



Voter Information

Voter Registration

To vote in Elmsford School elections, you must be registered for either school elections or general elections. If you are not registered, you may register for school voting in the District Clerk's office, Room 106, Alexander Hamilton High School, 98 South Goodwin Ave., between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., any day school is in session. You may register in the school district through May 14, 2009, to be eligible to vote in the May 19, 2009, election, or with the Board of Elections through the date of the vote.

Qualifications To Vote

- A person must be a citizen of the United States
- Must be at least 18 years old
- Be registered to vote in the School District election, and
- Be a resident of the District for at least 30 days preceding the vote.

Absentee Ballots

Applications for absentee ballots are available now for registered voters who will not be in Elmsford on May 19, 2009. Apply in person in the Board of Education Office at Alexander Hamilton High School for an application. May 12 is the deadline for absentee ballot application if ballot is to be mailed to the voter. May 18 is the deadline for absentee ballot application if the ballot is to be picked up by the voter. May 19 at 5 p.m. is the deadline for absentee ballots to be received by the District Clerk. Contact Elmsford Public Schools, South Goodwin Ave., Elmsford, N.Y. 10523, or call 592-3758 for further information.

Vote Tuesday, May 19

Polling Place

Music Room, Alice E. Grady School,
Elmsford, New York, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Letter from the Board of Education

Dear Fellow Community Members:

The Board of Education is meeting the current economic crisis by proposing a budget-to-budget increase smaller than any in 15 years.

Our obligation to students and taxpayers is to provide education that is aligned with New York State Standards, as well as with our mission, vision and values statements, at an appropriate cost. We are aware that virtually no taxpayer has survived the current economic crisis unscathed. We are therefore asking for only a minimal increase.

The proposed budget is \$28,591,952. That is a budget-to-budget increase of 1.1%, and a tax rate increase of 2.84%.

Every year the district faces increased costs due to contractual obligations and state mandates. In the current downturn, businesses and homeowners have asked that their taxes be reviewed, and many have been successful in winning reductions, eroding the tax base in Elmsford by about \$1 million this year. Next year assessed valuations are expected to drop another \$1.3 million.

To hold the line, we have made tough decisions. We believe that our proposed expenditures will maintain, and in some cases even

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Proposed Budget: Lowest Increase in 15 years

- 2009-10 Total Proposed Budget: \$28,591,952
- Budget-to-Budget Increase: 1.1%
- Property Tax Levy Change: 0.19%
- Proposed Tax Rate Increase: 2.84%
\$492.77 per \$1,000 assessed value, an increase of \$13.61 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

10 Most Frequently Asked Questions **Q&A**

1. What preparation went into developing the proposed 2009-2010 budget?

A. The Board heard from members of the public and considered requests

from top administration and department heads concerning curriculum, staffing and staff development, programs, materials, contractual obligations, and current and anticipated enrollment. After a series of public meetings, the Board approved a \$28,591,952 proposed budget, a 1.1 percent budget-to-budget increase over last year. This is the smallest budget increase in modern memory. The proposed tax rate increase is 2.84 percent, a \$13.61 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

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further, our high standards, though there is no doubt we will have to learn to do more with less, as we all are doing at home.

Every year the Board combs through the budget line by line for a careful review of all programs, and works with administration and staff to define costs for the following year. This year we were further challenged to leave our assumptions at the door.

We chose to defer nearly \$376,000 in requests for enhancements to our programs and infrastructure. We also found it necessary to streamline our corps of teaching assistants, and to make other judicious staff cuts.

And we took a step some might consider bold in eliminating summer school this year. In attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of our summer school program, we realized we needed more research to justify the expense. This year we will take a good long look at whether summer school is a necessary component in helping enhance student achievement, and, if so, how we might use the time to best effect.

It is particularly fortunate this year that Elmsford carries no debt. We can therefore offer what we consider to be a lean and responsible budget with fewer cuts than many other districts must now endure.

