

It's *Elementary*



VALLEY STREAM DISTRICT THIRTEEN NEWSLETTER

Supporting Educational Excellence Through Strategic Financial Planning



A Message from **YOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT**

Dear Residents,

On Tuesday, May 17, you will be asked to cast a vote on an issue as important as any you cast: the 2011-2012 annual school budget. The economic downturn continues to add stress to our every day lives. Yoked to the continuing and burgeoning unfunded requirements passed on to school districts by Albany, the Board of Education and our Leadership Team have worked tirelessly to present you with a budget which at once meets the needs of twenty-first century learners while being mindful of the challenges on our household budgets. Many difficult decisions were made throughout the budget process and we believe that we have effectively spread the necessary expense reductions across many sections of the District's operations as to not overly impact one area. While we found the need to make personnel cuts based on enrollment needs, we are confident that we did so having maintained a program that prepares our youngsters to meet the challenge of

secondary school, as well as that of life-long learning.

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 17, 2011 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 17, 2011.

Sincerely,

Frank Chiachiere, Ph.D.
Board of Education President

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

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

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

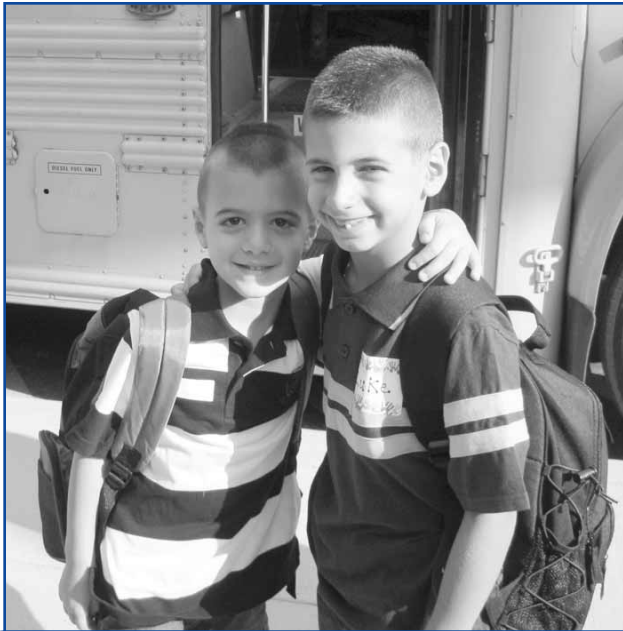
- SMART Tables
- Interactive White Boards
- Student Response Systems
- Video Streaming
- Videoconferences
- iPods
- Online Resources
- E-Books
- Informative District Website



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 District Thirteen as a high-value school district:

- **Curriculum exceeding New York State 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**



Did You Know...

- More than 90% of the budget increase is attributable to increases in state mandated pension and health insurance rates
- District employees pay one of the highest contributions toward their health insurance premiums and the maximum allowed by law toward their pensions
- Due to the absence of large-scale commercial property, more than 90% of taxes are paid by residential homeowners in District Thirteen
- The District is identifying opportunities to make improvements in the energy efficiency of its facilities and systems and will make those improvements at no net cost to the community

Shared Services Help to Reduce Costs

Throughout the school year, the District engages in several cooperative agreements with other districts in order to control spending. Below is a brief description of the partnerships District Thirteen is involved in:

- **Transportation:** Founding member of Southwest Quadrant Transportation Cooperative for private and parochial schools
- **Food services:** Cooperates with Central High School District and District Thirty for school lunch services, saving on clerical, accounting, and auditing costs
- **Technology Infrastructure:** Interconnectivity with Valley Stream Districts for cooperative projects
- **Joint collective bargaining:** Coalition with other Valley Stream Districts
- **Residency:** Participates with Central High School District and District Twenty-Four to share residency advisory services, eliminating duplication of effort
- **Insurance:** Founding member of Nassau County Cooperative for Workers' Compensation. Founding member of New York State Insurance Reciprocal
- **Equipment and Supplies:** Participates in cooperative bidding, BOCES, and New York State contracts
- **Professional Development Services:** Joins with other districts to share consultant expenses
- **BOCES Services:** Joins with other Nassau districts to share services, such as special education, textbooks, health and safety support, and technology

Maintaining Programs While Reducing Expenditures

The proposed budget includes the following reductions based on enrollment and service needs:

- 1 Gifted & Talented Teacher
- 0.5 Special Education Teacher
- 3 Classroom Teachers
- 0.5 Psychologist
- 1.5 Speech Teacher
- 0.5 ESL Teacher
- 4 Noon Hour Aides

The proposed budget includes program elimination or funding reductions in the following areas:

- Travel/Conferences
- Equipment
- Furniture
- Cultural Arts
- Project Adventure

A DETAILED LOOK AT PROPOSED 2011-2012 BUDGET

INSTRUCTION – 61.3% of Budget

	2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Teaching - Regular School	\$14,599,862	\$14,644,439
Special Education	5,879,677	5,763,447
Curriculum Development	358,887	354,915
Supervision	1,239,110	1,248,466
Research & Development	6,250	4,250
Reading	1,346,277	1,438,267
Preschool	5,750	5,750
Gifted & Talented	241,241	123,611
Library	593,618	558,348
Computer-Assisted Instruction	760,633	744,630
Student Management System	49,500	53,150
Health Services	435,824	440,627
Psychological Services	576,493	529,803
Social Worker	184,975	184,095
Total Instruction	\$26,278,097	\$26,093,798
% Change		-0.7%

DISTRICT SUPPORT – 4.5% 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
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Total District Support
% Change

TRANSPORTATION – 4.7% of Budget

	2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Transportation	\$90,032	\$90,459
Contracted Transportation	2,150,551	1,904,620
Total Transportation	\$2,240,583	\$1,995,079
% Change		-11.0%

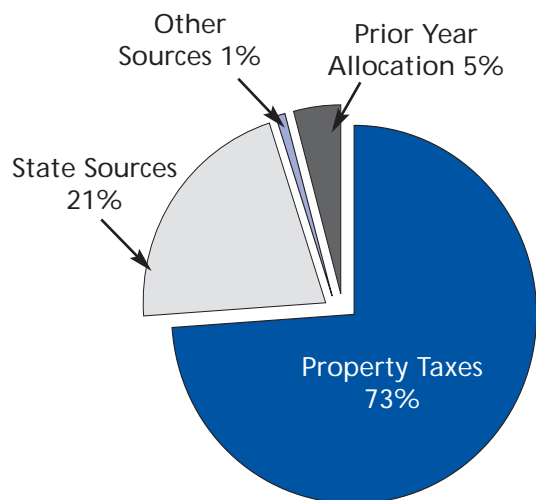
OPERATION & MAINTENANCE - 5.7%

Operations
Maintenance
Total Operations and Maintenance
% Change

SUMMARY OF 2011-2012 REVENUE

	2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
State Aid	\$9,425,000	\$8,947,175
Fund Balance Appropriations	1,175,000	2,100,000
Interest Earnings/Building Use	201,000	201,000
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	30,160,180	30,909,586
Revenue for Budget	\$41,341,680	\$42,538,261

PROPOSED BUDGET SOURCES OF REVENUE BY PERCENT



PROPOSED BUDGET EXPENDITURES

BUDGET - \$42,538,261

DEBT SERVICE/TRANSFERS – 1.4% of Budget

2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012	2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
\$14,850	\$13,900	Construction	\$456,475
9,526	9,700	Interfund Transfer	140,000
21,900	21,900	TAN & Energy Performance Contract	74,606
370,595	369,982	Total Debt Service/Transfers	\$671,081
472,916	483,557	% Change	-14.3%
92,000	97,000		
12,700	12,200		
132,000	137,000		
18,700	10,200		
9,242	8,500		
74,500	75,500		
13,570	13,900		
37,000	35,000		
298,500	259,500		
11,700	11,930		
273,195	266,649		
Tax 100,000	90,000		
\$1,962,894	\$1,916,418		
	-2.4%		

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – 22.2% of Budget

* Government Mandated

2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Health Insurance	\$3,281,075
Teachers' Retirement*	1,975,924
Employees' Retirement*	188,581
Social Security (FICA)*	2,068,531
Workers' Compensation*	194,640
Unemployment*	61,500
Life Insurance	1,500
Disability Insurance	2,000
Total Employee Benefits	\$7,773,751
% Change	21.3%

of Budget

2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
\$1,787,742	\$1,895,574
524,532	529,527
\$2,312,274	\$2,425,101
	4.9%

SUMMER RECREATION – 0.2% of Budget

2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Summer Recreation	\$103,000
Total Summer Recreation	\$103,000
% Change	0%

TAX IMPACT ON THE AVERAGE HOMEOWNER

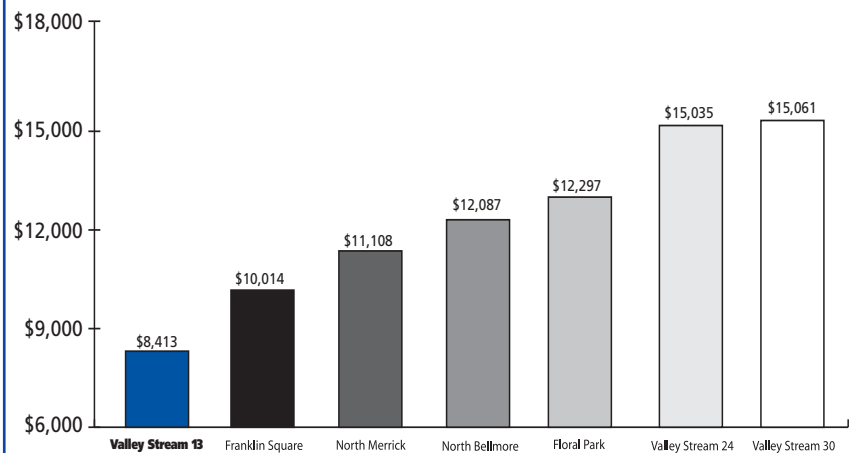
	2010-11	Proposed 2011-2012	% Changed
Elementary District	\$3,186.64	\$3,265.85	2.49%
High School District	\$3,297.94	\$3,367.53	2.11%
Combined Tax	\$6,484.58	\$6,633.38	2.29%

According to the Nassau County Department of Assessment the average home in Valley Stream District Thirteen has a market value of \$356,000.

