

Messenger

Proposed Budget Issue



May 2026

Dear Watkins Glen School Community,

As we move into the spring season, we also enter an important time for our school community: budget development. On May 19, 2026, voters across New York State, including here in Watkins Glen, will consider proposed school budgets. This update is meant to provide clear, straightforward information to support your understanding of our plan.

The Governor’s Executive Budget includes a 1% increase in Foundation Aid, our primary revenue source. While modest, it is a step in the right direction and supports our continued focus on strong programming for students. Even as costs rise across all areas of operation, we remain confident in our ability to plan thoughtfully and stay grounded in what matters most: student success. With the state budget still unresolved, we will continue to monitor developments and adjust as needed.

Our work is guided by a commitment to preserving opportunities for students while maintaining fiscal responsibility. We are proud of the programs we offer and remain focused on sustaining a high-quality educational experience while being mindful of our impact on taxpayers.

The proposed budget represents a 5.9% increase in overall expenditures over last year. Key drivers include contractual salary increases, costs associated with employee benefits, GST BOCES services, inflationary pressures, and maintaining the current level of educational programs and services.

STATE AID AND OTHER REVENUE INFORMATION:

The proposed 2026–2027 budget is built on the framework of the Governor’s Executive Budget. The combination of Foundation Aid and a measured increase in the tax levy allows us to sustain the programs and opportunities our students and families value.

To present a balanced and responsible budget, we have thoughtfully utilized fund balance and reserves to support the overall financial plan. This approach helps maintain program stability while limiting additional burden on taxpayers.

Alongside state aid and the use of reserves, a modest tax levy increase is included to support the full educational program. Additional details regarding the tax levy impact are outlined below:

- According to the Tax Levy Calculation (as stipulated in NYS law), the maximum allowable tax levy increase for 2026-2027 could have been \$360,576 or 3.29%. We are proposing a tax levy increase of \$185,000 or 1.69%, **below** the allowable limit by \$175,576. As a reminder, the “tax levy” is the revenue generated through the collection of school taxes.
- The tax rate per thousand of assessed property value is projected to increase from the prior year's average tax rate of \$8.67 to an estimated average of \$8.80 per thousand.
 - To help you gain better understanding of what our proposed tax levy increase would do to your school tax bill, please see the chart below:

\$200,000 Assessed Home	\$275,000 Assessed Home	\$350,000 Assessed Home	\$400,000 Assessed Home
Increase of \$26 per year	Increase of \$35.75 per year	Increase of \$45.50 per year	Increase of \$52 per year
Increase of \$2.17 per month	Increase of \$ 2.98 per month	Increase of \$3.79 per month	Increase of \$4.33 per month

****Calculation *assumes* basic STAR exemption on a primary residence**

IN SUMMARY:

We remain optimistic as we await final action on the New York State budget. While the projected increase in State Aid is limited, it provides a foundation that, along with the tax levy and the thoughtful use of fund balance and reserves, allows us to maintain the programs and services our students and families rely on. In a time of rising costs, this budget reflects careful planning and a steady focus on what matters most: supporting students as they work to reach their full potential.

This proposal is grounded in our commitment to delivering a high-quality educational experience while being responsible stewards of public resources. It prioritizes stability for our students, preserves meaningful opportunities, and continues to support the staff who make our schools strong, supportive, and engaging places to learn.

As we move forward, we do so with purpose and confidence. With the continued support of our Board of Education and community, we remain focused on meeting the needs of our students and upholding the values that define Watkins Glen.

Thank you for your partnership and support: United, We Soar!

SOAR LAKE HAWKS!

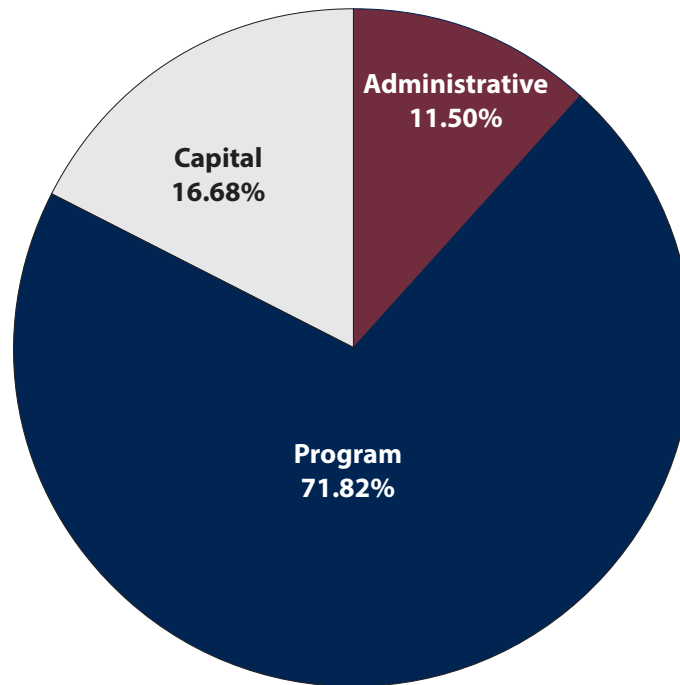
Respectfully,
 Keith Caslin, WGCSD Board of Education President
 Kai D’Alleva, WGCSD Superintendent of Schools

