



# It's Elementary

VALLEY STREAM UFSD THIRTEEN

SPECIAL 2015-2016 BUDGET ISSUE

## CONTINUING ALL PROGRAMS *Staying Within the Tax Levy Cap Again*

### A MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT

Dear Residents,

Following several months of analysis, planning and collaboration, the Board of Education and District administrators have developed a budget for the 2015-16 school year that once again remains within the New York State-imposed tax levy cap, supports our existing programs and provides a quality education to all of our children. Throughout the budget development process, the Board, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Adrienne Robb-Fund and administrators worked with staff, parents and our budget ambassadors.

We strongly believe in the importance of educating the whole child to ensure they have the skills needed to be successful in the future. The proposed budget maintains the District's rigorous academic curriculum, which is aligned with the New York State Common Core Learning Standards, our STEM initiatives, outstanding music and fine arts programs, and our clubs and after-school activities designed to meet students' interests. Additionally, the 2015-16 budget addresses technology and school security upgrades.

The proposed budget requires a simple majority approval of 50 percent plus one since it does not exceed the state-mandated tax levy cap. We believe the proposed budget demonstrates the Board's commitment



to our taxpayers to be fiscally responsible while ensuring our children continue to receive a high-quality education. We encourage all residents to review the budget information included in this newsletter and remember to vote on Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

Sincerely,  
Joseph DiSibio  
Board of Education President



**REMEMBER TO VOTE**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015 • 6 A.M. - 9 P.M.**



# ACHIEVING SUCCESS THROUGH TEAMWORK

## BUILDING UPON A RICH HISTORY OF SUCCESS

### PARENT/COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

- Parents as Reading Partners
- Parent Workshops
- Family Literacy and Math Events
- Strategic Planning Committee
- Partnerships with Local Colleges
- Intergenerational Reading Partners
- District Volleyball Tournament
- Empire State Games for the Physically Challenged
- Wellness Nights
- Shared Decision Making
- Pride Committees
- Emergency Phone and Text Alert System
- Parent Portal
- Email Notification System
- Parent Education Programs
- Summer Recreation Programs

### RICH & DIVERSE CURRICULUM

- Implementation of Common Core Learning Standards
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
- Differentiation of Instruction
- Focus on 21st Century Skills
- Gifted and Talented Program
- Research-Based and Evidence-Proven Support Programs
  - Read 180
  - Waterford Reading
  - Wilson Reading Program
  - Junior Great Books
  - Leveled Literacy Intervention
- Outstanding Musicians and Artists
- Comprehensive Science Program
- Wide Range of Special Education Services and Programs
- Academic Intervention Services
- Bilingual Social Work Services
- Ongoing Professional Development and Mentoring
- Training Opportunities for Support Staff

### INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- SMART Tables
- Student Response Systems
- Video Streaming
- Video Conferences
- iPods
- Online Resources – Encyclopedias and Databases
- E-Books
- Comprehensive District Website
- Online Research Tools and Resources

## DEFINING A HIGH-VALUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

A high-value school district can be identified in a number of ways. Below are some of the qualities that define Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen as a high-value school district:

- **Curriculum aligned with New York State Common Core Learning Standards**
- **Technology-integrated instruction**
- **Safe and secure environment conducive to student success**
- **Outstanding art, music and physical education programs**
- **Districtwide health and wellness program**
- **Ongoing character education and anti-bullying programs**
- **Student, faculty, parent and community partnerships**
- **Formidable financial oversight**

## Important Information...

There is one Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen proposition for voter consideration:

**Proposition No. 1:** The District is presenting a proposed budget that represents a 2.52 percent increase over last year's budget. The tax levy associated with this budget adheres to the new tax levy limit.

### Driving Forces Behind the Budget

- *Preserve high-quality instructional programs.*
- *Preserve all music and fine arts programs.*
- *Maintain all clubs and after-school activities.*
- *Continue ongoing maintenance of facilities.*
- *Fund New York State mandates.*
- *Support STEM program.*



### Important Transportation Information

The current yellow bus transportation policy for eligible students in grades K-6 attending the four elementary schools in Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen will remain in place for the 2015-2016 school year. Kindergarten through third-grade students residing one-half mile or greater and fourth- through sixth-grade students residing one mile or greater from the school they attend will still be provided yellow school bus transportation.

