

It's Elementary



VALLEY STREAM DISTRICT THIRTEEN NEWSLETTER

District Proposes 1.6% Budget Increase

A Message from YOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT

Dear Residents,

While every budget development process holds its challenges, this year I would like to ask you to pay special attention to the 2012-2013 school budget. As you have heard me say many times this year, beginning with our Education Planning Day back in November, recent New York State legislation, the New York State Tax Levy Limit, has challenged school districts to continue offering the types of services our children need and our parents and community expect while limiting our ability to fund those programs. The Board of Education directed the administrators to nonetheless present the Board with a budget that maintains class sizes, programmatic offerings, music and art and to do so UNDER the Tax Levy Limit. I am pleased to write to you today and tell you that the District is presenting a budget with a 1.6 percent increase over last year's budget that is under our District's tax levy limit. A number of things had to happen in order to bring this about, not the least of which was a new Collective Bargaining Agreement with our Teachers' Association as well as most other employee bargaining groups calling for a hard freeze in



salaries for the upcoming school year. Our Teachers' Association, our largest bargaining unit, agreed to a zero increase in salary and forfeiture of step, two things which went a long way toward enabling the District to meet the Tax Levy Limit. Nevertheless, please be aware that this year's budget will require a 60 percent supermajority affirmative vote since the budget is being presented together with an additional proposition on transportation, introduced by a group of residents within the community. If Proposition No 2 is approved this would result in an overall tax levy that exceeds the District's Tax Levy Limit.

Greater detail about the proposed budget can be found in the pages of this publication. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with its contents so that you can become a more informed voter as you cast your ballot on May 15, 2012, at your neighborhood elementary school. Should you have any questions about the information enclosed or the proposed budget, please contact the District's Business Office at 568-6110.

Thank you again for your past support of our school district and our students. All residents are encouraged to vote on Tuesday, May 15, 2012.

Sincerely,

Frank Chiachiere, Ph.D.
Board of Education President



REMEMBER TO VOTE

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2012 • 6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS THROUGH TEAMWORK

BUILDING UPON A RICH HISTORY OF SUCCESS

PARENT/COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS

- PARP
- Intergenerational Reading Partners
- District Volleyball Tournament
- Empire State Games for the Physically Challenged
- Wellness Nights
- Shared Decision Making
- Pride Committees
- One-Call Information System
- Parent Portal
- Email Notification System
- Parent Education Programs



RICH & DIVERSE CURRICULUM

- Professional Learning Communities
- Curriculum Focus Groups
- Training Opportunities for Support Staff
- Differentiation of Instruction
- Focus on 21st Century Skills
- Early Intervention/Response to Intervention
- Gifted and Talented Program
- Students Meet/Exceed State Performance Standards
- Comprehensive Science Program
- Outstanding Musicians and Artists
- Faculty Members Share Best Practices
- Wide Range of Special Education Services and Programs
- Researched-Based and Evidence-Proven Support Programs
 - Read 180
 - Waterford Reading
 - Wilson Reading Program
 - Foundations
- Bilingual Social Work Services
- Implementation of Common Core Learning Standards

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- SMART Tables
- Interactive White Boards
- Student Response Systems
- Video Streaming
- Videoconferences
- iPods
- Online Resources
- E-Books
- Informative District Website
- Online Research Tools

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 exceeding New York State Standards and aligned with Common Core Learning Standards**
- **Environment conducive to success**
- **Outstanding Art, Music, and Physical Education Programs**
- **Districtwide Health & Wellness Program**
- **Student, faculty, parent, and community partnerships**
- **Technology-integrated instruction**
- **Formidable financial oversight**





Important Information...

There are two propositions for voter consideration:

Proposition No.1: The District is presenting a proposed budget that represents a 1.6% increase over last year's budget. The tax levy associated with this budget is under the new tax levy limit.

Proposition No. 2: This requires a separate vote requesting an increase in transportation eligibility. If Proposition No. 2 were to be approved, the associated cost estimated at \$296,059 would be added to the proposed budget which would then exceed the tax levy limit.