Expenditure Summary

TOTAL CHANGE IN SPENDING BUDGET: \$1,885,385 or 5.99%

Budget Component	2025-26	2026-27	Difference	% Difference
Administrative	\$3,668,177	\$3,831,063	\$162,886	
Program	\$22,281,933	\$23,930,381	\$1,648,448	
Capital	\$5,483,840	\$5,557,891	\$74,051	
Total	\$31,433,950	\$33,319,335	\$1,885,385	5.99%

2026-27 Proposed Expenditures



Proposed 2026-27 Budget vs. Contingency Budget

2026-27 Proposed Budget	Contingency Budget	\$ Difference
\$33,319,335	\$32,973,263	(\$346,072)

The 2026-27 Proposed Budget is available at the following locations:

District Office
 District website: www.wgcsd.org

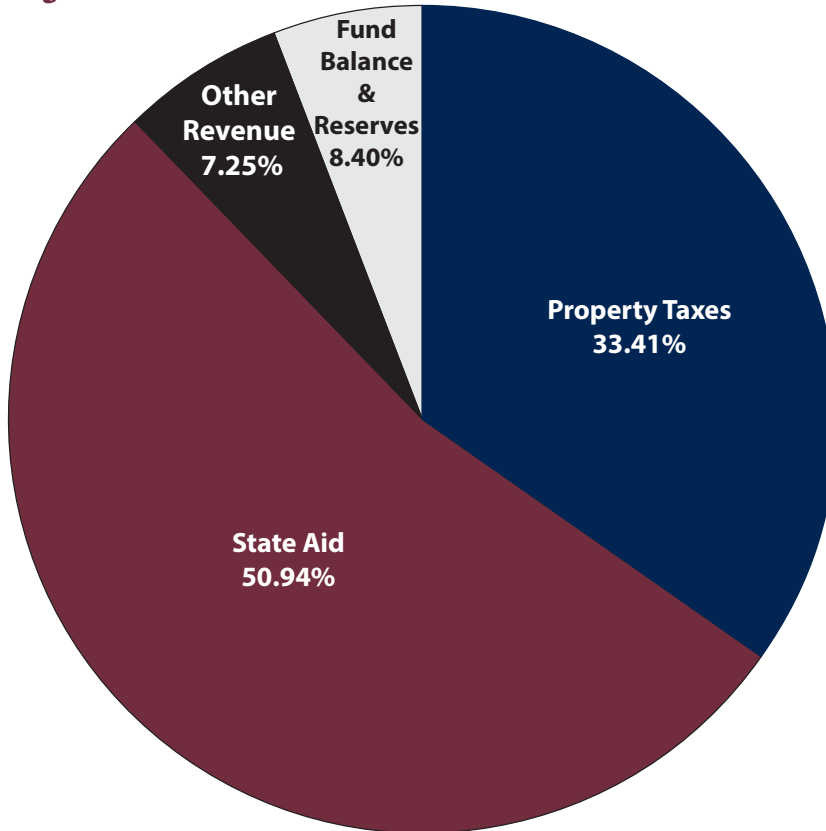
School Report Card Information

Information on Watkins Glen Central School District's New York State Report Card is available in the District Office or on the district's website, www.wgcsd.org.

Revenue Summary

Description of Revenue	2025-26	2026-27
Property Taxes <i>(includes leasing of buses)</i>	\$10,946,500	\$11,131,500
State Aid	\$16,696,003	\$16,972,970
Other Revenue Sources	\$1,991,447	\$2,414,865
Fund Balance and Reserves	<u>\$1,800,000</u>	<u>\$2,800,000</u>
Total	\$31,433,950	\$33,319,335

2026-27 Projected Revenues



How Will My Taxes Be Affected?