## *Cost-Saving Initiatives*

- **Energy Performance Contract** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen has completed a \$5.5 million energy performance project. Energy efficiency measures installed as part of this project included replacement of all 11 original boilers, lighting upgrades, computerization of heating and lighting controls, and natural gas service upgrades. The 2015-2016 budget reflects an overall energy savings of more than \$300,000.
- **Joint Collective Bargaining** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is engaged in joint collective bargaining through a coalition with other Valley Stream districts.
- **Local Government Efficiencies** – Through Nassau BOCES, Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen received a local government efficiency grant to explore opportunities for shared services. The District executed an intermunicipal agreement with the Village of Valley Stream for the purchase of gasoline.
- **Contract Services** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen uses an RFP (Request for Proposal) process to seek service providers and annually participates with Districts 24 and 30 in soliciting special education services through an RFP.
- **Technology Infrastructure** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is interconnected with Valley Stream districts for cooperative projects.
- **Transportation** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is a founding member of the Southwest Quadrant Transportation Cooperative for private and parochial schools, which allows for the sharing of yellow school bus service for all private and parochial school students within the district's transportation guidelines.
- **Food Services** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen participates with District 30 and the Central High School District in a cooperative food service program. The cooperative is able to take advantage of reduced food costs and shared administrative expenses, including clerical, accounting and auditing costs.
- **Insurance – Workers' Compensation** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is one of the charter members of the Nassau County School Cooperative Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Plan. The District's assistant superintendent for business has served as president of the cooperative for the past 14 years. The District has realized more than \$600,000 in premium savings versus the least expensive alternative – insuring through New York Safety Group 491. **Other Insurance** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is also a founding member of the New York State Insurance Reciprocal, a consortium of school districts throughout the state. The reciprocal is run by school districts, for the benefit of school districts, providing coverages tailored to district needs at competitive rates.
- **Residency** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen cooperates with District 24 and the Central High School District in the provision of residency advisory services, including the employment of a full-time residency officer. This cooperative arrangement reduces clerical and investigative costs.
- **Equipment and Supplies** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen participates in cooperative bidding, BOCES, New York State contracts and intermunicipal agreements for the purchase of equipment and supplies.
- **Professional Development and Technology Services** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen joins with other school districts to share consultant expenses.
- **BOCES Services** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen joins with other Nassau County school districts to share services, such as special education, textbooks, health and safety support, and technology.

# A DETAILED LOOK AT PROPOSED 2015-2016 BUDGET

## INSTRUCTION – 60.68% of Budget

	2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
Teaching-Regular School	\$14,818,515	\$15,410,353
Special Education	6,611,313	6,944,399
Curriculum Development	375,509	401,050
Supervision	1,267,636	1,317,223
Research & Development	4,250	4,250
Reading	1,509,937	1,555,235
Preschool	5,750	5,780
Gifted & Talented	125,553	129,218
Library	571,199	587,047
Computer-Assisted Instruction	728,557	735,726
Student Management System	59,359	61,550
Health Services	437,562	467,024
Psychological Services	625,033	643,589
Social Worker	195,624	236,481
<b>Total Instruction</b>	<b>\$27,335,797</b>	<b>\$28,498,925</b>
<b>% Change</b>		<b>4.25%</b>

## DISTRICT SUPPORT – 4.16% of Budget

Board of Education
District Clerk
District Meeting
Central Administration
Business Administration
Auditing
Treasurer
Legal Services
Personnel
Records Management
Public Information
Central Mailing
Central Data Processing
Insurance
School Dues
BOCES Administration
Refund of Property Taxes
<b>Total District Support</b>
<b>% Change</b>

## TRANSPORTATION – 4.47% of Budget

	2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
Transportation	\$97,650	\$99,995
Contracted Transportation	1,936,798	1,997,350
<b>Total Transportation</b>	<b>\$2,034,448</b>	<b>\$2,097,345</b>
<b>% Change</b>		<b>3.09%</b>

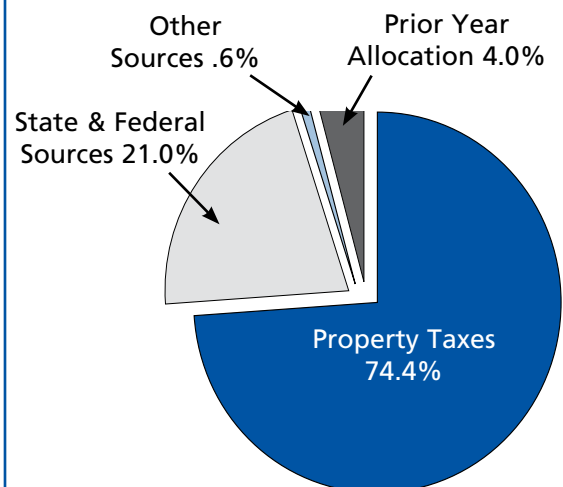
## OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE - 4.77%