Please look at the information contained in this issue of “EdNews.” We encourage you to participate in the annual budget vote and board member election in the Alice E. Grady School Music Room from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. on May 19.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

The Board of Education
James B. Henson, President
Michael Colasuonno
Matthew R.C. Evans
Betty Funny-Crosby
Debra B. Lawrance

Q&A 10 Most Frequently Asked Questions

2. What elements did the Board consider key in developing the budget?

A. This budget reflects the goals of the Board and administration for a difficult year during which the economy is expected to tighten even more drastically, state aid is to drop precipitously, and local assessment challenges are expected to further erode the tax base. The goal was to promote academic rigor and relevance, and to preserve the health and safety of students while being fiscally responsible to taxpayers. The Board crafted a proposed budget to maintain the high standards of the district, and to continue program initiatives with a proven record of success. This proposed budget seeks a continued reasonable teacher-student ratio, although by virtue of an anticipated decline in enrollment in some grades at Dixson and Alexander Hamilton High School, and the realities of the economy, some judicious staff cuts were necessary. Staff and curriculum development remained priorities.

3. Where does the money come from?

A. Money to run the district comes from property taxes (86 percent), state aid (6 percent), funds carried over from the previous year (5 percent), and from money raised through grants, and contributions (3 percent). We expect to receive \$1.7 million in

state aid, although this number may change due to alterations in the state budget, or to federal allocations for school districts.

We have already begun to curb spending, and so will apply unexpended funds from this year’s budget to next year’s.

4. Where does the money go?

A. About 80 percent of the proposed budget is classified as “program expenses,” and includes teacher salaries and benefits, instructional materials and equipment, transportation expenses for both public and non-public students, sports and extracurricular activities. About 12 percent goes toward school management, which includes the personnel in the offices of the Superintendent, and Business Official, Board of Education expenses, and planning and consulting costs directly related to student services and programs. Capital expenses, or about 8 percent of the budget, include custodian salaries and benefits, service contracts, supplies, utilities, repair and maintenance. Our school buildings are old and require frequent upgrades and repairs. However, because we have not borrowed money for new construction, Elmsford has no long-term debt.

5. In what ways did the Board attempt to curb spending?

A. The administration and Board declined departmental requests of some \$376,000, including materials, equipment, and software, and elected to delay certain upgrades to the facilities. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent will voluntarily forgo their contracted pay raises.

6. Was the Board able to cut in all areas?

A. Before looking at staff cuts, the administration and Board combed carefully through expenditures and identified areas of savings. Field trips will not be funded by the district next year, although it is hoped money will be raised for some trips through contributions and grants. Conferences, consultants and curriculum development were cut back. The greatest savings in areas other than personnel was in the elimination of summer school, though this was not entirely budget-related. Because we do not know the extent to which this service has been useful to student achievement, it is the administration and Board’s intention to study the data over the next year to determine if, or in what form, summer school services should be reestablished after the next school year.

Fortunately, the cost of fuel has come down from record highs, although the price of transportation will go up this year due to contractual obligations.

The Board was unable to stem contractual needs, including employee salaries, retirement, health and workers compensation insurance and Social Security, as well as basic facilities maintenance. The Board was also bound by unfunded state mandates, among them standardized testing and scoring, and by the continuing need for academic intervention services, special education services, and some materials