The estimated district-wide tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed value is anticipated to increase by approximately \$0.13.

Tax Information for a \$200,000 Home

2025-26 Tax Rate per \$1,000	Estimated 2026-27 Tax Rate per \$1,000	Estimated Tax with Basic STAR	Estimated Tax with Enhanced STAR
\$8.67	\$8.80	\$1,510	\$982

Three-Part Budget Summary

Administrative Component

The Administrative Component provides for overall general support and management activities, including business office operations, payroll, purchasing, general administration, personnel, legal and auditing services. Costs for administration and supervision of each of the district's schools also are included in this component.

Budget Function	2025-26	2026-27	Difference	% of Budget
Board of Education	\$26,100	\$26,100	\$0	
Central Administration	\$256,135	\$263,305	\$7,170	
Finance	\$422,764	\$462,154	\$39,390	
Personnel	\$28,763	\$28,991	\$228	
Public Information	\$5,700	\$5,500	(\$200)	
Other Central Services	\$600,484	\$564,946	(\$35,538)	
Other Special Items	\$732,340	\$783,051	\$50,711	
Curriculum Development and Supervision	\$449,379	\$477,969	\$28,590	
Supervision - Regular School	\$376,528	\$405,257	\$28,729	
Supervision - Special School	\$149,418	\$160,406	\$10,988	
Inservice Training - Instruction	\$152,514	\$163,777	\$11,263	
Employee Benefits	<u>\$468,052</u>	<u>\$489,607</u>	<u>\$21,555</u>	
Total Administrative Component	\$3,668,177	\$3,831,063	\$162,886	11.50%

Program Component

The Program Component provides funding for the instruction of and educational support services for the district's students. Funds also are included in this component for transportation services.

Budget Function	2025-26	2026-27	Difference	% of Budget
Legal	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	
Instruction	\$13,532,176	\$14,815,055	\$1,282,879	
Transportation, including				
Proposition #2 – Leasing of Buses	\$1,898,700	\$1,952,043	\$53,343	
Local Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Employee Benefits	\$6,671,057	\$6,978,283	\$307,226	
Compensated Absences	\$75,000	\$80,000	\$5,000	
Other Transfers	<u>\$75,000</u>	<u>\$75,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	
Total Program Component	\$22,281,933	\$23,930,381	\$1,648,448	71.82%

Capital Component

The Capital Component pays for maintaining schools, the bus garage, upkeep of property and for electricity, gas heat, water and sewer and telephone services. Funds also are included for "mortgage" payments on capital projects (principal and interest payments) and transfers to capital funds.

Budget Function	2025-26	2026-27	Difference	% of Budget
Operation of Plant	\$1,025,791	\$1,056,508	\$30,717	
Maintenance of Plant	\$933,155	\$945,346	\$12,191	
Judgments and Claims	\$500	\$500	\$0	
Refund of Real Property Taxes	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$0	
Employee Benefits	\$728,631	\$762,187	\$33,556	
Debt Service	<u>\$2,792,263</u>	<u>\$2,789,850</u>	<u>(\$2,413)</u>	16.68%
Total Capital Component	\$5,483,840	\$5,557,891	\$74,051	
TOTAL SPENDING BUDGET	\$31,433,950	\$33,319,335	\$1,885,385	

Programmatic Components Supported by this Budget

- Academic intervention services in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math at the elementary level
- All current staffing levels
- AP testing at no cost to students
- Arts in education field trips and hands-on learning experiences
- Athletics programs, including an on-site athletic trainer and a staffed fitness center open for community use
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs offered in our district, including Agriculture, Work-Based Learning, Technology, and Business
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs through GST BOCES
- Continued commitment to three world language offerings: Spanish, American Sign Language, and Mandarin
- Continued leasing and replacement cycle of our diesel school buses
- Early college access programs, including college courses and Advanced Placement (AP), at no cost to students and families
- Manageable class sizes at the elementary school
- Ongoing costs to maintain and operate school buildings for both school and community use, seven days a week
- Ongoing improvements to Math and ELA instruction based on the Science of Learning
- Paid school supplies for all elementary school students
- Restoration of the grand piano to enhance fine arts programs
- SAT testing at no cost to students
- School Resource Officer (SRO) services during the school day and at evening events
- Social and emotional support, including two school counselors in each building and access to social workers
- A Library Media Specialist supporting students and staff in both the elementary school and high school
- A one-to-one student device program (K-12) and the technology support needed to maintain it

On the Ballot

Proposition 1: 2026-27 Budget

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the Watkins Glen Central School District is hereby authorized to expend the sums set forth in the proposed budget for 2026-27 and to levy the necessary tax therefor.