Operations
Maintenance
<b>Total Operations and Maintenance</b>
<b>% Change</b>

## SUMMARY OF 2015-2016 REVENUE

	2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
State and Federal Aid	\$9,572,791	\$9,863,487
Fund Balance Appropriations	1,875,000	1,875,000
Interest Earnings/Building Use	52,000	52,000
Summer Recreation	103,000	103,000
Tuition Other Districts	65,000	65,000
Refund of Prior Year Expenditures	15,000	15,000
Misc. Revenue	12,500	12,500
Property Tax Levy	34,100,613	34,963,678
PILOT Payments	16,071	17,026
<b>Revenue for Budget</b>	<b>\$45,811,975</b>	<b>\$46,966,691</b>

## PROPOSED BUDGET SOURCES OF REVENUE BY PERCENT



# PROPOSED BUDGET EXPENDITURES

## BUDGET - \$46,966,691

2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
\$22,700	\$22,700
9,975	10,283
23,400	34,050
322,312	351,157
494,941	508,846
91,000	91,000
12,200	12,560
169,000	223,400
16,700	18,200
10,900	10,900
75,500	78,000
12,900	13,050
35,000	35,000
272,930	257,650
11,955	12,130
272,935	275,935
0	0
<b>\$1,854,348</b>	<b>\$1,954,861</b>
	5.42%

% of Budget	Proposed 2015-2016
2014-2015	2015-2016
\$1,548,842	\$1,603,009
594,795	637,043
<b>\$2,143,637</b>	<b>\$2,240,052</b>
	4.50%

### DEBT SERVICE/TRANSFERS – 2.60% of Budget

2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
Construction	\$588,600
Interfund Transfer	80,000
TAN & Energy Performance Contract	492,649
<b>Total Debt Service/Transfers</b>	<b>\$1,161,249</b>
% Change	5.22%

### EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – 23.10% of Budget

*Government Mandated	2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
Health Insurance	\$4,073,052	\$4,489,380
Teachers' Retirement*	4,154,785	3,274,785
Employees' Retirement*	701,850	750,000
Social Security (FICA)*	1,939,409	2,026,682
Workers' Compensation*	215,000	212,000
Unemployment*	91,500	91,500
Life Insurance	1,500	1,500
Disability Insurance	2,400	2,400
<b>Total Employee Benefits</b>	<b>\$11,179,496</b>	<b>\$10,848,247</b>
% Change		-2.96%

### SUMMER RECREATION – 0.22% of Budget

2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016
Summer Recreation	\$103,000
<b>Total Summer Recreation</b>	<b>\$103,000</b>
% Change	2.33%

## TAX IMPACT ON THE AVERAGE HOMEOWNER

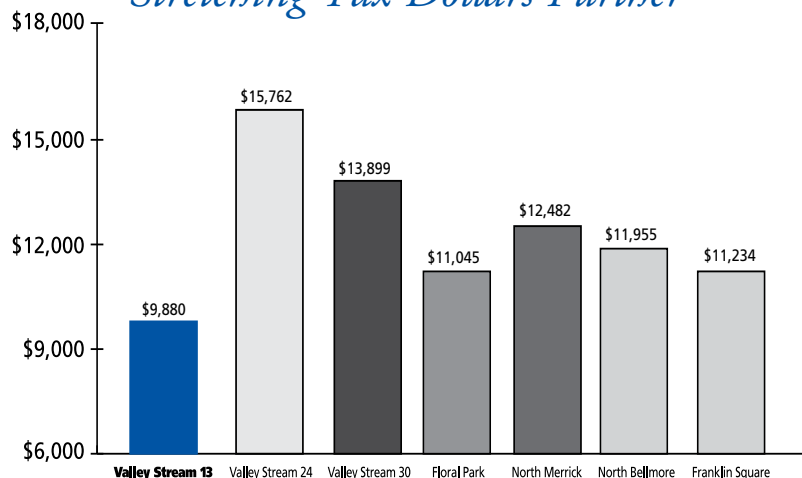
	2014-2015	Proposed 2015-2016	% Change
Elementary District	\$3,457.06	\$3,544.52	2.53%
High School District	\$3,367.47	\$3,366.89	-0.02%
Combined Tax	\$6,824.53	\$6,911.41	1.27%

According to the Nassau County Department of Assessment, the average home in Valley Stream UFSD thirteen has a market value of \$323,702.