The Elementary School Tax will increase \$79.21 per year or 22¢ per day!

Comparing Per Pupil Expenditures

Stretching Tax Dollars Further



Source: New York State Education Department (2010-2011)

WHAT IS REVENUE?

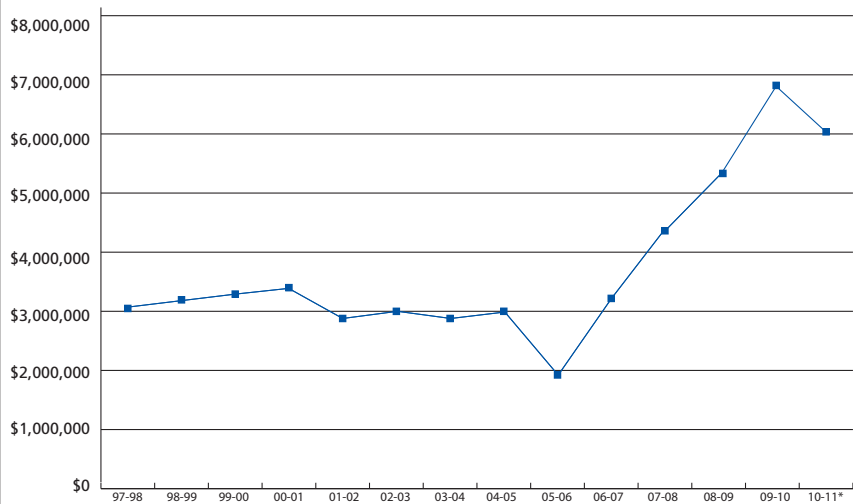
The District receives revenue from four sources:

- 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 2011-2012 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 2011-2012 proposed budget, the Board of Education has authorized the use of more than \$2,100,000 in fund balance and reserve funds.

Reserve Funds 1998-2011 (estimated*)



WHAT IS THE ESTIMATED TOTAL REVENUE FOR 2011-2012?

Based on current projections, Valley Stream Thirteen estimated 2011-2012 revenues are broken down in the following manner:

State Aid	\$8,947,175
Other revenues	\$581,500
Carryover from previous year	\$2,100,000

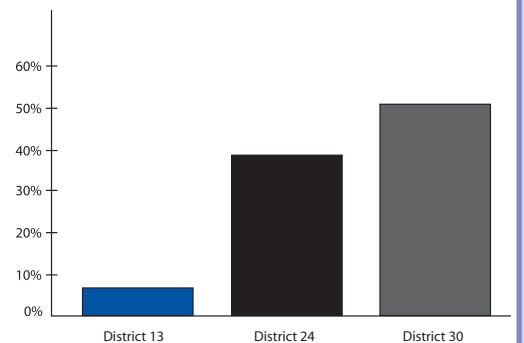
TOTAL \$11,628,675

The remaining funds, \$30,909,586, needed to support the budget, will be obtained through the set tax levy.

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.

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 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, 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.

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

A. Administrative costs account for 10.61% of the total 2011-2012 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 17?

A. If the budget is defeated on May 17, 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 \$17,000. 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 imposes a cap on a contingency budget, which sets the expenditure increase at 1.9% for next year, plus an allowance for such excludable expenses as enrollment increases. This would require the District to reduce the proposed budget by \$427,464.

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 to or eliminations of programs from among the following areas: the summer recreation program; the use of buildings and fields by outside groups; the gifted & talented Program; 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. Committee members target specific grants and formulate highly focused applications aimed at the grant objectives. 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. Complete copies of the proposed 2011-2012 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 buttons, or locate their names on the school's front door or on the District's website.



**2011-2012
Budget Information**
District Budget &
Trustee Vote
May 17, 2011
6 a.m.-9 p.m.



ECRWSS
Postal Customer

REMEMBER TO VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2011 • 6:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.

EVERY VOTE COUNTS!
REMEMBER TO REGISTER AND VOTE

Public Budget Hearing -
Wednesday, May 4 at 7:30 P.M.
James A. Dever School Cafeteria
Last Day to Register to Vote -
Tuesday, May 10 from 5:00-9:00 p.m.
At Each School Building
BUDGET VOTE TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2011
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 17 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 17, 2011.

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 2007-2010).



BOARD OF EDUCATION
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