Proposition 2: Leasing School Buses

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to enter into a lease for: three (3) Thomas C2 66 passenger diesel buses, the total cost not to exceed one hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000) per year for a maximum of five (5) years for the leasing and financing of the buses? The source of the funds shall be a tax upon the taxable property of the District to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education.

Election of Members of the Board of Education: Three (3) Three-Year Terms

Select three of the following candidates to fill open positions:
Tracey VanSkiver • Astra Titus • Alexander Gill

Public Hearing

May 6, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

High School Board of Education Room

Vote

May 19, 2026, Noon to 8 p.m.

High School Board of Education Room

2026 Annual Spud Run

The Annual Spud Run, held on March 17, at WG Alumni Field, was a tremendous success with more than 225 runners joining in the fun and competition.

Top Finishers

First Place Male: Isaac Hendrickson

First Place Female: Natalee Oliver

Both athletes delivered outstanding performances and set a high bar for future races.

Community Participation

We saw outstanding involvement from Watkins Glen Elementary students and their families. Their energy and enthusiasm filled the field and pathways, helping create a warm and spirited atmosphere that truly defines the Spud Run tradition.

A Beautiful Tribute to Tracie McIlroy

The event also featured a heartfelt tribute to Tracie McIlroy. Bagpipe music performed by Emily Peckham set a powerful, emotional tone, followed by thoughtful words from Rod Weeden and Travis Durfee, honoring Tracie's lasting impact on the school and community.

Through the years, Tracie served as a teacher, worked in the athletic department and was deeply involved in youth sports, the WG Boosters Club, and the Spud Run – one of her favorite events to organize for both the school and the community.

The tribute added meaningful depth to the day, reminding all in attendance of the strong bonds that connect us.



NHS in Action

Recently, 23 National Honor Society (NHS) students, along with advisor Mrs. Foss, volunteered at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. Students helped unpack and pack bread items and sorted over 11,000 pounds of apples. They worked so well as a team that they finished packing early and were able to spend the extra time touring the facility and learning more about the important work the Food Bank does to support our community. We are proud of our students for giving their time to help others and represent our school.



2026 NTHS Inductees

Watkins Glen High School is pleased to announce the 2026 National Technical Honor Society Inductees.

These outstanding students from the Class of 2026 are enrolled in Career and Technical Education and New Visions programs at the GST BOCES Bush and Coopers campuses and showcase the integrity, perseverance, strong work ethic and commitment to learning that we are proud to showcase at WGCSD. Congratulations to:

Animal Science

Cordelia Thompson

Audio Media Design

Leland Cole

Automotive Technology

Angelina Cagle, Justin Wrubel

Cosmetology

Kaylee Yaw

Criminal Justice

Grace Underdown

Diesel Equipment

Marcus Delong

Digital Media Arts

Luka VanScoyk

Nurse Assisting

Grace Roney

Heavy Equipment

Gabriel Majors

New Visions Health Career Exploration

Caleb Bresett, Anna Franzese, Emily Melveney

New Visions Human Services

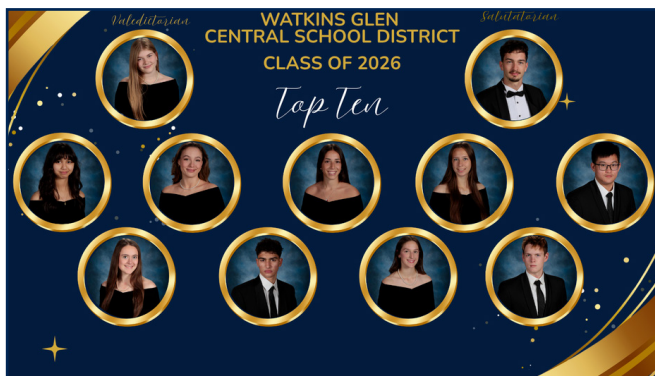
Wendy Coleman, Gillian D'Alleva, Erin Snow,
Zade Gomez Fitzsimmons, Christopher Simiele

New Visions Innovation, Business and Leadership

Logan DeBolt, Samuel Hohle, Michael Purpura

Class of 2026 Top Ten Named

Regal Ending for Senior Show



WGCS D is proud to announce the Top 10 students of the Class of 2026: Valedictorian Anna Franzese, Salutatorian Samuel Hohle, Lilian Artusa, Gillian D'Alleva, Olivia King, Enric Lin, Emily Melveney, Michael Purpura, Erin Snow, Carson Thaete and Wendy Coleman.