**The Elementary School Tax will increase \$87.46 per year, or 24¢ per day!**

## Comparing Per Pupil Expenditures

*Stretching Tax Dollars Further*



Source: New York State Education Department (2013-2014)

## WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED TOTAL REVENUE FOR 2015-2016?

Based on current projections, Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen's estimated 2015-2016 revenues are broken down in the following manner:

State and federal aid . . . . . \$9,863,487  
 Other revenues . . . . . \$264,526  
 Carryover from previous year . . . . \$1,875,000

**TOTAL . . . . . \$12,003,013**

The remaining funds of \$34,963,678 that are needed to support the budget will be obtained through the set tax levy.

## WHAT IS REVENUE?

The District receives revenue from four sources:

- State aid
- Other miscellaneous sources, including interest earnings and grants
- Carryover from prior year's operations
- Tax levy (remaining monies needed to support the budget)

## USING RESERVES...

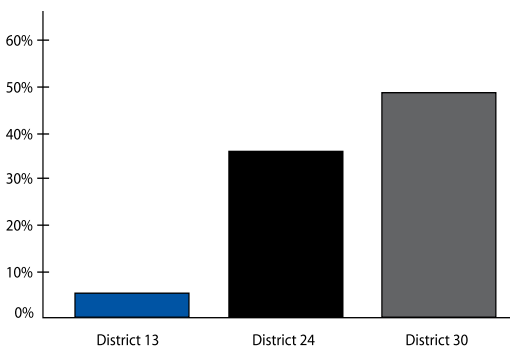
At the end of any fiscal year, districts have funds that were budgeted but not fully expended or revenues somewhat in excess of those planned. After returning significant portions of those funds to the taxpayers in

the ensuing fiscal year, the Board of Education places any additional funds in reserve accounts. These reserves serve to protect the District against unanticipated needs and/or a severe economic downturn, such as the one we recently experienced. Part of the proposed 2015-2016 budget uses these reserve accounts and thereby reduces the tax levy. As the state's fiscal difficulties begin to ease, the Board anticipates continuing to utilize these funds in the upcoming years in order to control increases in property taxes and maintain the district's excellent academic and fine arts programs. For the 2015-2016 proposed budget, the Board of Education has authorized the use of \$1,875,000 in fund balance plus additional reserve funds.

### What is a tax levy?

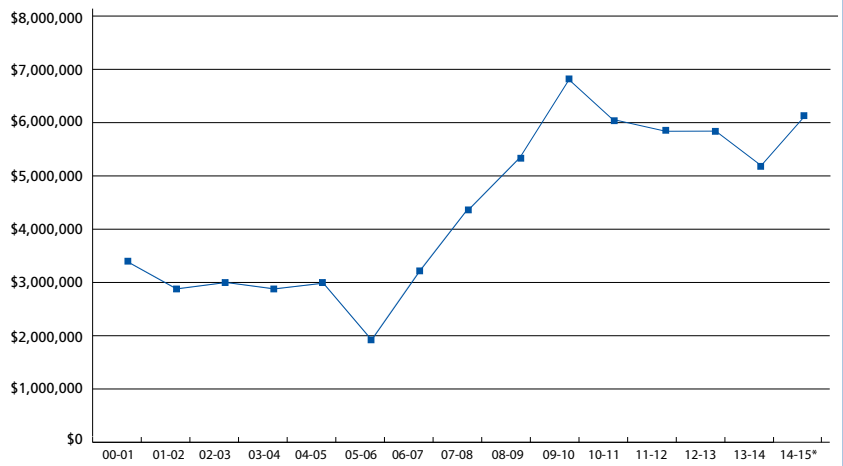
The tax levy is the amount of money determined by the Board of Education that needs to be raised in property taxes in order to balance the school budget. The District takes the total school budget and subtracts estimated revenues such as state aid, tuitions and fees. The remaining amount is what needs to be raised in property taxes.

### PORTION OF TAX LEVY PAID BY COMMERCIAL PROPERTY OWNERS \*



\*Percentages based on current adjusted base proportion.

### VALLEY STREAM UFSD THIRTEEN RESERVE FUNDS 2000 THROUGH 2015 (ESTIMATED \*)



# Questions & Answers

**Q: What is a school budget?**

A: A school district's annual budget is the best estimate made by the Board of Education and the administrators of the funds needed to support a quality educational program for the upcoming school year.

**Q: Does this budget include services for residents who do not have children in public schools?**

A: Yes, as required by law, Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen offers yellow school bus transportation, textbooks and special services such as speech and school health for all public and private school students. The District also makes its facilities available to community groups and organizations.