7. What staffing changes are proposed?

A. Alexander Hamilton will reduce staff by 5.5 full-time teachers, two regular substitutes,

Elmsford 2009 – 2010 Proposed Budget

ITEM	EST. EXPENSE 08/09	BUDGETED 08/09	PROPOSED 09/10	CHANGE
BOARD OF EDUCATION	29,600	31,200	38,200	7,000
DISTRICT CLERK & VOTING	3,950	3,950	7,000	3,050
CHIEF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR				
Salaries	280,304	285,980	280,304	
Office Expenses	18,900	15,707	20,007	
TOTAL	299,204	301,687	300,311	(1,376)
BUSINESS & FINANCE				
Business Office Salaries	413,000	305,951	279,430	
Business Office Expenses	25,650	12,681	39,681	
Auditors' Fees	39,000	50,570	44,000	
Bookkeeper/Treasurer	76,200	75,967	85,300	
TOTAL	553,850	445,169	448,411	3,242
LEGAL: Attorneys' Fees & Other Legal Expenses	91,000	96,652	100,000	3,348
PUBLIC INFORMATION	27,831	26,500	37,800	11,300
OPERATION & MAINTENANCE				
Salaries	678,045	734,858	749,126	
Operations & Maintenance Expenses	964,150	984,881	977,608	
TOTAL	1,642,195	1,719,739	1,726,734	6,995
CENTRAL DATA PROCESSING	12,000	6,180	6,180	0
INSURANCE	95,573	97,888	102,781	4,893
CLAIMS & ASSESSMENTS	266,000	266,000	169,900	(96,100)
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & IN-SERVICE TRAINING	62,250	62,750	100,866	38,116
SCHOOL SALARIES	12,565,271	12,910,064	13,017,094	107,030
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	5,038,080	5,219,691	5,381,454	161,763
DEBT SERVICE	0	0	0	0
TUITION	0	45,000	45,000	0
TRANSPORTATION	1,196,593	1,382,181	1,510,634	128,453
HEALTH SERVICES	11,900	11,900	11,900	0
PRIVATE & PAROCHIAL PUPIL SERVICES	1,193,133	1,182,233	1,285,013	102,780
BOCES	276,672	475,544	551,601	76,057
INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM BY BUILDING				
Hamilton School Programs	274,525	332,445	296,070	(36,375)
Elementary School Programs	212,514	241,432	171,722	(69,711)
INTERSCHOLASTICS	147,421	148,121	143,931	(4,190)
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY SUMMER SCHOOL	41,220	91,000	0	(91,000)
COMPUTER INSTRUCTION	377,823	345,661	399,357	53,696
ESL INSTRUCTION: Text & Supplies	4,500	16,000	16,000	0
SPECIAL EDUCATION				
Committee on Special Education	22,500	26,968	29,800	
Pupils with Handicapped Needs	35,200	39,000	23,000	
BOCES Tuitions & Services	1,278,860	2,394,546	2,293,049	
Special Ed Private Tuitions	240,000	349,546	367,644	
Support Services	79,250	11,500	10,500	
TOTAL	1,655,810	2,821,560	2,723,993	(97,567)
GRAND TOTAL	26,078,915	28,280,547	28,591,952	311,405

An Explanation of Budget Lines

Board of Education

Office supplies, advertising and membership in NYS School Board Association.

District Clerk & Voting

Tellers, voting machines, postage, legal notices and all expenses relating to voting.

Chief School Administrator

Salaries for the Superintendent and one clerical along with office expenses.

Business & Finance

Salaries for the Business Official, Treasurer and clerical staff and office expenses.

Legal

Retainer fee for the Board Attorney, litigation costs, investigation services, and employee negotiations.

Public Information

Publication of a district calendar, the newsletter, fliers, postage and supplies.

Operation & Maintenance

Salaries: All custodians and maintenance personnel for the district buildings and grounds, plus overtime and part-time when necessary. Operations and maintenance: Fuel; electricity; gas; water; telephone; cleaning equipment and supplies; plumbing; electrical work; boiler service; maintenance projects; other services necessary for buildings and grounds; miscellaneous tools, light bulbs, glass, locks, paint, etc.

Central Data Processing

Technical support and supplies for in-house accounting and payroll system. Substantial savings have been and continue to be realized by converting these systems to in-house.

Insurance

Fire, theft, liability, boiler, student accident, employee bonding and Board liability.

Claims & Assessments

Sewer taxes paid to the County of Westchester and tax assessment refunds.