Therefore, a 60% supermajority is required to pass either proposition.

Negotiations Update

Most of the District's bargaining units have newly settled contracts extending to June 2014. Recognizing the current fiscal constraints and the slow economic recovery, almost all of these contracts incorporate no salary increase in 2012-2013 and greatly reduced or delayed increases for 2013-2014.

Cost Saving Initiatives

- **Transportation** – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is a founding member of the Southwest Quadrant Transportation Cooperative. When some member districts were contemplating withdrawing from this cooperative because of state restrictions, Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen took the lead in strongly urging members to continue this important cost-saving relationship. The state regulation was later eased.
- **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.
- **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 Assistant Superintendent for Business has served as President of the Cooperative for the past 12 years. The District has realized over \$600,000 in premium savings versus the least expensive alternative - insuring through New York Safety Group 491.
Other Insurance – Valley Stream UFSD Thirteen is 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 inter-municipal 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 BUDGET EXPENDITURES

2012-2013 BUDGET - \$43,217,705

INSTRUCTION – 62.5% of Budget

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Teaching - Regular School	\$14,644,439	\$14,749,626
Special Education	5,763,447	6,386,407
Curriculum Development	354,915	427,302
Supervision	1,248,466	1,292,311
Research & Development	4,250	4,250
Reading	1,438,267	1,454,573
Preschool	5,750	5,750
Gifted & Talented	123,611	121,396
Library	558,348	560,521
Computer-Assisted Instruction	744,630	764,081
Student Management System	53,150	56,500
Health Services	440,627	540,737
Psychological Services	529,803	436,472
Social Worker	184,095	188,717
Total Instruction	\$26,093,798	\$26,988,643
% Change		3.4%

DISTRICT SUPPORT – 4.1% of Budget

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Board of Education	\$13,900	\$13,900
District Clerk	9,700	9,850
District Meeting	21,900	21,900
Central Administration	369,982	329,023
Business Administration	483,557	501,459
Auditing	97,000	91,000
Treasurer	12,200	12,200
Legal Services	137,000	137,000
Personnel	10,200	17,700
Records Management	8,500	9,500
Public Information	75,500	75,500
Central Mailing	13,900	12,800
Central Data Processing	35,000	35,000
Insurance	259,500	259,500
School Dues	11,930	11,930
BOCES Administration	266,649	247,816
Metropolitan Transportation Authority Tax	90,000	0
Total District Support	\$1,916,418	\$1,786,078
% Change		-6.8%

DEBT SERVICE/TRANSFERS – 1.4% of Budget

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Construction	\$440,718	\$484,300
Interfund Transfer	80,000	80,000
TAN & Energy Performance Contract	54,405	54,656
Total Debt Service/Transfers	\$575,123	\$618,956
% Change		7.6%

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – 20.9% of Budget

*Government Mandated	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Health Insurance	\$3,760,986	\$3,623,720
Teachers' Retirement*	2,771,209	2,567,411
Employees' Retirement*	554,562	686,160
Social Security (FICA)*	2,084,385	1,888,779
Workers' Compensation*	193,600	193,600
Unemployment*	61,500	61,500
Life Insurance	1,500	1,500
Disability Insurance	2,000	2,400
Total Employee Benefits	\$9,429,742	\$9,025,070
% Change		-4.3%

TRANSPORTATION – 5.0% of Budget

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Transportation	\$90,459	\$95,191
Contracted Transportation	1,904,620	2,072,863
Total Transportation	\$1,995,079	\$2,168,054
% Change		8.7%

OPERATION & MAINTENANCE - 5.9% of Budget

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Operations	\$1,895,574	\$1,912,296
Maintenance	529,527	615,608
Total Operations and Maintenance	\$2,425,101	\$2,527,904
% Change		4.2%