**Q: Will transportation for students be preserved under the proposed budget?**

A: Yes, all Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen students who are eligible under the District's current transportation guidelines will continue to receive yellow school bus transportation. Kindergarten through third-grade students residing one-half mile or greater and fourth- through sixth-grade students residing one mile or greater from the school they attend will still be provided transportation.

**Q: What percentage of the budget represents administrative costs and what are some of these costs?**

A: Administrative costs account for 10.5 percent of the total 2015-2016 proposed budget. These costs include the operation of the District office, curriculum development and instructional administration, operation of the principals' offices, auditing, the District treasurer, legal expenses, public information and insurance. As with all areas of the budget, the District continually monitors these expenses to ensure that tax dollars are spent in the most efficient manner possible.

**Q: What happens if the budget fails on May 19?**

A: If the budget is defeated on May 19, state law allows the District to present either the same budget or a revised budget, which would include program cuts, for one more vote. The cost of a second budget vote is approximately \$27,000. If a second proposed budget is defeated, the District must, by law, adopt a contingency budget.

**Q: What is a contingency budget?**

A: A contingency budget is the maximum amount authorized by law that a district can impose on the community if the school budget is voted down. New York State now mandates a limit on the tax levy associated with a contingency budget. Under a contingency budget, \$863,065 would need to be removed in order to comply with New York State law.

**Q: What are the restrictions under a contingency budget?**

A: In addition to expenditure caps, the state imposes controls on certain district expenditures, including the elimination of all capital projects and severe restrictions on the use of school facilities by community members. The Board of Education may choose to make reductions or eliminate programs, which



could include the summer recreation program, the use of buildings and fields by outside groups, instrumental music and extracurricular activities. Class size may also increase.

**Q: Does the District seek alternative funding sources?**

A: Yes. District personnel seek opportunities to secure funding from both public and private sources. The Grants Committee investigates funding opportunities offered by corporations and other private sector organizations. In cooperation with local legislators, the District seeks funding through special legislative grants for such projects as playground improvements and science and technology equipment.

**Q: Where can I get more information?**

A: Detailed copies of the proposed 2015-2016 Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen budget are available in the District Office at 585 North Corona Avenue. Reference copies are available for inspection at all District schools. Budget information is also available on the District's website at [www.valleystream13.com](http://www.valleystream13.com). In addition to obtaining information on the proposed budget from the sources listed above, the community can also stay informed by speaking with one of the District's Budget Ambassadors. To find out who your local Budget Ambassador is, please ask your school principal, look for the Budget Ambassador's identifying button, or locate their names on the school's front door or on the District's website.



**2015-2016  
Budget Information**

**District Budget &  
Trustee Vote  
May 19, 2015  
6 a.m. - 9 p.m.**

**Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen**

585 North Corona Avenue  
Valley Stream, New York 11580-2099  
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**REMEMBER TO VOTE**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015 • 6 A.M. - 9 P.M.**



**EVERY VOTE COUNTS!**  
**REMEMBER TO REGISTER AND VOTE**

**Last Day to Register to Vote -  
Tuesday, May 12, 2015  
at Each School Building**

**BUDGET VOTE  
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015  
6 a.m. - 9 p.m.**

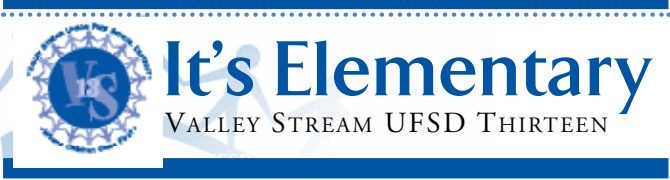
**Voting will be in the District Thirteen school election district in which you live. This is usually in the public school your child or your neighbor's child attends.**

**NEED AN ABSENTEE BALLOT?**

District residents who will be unavailable for the annual budget vote and election on Tuesday, May 19 may obtain absentee ballots. Applications for ballots may be obtained at the office of the District Clerk and on the District's website at [www.valleystream13.com](http://www.valleystream13.com). All ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

**VOTER REQUIREMENTS**

- In order to qualify to vote in the upcoming budget vote and trustee election:
- You must be a U.S. citizen.
  - You must be 18 years of age or older.
  - You must be a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.
  - You must have registered to vote in the general elections or have voted in a school election within the last four years (between 2011-2014).



**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
Joseph DiSibio, President    Antoinette Pomerantz, Vice President  
Sean Douglas, Ph.D.    Jeanne Greco Jacobs    Frank Chiachiere, Ph.D.  
William P. Stris    Patricia Farrell  
Adrienne Robb-Fund, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools