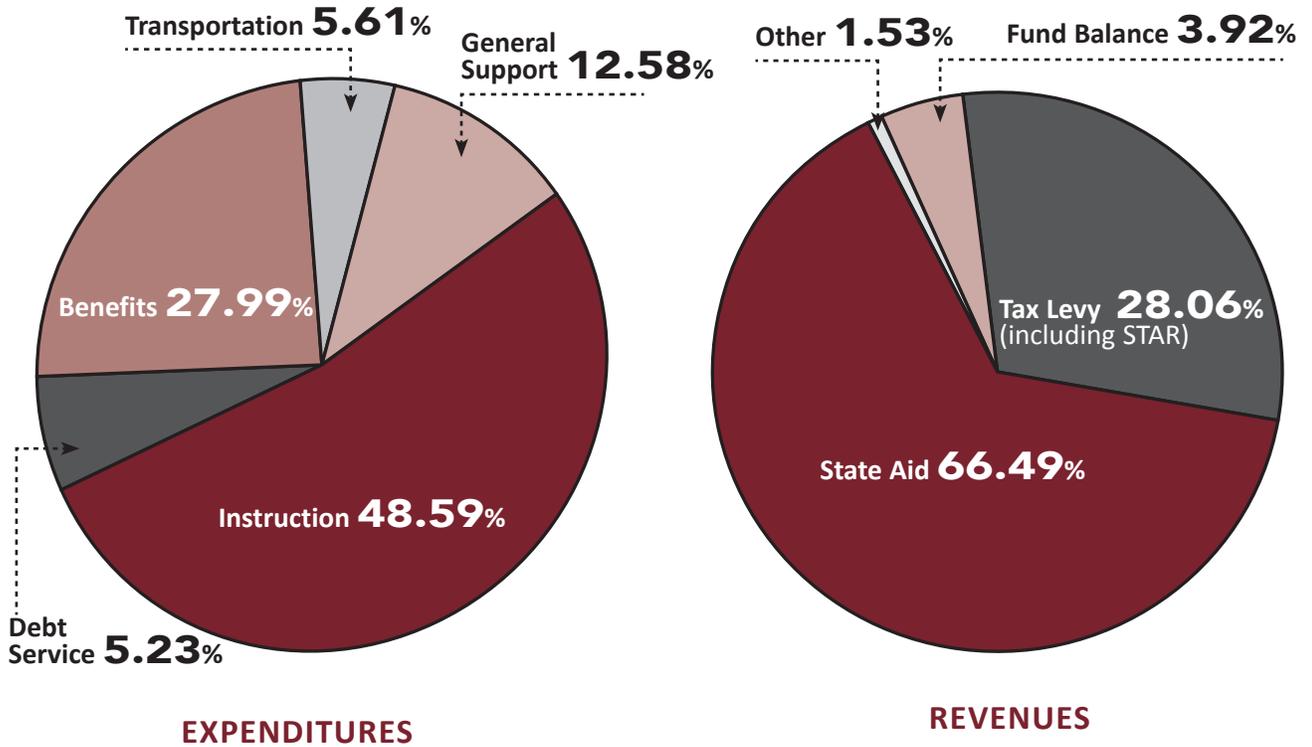
- U.S. citizen
- School district resident for at least 30 days
- 18 years of age by May 10, 2017

### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Voters who are unable to make it to the polls on school budget vote day and meet eligibility requirements may cast their votes by absentee ballot. An application must be completed and received by the district clerk at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter. For applications or more information, contact the district office at 993-4000.



## 2017-18 Budget at a Glance



### EXPENDITURES

	2016-17 Budget	2017-18 Proposed Budget	Percent Change
General Support	\$2,365,076	\$2,502,683	5.82%
Instruction	9,248,079	9,663,593	4.49%
Pupil Transportation	1,042,218	1,115,955	7.08%
Employee Benefits	5,804,627	5,567,769	-4.08%
Debt Service & Related Transfers	1,040,000	1,040,000	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$19,500,000</b>	<b>\$19,890,000</b>	<b>2.00%</b>

### REVENUES

	2016-17 Budget	2017-18 Proposed Budget	Percent Change
State Aid	\$12,893,986	\$13,224,994	2.57%
Property Tax Levy (including STAR)	5,473,489	5,580,146	1.95%
Fund Balance	780,000	780,000	0%
Other	352,525	304,860	-13.52%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$19,500,000</b>	<b>\$19,890,000</b>	<b>2.00%</b>



## Budget proposal continued...

who may require supportive interventions. One new option for support available to this team is an Academic Coaching Center (ACC), where the focus is to provide time and space for students who may need extra support to ensure they are progressing toward graduation. Students who present risk factors are referred by the CST to receive academic coaching from a certified teaching assistant. A personalized approach is taken to assist students in coping with factors that may pose barriers to success in school. "The ACC is a safe place for students who otherwise may have dropped out or not graduated," explains teaching assistant Denise Smith.

### *Curriculum development and support*

2017-18 will mark Harry Hoag Elementary School's third year of instructional coaching with Dr. Cheryl Dozier, a University at Albany professor with childhood literacy expertise. Dr. Dozier works with grade-level teams and models instructional strategies to support consistent implementation of research-based literacy strategies throughout the school.

Department leaders at the Junior-Senior High School will continue to facilitate the creation of curriculum blueprints and assessment development in 2017-18. Also, the high school planning team is in the process of designing two new pathways to graduation. A pathway is a themed-based approach that includes in the attainment of post-secondary credits or an industry certification in addition to high school graduation. In Fort Plain, two pathways that will integrate career education into core academics are in the planning stages. The first will be Engineering Technology, which utilizes the Engineering by Design curriculum, the second will be connected to Business Management.

### *Family and community engagement*

The Board has targeted building trust and communication with parents as areas for emphasis over the past two years. Information is made available to parents, students, and the community through various forms of print and electronic communication including newsletters, the District Facebook page, the Remind text service, and the District website which is being redesigned and is scheduled to launch in the summer of 2017.

### *Fiscal Resources*

"The Board and administration are committed to providing a strong education to our students in a fiscally responsible manner," said Dr. Ziskin. "The tax levy increase proposed is again below 2 percent. In fact, the actual tax levy is still less than it was five years ago for



the 2012-13 school-year."

As student and instructional needs were assessed it became apparent that staffing adjustments would be necessary. Due to an influx of students requiring special education support entering kindergarten, an elementary special education teacher will be added. A speech pathologist will also be added to account for an increased need for services. These additions are being offset by the elimination of two teaching positions in other areas and a reduction in contracted speech services.

### **Other items on the ballot**

A second proposal on the May 16 ballot will ask residents to vote on the use of \$270,000 from the district's Bus Purchase Reserve Fund for the purchase of new school vehicles. Expenditures of reserve funds require voter approval; however, since 100 percent of the cost is paid from the fund, there will be no impact on the tax levy.

In addition to voting on the budget, residents will be asked to elect three members of the Board of Education to a three year term commencing on July 1, 2017 and expiring on June 30, 2020 to succeed Todd McFee, Jeffrey L. Jones, and David Przestrzelski whose terms expire on June 30, 2017.

Qualified residents of the Fort Plain Central School District will vote on the proposed budget Tuesday, May 16, 2017. Polls will be open 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Harry Hoag gymnasium. Additional information about voting is available on the district website, [www.fortplain.org](http://www.fortplain.org).

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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**Fort Plain Central School**

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## What will you see on the ballot?

### Proposition 1:

To adopt the annual budget of the School District for the fiscal year 2017-2018 and to authorize the requisite portion thereof to be raised by taxation on the taxable property of the District.

### Proposition 2:

Authorization to Purchase Buses: Shall the Board of Education of the Fort Plain Central School District be authorized to: (a) acquire school vehicles at a maximum aggregate cost of \$270,000.00; (b) expend such sums for such purpose; (c) expend from the Bus Purchase Reserve Fund an amount not to exceed \$270,000.00 for such purpose; (d) levy the necessary tax therefore, to be levied and collected in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education taking into account state aid received and amounts disbursed from the reserve fund; and (e) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, to issue bonds and notes of the District at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed \$270,000, and to levy a tax to pay the interest on such obligations when due?

*Voters will also be asked to elect three (3) members of the Board of Education to a three (3) year term commencing on July 1, 2017 and expiring on June 30, 2020 to succeed Todd McFee, Jeffrey L. Jones, and David Przestrzelski whose terms expire on June 30, 2017.*

### BUDGET VOTE

**May 16, 2017**

1 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Harry Hoag Elementary  
Gymnasium

### PUBLIC HEARING

**May 3, 2017**

7 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School Auditorium



## Return on investment

*Fort Plain High School has carried an 88 percent graduation rate over the past two years - the highest in Montgomery County in 2015 and the second highest in 2016.*

*The Jr./Sr. High School received the designation of Silver Medal School from US News and World Report, which is based on performance on state-required tests and on how well students are prepared for college upon graduation.*