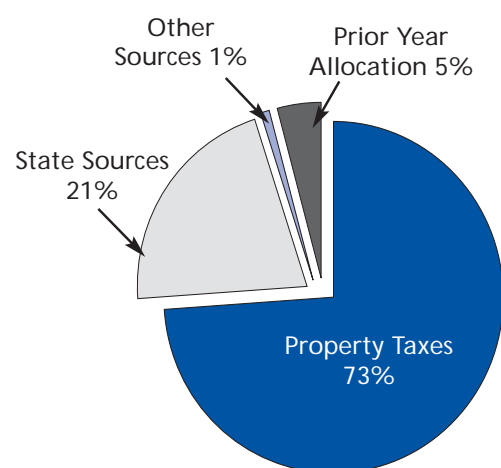
SUMMER RECREATION – .2% of Budget

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
Summer Recreation	\$103,000	\$103,000
Total Summer Recreation	103,000	\$103,000
% Change		0%

SUMMARY OF 2012-2013 REVENUE

	2011-2012	Proposed 2012-2013
State Aid	\$8,947,175	\$8,879,320
Fund Balance Appropriations	2,100,000	1,875,000
Interest Earnings/Building Use	201,000	76,000
Summer Recreation	103,000	103,000
Tuition Other Districts	250,000	250,000
Refund of Prior Year Expenditures	15,000	15,000
Misc. Revenue	12,500	12,500
Property Tax Levy	30,909,586	31,992,885
PILOT Payments		14,000
Revenue for Budget	\$42,538,261	\$43,217,705

PROPOSED BUDGET SOURCES OF REVENUE BY PERCENT



TAX IMPACT ON THE AVERAGE HOMEOWNER

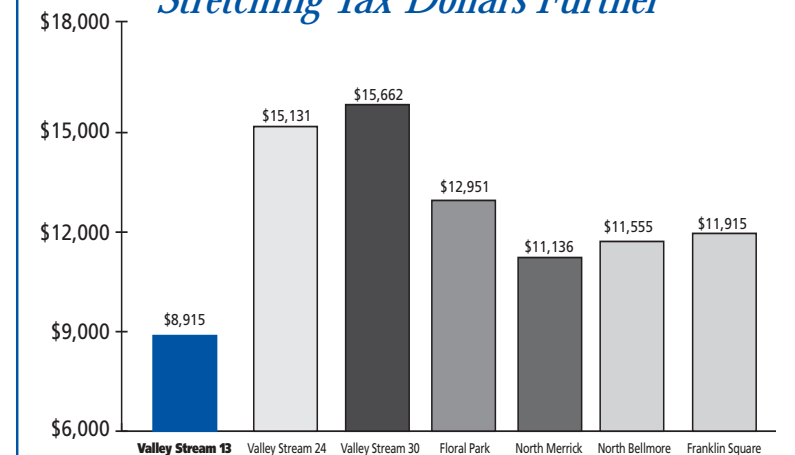
	2011-12	Proposed 2012-2013	% Changed
Elementary District	\$3,258.44	\$3,372.85	3.51%
High School District	\$3,367.53	\$3,443.18	2.25%
Combined Tax	\$6,625.97	\$6,816.03	2.87%

According to the Nassau County Department of Assessment the average home in Valley Stream District Thirteen has a market value of \$340,000.

The Elementary School Tax will increase \$114.41 per year or 31¢ per day!

Comparing Per Pupil Expenditures

Stretching Tax Dollars Further



Source: New York State Education Department (2011-2012)

WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED TOTAL REVENUE FOR 2012-2013?

Based on current projections, Valley Stream Thirteen estimated 2012-2013 revenues are broken down in the following manner:

State Aid \$8,879,320
 Other revenues..... \$470,500
 Carryover from previous year..... \$1,875,000

TOTAL \$11,224,820

The remaining funds, \$31,992,885, 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
- Carryover from prior year's operations
- Tax Levy (remaining monies needed to support the budget)

USING RESERVES...

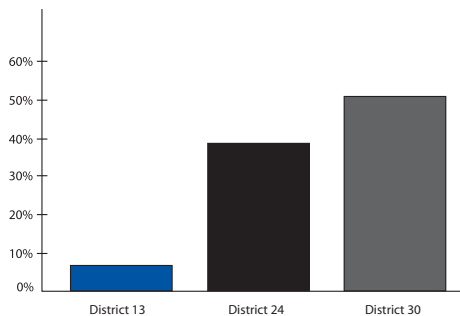
At the end of any fiscal year, districts have funds that were budgeted but not fully expended or revenues somewhat in excess of those planned. After returning significant

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 are currently experiencing. Part of the proposed 2012-2013 budget uses these reserve accounts and, thereby reduces the tax levy. As the state's fiscal difficulties continue, the Board anticipates utilizing significantly more of these funds in the upcoming years in order to control increases in property taxes. For the 2012-2013 proposed budget, the Board of Education has authorized the use of more than \$1,875,000 in fund balance and reserve funds.

What is a tax levy?

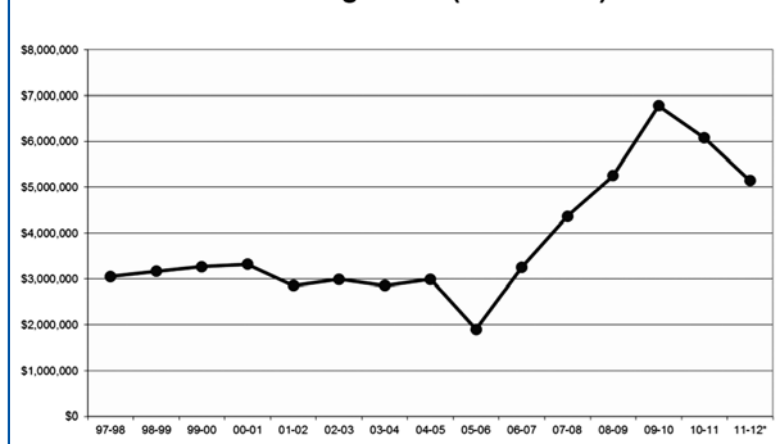
The tax levy is the amount of money determined by the Board of Education that needs to be raised in property taxes in order to balance the school budget. The District takes the total school budget and subtracts estimated revenues such as state aid, tuitions, and fees. The remaining amount is what needs 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 1998 Through 2012 (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 administration 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 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, if the proposed budget in Proposition No. 1 is approved, current transportation guidelines will remain the same. 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. A yes vote on Proposition No. 2 is not required to support the current transportation guidelines.

Q. What percent of the budget represents administrative costs and what are some of these costs?

A. Administrative costs account for 10.66% of the total 2012-2013 proposed budget. These costs include the operation of the District offices, 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 15?

A. If the budget is defeated on May 15, 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, more than \$1,000,000 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. Also, the Board of Education may choose to make reductions or to eliminate programs which could include the summer recreation program; the use of buildings and fields by outside groups; instrumental music; field trips; and extra-curricular 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 technology equipment.

Q. Where can I get more information?

A. Detailed copies of the proposed 2012-2013 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. 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.



**2012-2013
Budget Information**
District Budget &
Trustee Vote
May 15, 2012
6 a.m.-9 p.m.

Valley Stream Union Free School District Thirteen
585 North Corona Avenue, Valley Stream, New York 11580-2099
(516) 568-6100
www.valleystream13.com

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

**Public Budget Hearing -
Wednesday, May 2 at 7:30 P.M.
James A. Dever School Cafeteria**
**Last Day to Register to Vote -
Tuesday, May 8 from 5:00-9:00 p.m.
At Each School Building**
**BUDGET VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2012
6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.**
Voting will be in the District Thirteen school
election district in which you live
(usually in the public school your child or
neighbor's child attends.)

**NEED AN
ABSENTEE BALLOT?**

District residents who will be unavailable for the annual budget vote and election on Tuesday, May 15, may obtain absentee ballots. Applications for ballots may be obtained at the office of the District Clerk. All ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 15, 2012.

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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 2008-2011).



REMEMBER TO VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2012 • 6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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