Curriculum Development & In-Service Training

Expenses relating to the Teacher Center, in-service programs for our instructional staff, testing costs for our students and other curriculum projects.

School Salaries

Salary expenses for administrators teaching staff; teaching assistants; clericals; nurses; substitute teachers; interscholastic and co-curricular stipends.

Employee Benefits

Various benefits provided by legislation or contract to staff. The cost of pension plans, Social Security, unemployment benefits and health insurance are included. In our district, administrators, teachers and civil service employees contribute toward health insurance.

Debt Service

The payment of principal and interest on our indebtedness. We currently are debt free.

Tuition

Tuition fees payable to other districts for pupils who originally resided in this district and were subsequently placed in out-of-district foster homes, and the cost of tutors for students who are hospitalized.

Transportation

Busing of students to our public schools, out-of-district schools, handicapped programs, Occupational Education at BOCES, and other special programs. Funds are also included for bus monitors on all elementary bus runs.

Health Services

Fees for required student medical and dental examinations.

Private & Parochial Pupil Service

Library materials, textbooks, computer software, health services and transportation for

resident pupils attending private and parochial schools, and a nurse at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School.

Boces

Occupational Education and Alternative Education for secondary students; our share of BOCES facilities and administration costs; computerized attendance; census and test scoring.

Hamilton School Programs

Funds allocated to continue programs as mandated by the State Board of Regents in social studies, library skills, science, math, English, art, modern language, music, home and careers. Funds are also included to continue the Regents Plus Program, the After-School Homework Program and the Teen Learning Center.

Elementary Programs

This is the budget that provides funds to maintain all elementary programs. All New York State Standards are being met and exceeded through our constant review to meet the needs of our students.

Interscholastics, Co-Curricular Activities

All athletic programs and clubs.

Computer Instruction

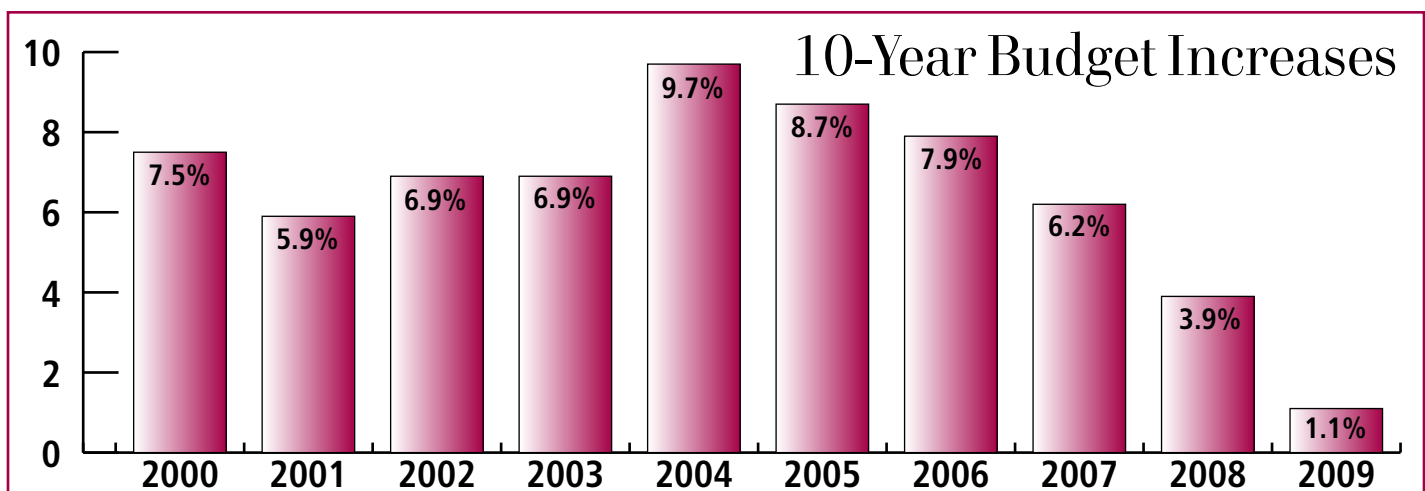
Equipment, software, supplies and materials for the elementary and secondary computer education programs.

ESL Instruction

Material and supplies for English as a Second Language program.

Special Education

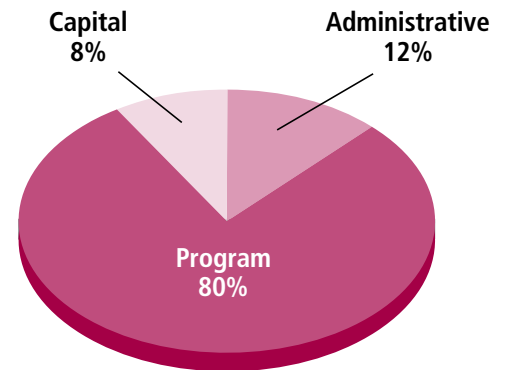
All costs relating to the functioning and programs of the in-District Committee on Special Education. In addition, tuitions for students placed in out-of-District public/private programs and Occupational Education programs.



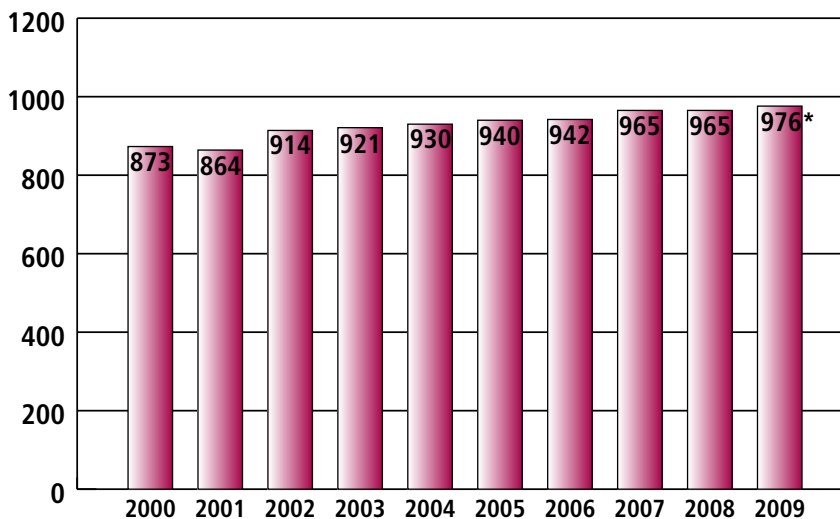
Assessed Valuation



Where the Money Goes

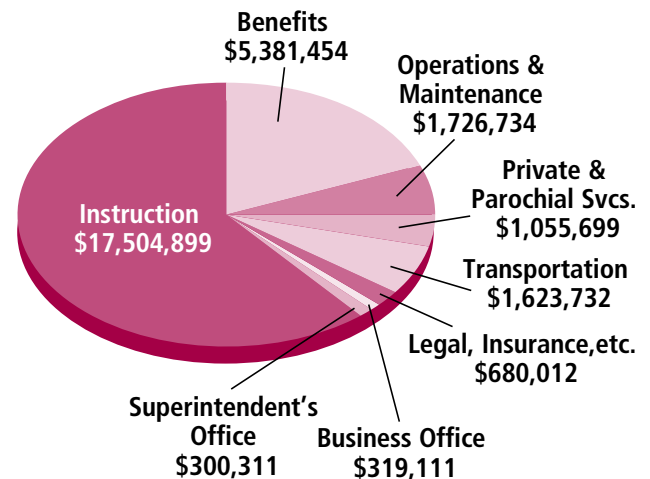


Enrollment



* Projected

Proposed Budget 2009-2010



10 Most Frequently Asked Questions

and a part-time clerk. Certain club stipends and salaries will be cut from the budget where there is duplication of services, or where those salaries can be funded with grants. The Director of Research and Student Development is paid by Special Education and Title 1 grant monies.

Positions to be cut, but whose functions will be picked up elsewhere, include the Scheduling, Moodle, TLC and JHS coordinators, and the Junior High School Honor Society which will be administered by the high school honor society.

At Grady, reductions will include two teachers, and the stipends for the school store, sixth grade study skills, and an elementary curriculum assistant.

Of the 10 teacher assistant positions originally scheduled to be eliminated, seven will

be restored through the use of stimulus monies and IDEA funds. In addition, a .5 Foreign Language teaching position and a .2 Special Education teaching position will also be restored through use of these funds.

8. Won't that mean bigger class sizes with less adult supervision?

A. Class sizes will still be within recommended levels, although in some cases there will be a few more children in the classroom. The remaining 20 teaching assistants will be deployed to various classrooms throughout the day as needed to maximize instruction. Lunch and playground supervision will not be affected.

9. Will this budget break our stride in curriculum and instruction?

A. No. We will continue to build on the momentum of the last several years to move forward as a district and reach our potential as a community of learners. We will find other ways to use our resources in creative ways. For example, a team of teachers is

currently meeting with a scheduling consultant to assist in adapting our high school schedule to allow a broader range of courses.

10. If this budget does not pass, what will happen next?

A. If the budget does not pass the first vote, the Board has the option of putting up the same budget or a revised one for a second vote, or to adopt a contingency budget. If the proposal is defeated a second time, the district must adopt a contingency budget. By law, the contingency budget may not exceed the first proposed budget. We would have no choice but to eliminate certain equipment and student supplies purchases, certain non-contract salaries and the community use of buildings and grounds, for a reduction of about \$42,000 from the proposed budget.

The District Made Strides Over the Past Year

Regents Exams

The average passing rate for the Regents exams taken in 2008 was 89.46%. While we still have a way to go, our students did well in most cases. These are the percentages of students who passed each test:*

- Comprehensive English: 96% of students passed.
- Integrated Algebra: 93%
- Mathematics A: 97%
- Mathematics B: 75%
- Global History and Geography: 77%
- U.S. History and Government: 94%
- Living Environment: 89%
- Earth Science: 86%
- Chemistry: 81 %
- Physics: 96%
- Spanish: 91%
- French: 88%

* The one student who took the Italian exam passed.



Grades 3-8 Assessment

21 students in grades 3-8 received the highest possible score on ELA, mathematics, science and social studies assessments.

89.05 percent achieved proficiency in the Social Studies 5 assessment .

Technical Upgrades

Improvements were made to the operating system, district wide. Network accounts were set up for all students grades 3-12. We continued our purchases of SmartBoard technology.

gy. And we continued to refine our robust Website, with links to the PTA and Elmsford Authors Fund, and the addition of a more comprehensive guidance department section, and audio and video sections.

Clubs

We now have chapters of the National Honor Society at Hamilton and Grady.

Teacher Support

Nationally recognized consultants were hired to provide support to both faculty and community. Building level collaboration was increased, and a new model for the instruction of ESL was established. Curriculum mapping is nearly complete for ELA and math. Particularly exciting is our new ability to access data warehouse analysis through the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center. Through this service teachers can study student responses to individual state test questions, determine trends both state and district-wide, and combine that knowledge with demographics and other statistics to

determine which areas of instruction need to be strengthened in the district, and which are doing well.

Improved Communications

Connect-Ed allows the administration to reach all parents and guardians in a short period of time, and enhanced Hamilton parent-teacher conferences and monthly parent coffee meetings have been successful. The newsletter was redesigned to better reflect our 21st century approach to education.

Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.elmsd.org



Elmsford Public Schools
Elmsford NY 10523

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