Their success reflects exceptional achievement, leadership and a sustained commitment to hard work and excellence.

Congratulations to this outstanding group!

Our senior production of *Six: Teen Edition* closed out an incredible run with a fitting finale earning a third standing ovation,

This year, the ladies of Watkins Glen High School took center stage, bringing to life the stories of the six wives of Henry VIII:

Catherine of Aragon played by
Zade Gomez Fitzsimmons

Anne Boleyn played by Natalie VanSkiver

Jane Seymour played by Lilian Artusa

Anne of Cleves played by Kaylin Smith

Catherine Howard played by Lilac Cruz

Catherine Parr played by Grace Weed

Alongside junior Isaac Hendrickson as Henry VIII, each performer brought a unique voice and powerful presence to the stage, creating something truly unforgettable.

We applaud the outstanding work of the 16-member cast, the dedicated crew and the incredibly talented directors. Thank you for sharing your talents with the WGCS D community.

2026 Summer Programs

Summer Classes at WGCS D

Summer Playground our Elementary School students and Summer School for our High School students will be held July 6 through August 20. High School students should check with their guidance counselor to register for summer classes.

Watkins Glen Summer Recreation

The Clute Park Summer Recreation Program offers six weeks of fun, engaging activities for students in grades K-5. Designed to keep kids active, creative and connected, the program features a mix of play, crafts and swimming throughout the summer.

The program will run from July 6 through August 14, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Each week has a theme, including *Party in the USA*, *Land Before Time*, *Movin' & Groovin'*, *Behind the Badge*, *Creature Feature*, and *Mad Scientists*.

Full-day rate is \$150 per week and half-day options are available starting at \$75 per week. Scholarships are available. Participants will receive free lunch each day.

Families interested in enrolling can find additional information and complete an online application at www.SenecaLakeEvents.org/summer-rec or contact the Watkins Glen Parks Department.

Summer of Innovation

Students of all ages can join GST BOCES and its partners this summer for learning, exploration and fun. Academies on a wide variety of subjects are offered all summer at sites across the region. For additional information, visit www.gstbooces.org.



Stay Up-To-Date

For the latest news and information within our school district, visit our website:

www.wgcsd.org.

You also can download the official Watkins Glen School District free app. Search "Watkins Glen CSD" on Apple or Android play stores.



VOTE

Tuesday, May 19, 2026

Noon to 8 p.m.

**Watkins Glen High School
Board of Education Room**



You are eligible to vote if you are...

- A U.S. Citizen
- At least 18 years of age
- A resident of the district since April 19, 2026.
- Not otherwise disqualified to vote by law.

Upcoming events

May

- 1 Boys Golf Senior Night
- 2 ES Spring Book Fair
Grades 5 and 8 NYS Science Testing
HS MP 5 Ends
- 5 Varsity Tennis Senior Night
- 6 Dub G Market Open, 2:35-6 p.m.
Girls Golf/Softball/Baseball Senior Night
- 7 WGND Lacrosse Senior Night at ND
Board of Education Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- 11 HS Report Cards
- 12 Steel Drum Performance
- 16 Senior Prom, 7-10 p.m., Clute Park Event Center
- 19 School Budget Vote and Board of Education Election,
Noon-8 p.m.
Grade 7-12 Spring Concert and Art Show, 6:30 p.m.
- 20 Dub G Market Open, 2:35-6 p.m.
- 25 No School: Memorial Day
- 26 Clay Target Senior Night
- 27 Grades 3-6 Spring Concert, 6:30 p.m.
- 29 Grade 7 Class Class Trip to Gettysburg

June

- 1 Board of Education Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- 3 Dub G Market Open, 2:35-6 p.m.
- 5 Senior Trip
- 9-10 Regents Exams
- 11 Cap and Gown Photos and ES/Senior Walk
- 16 Grades 1 and 2 Spring Concert
- 17-18 Regents Exams
Kindergarten Spring Concert
- 19 No School: Juneteenth
- 20 DUB G Athletic Awards, 6:30 p.m.
- 22 Board of Education Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- 23 Pre-K Spring Concert
- 23-25 Regents Exams
- 24 Pre-K through Grade 6 Early Dismissal
- 25 Graduation Rehearsal, 9 a.m.
Last Day of School for Students
Pre-K through Grade 6 Early Dismissal
- 26 ES/HS Marking Period Ends
- 27 Graduation, 10 a.m.
WGHS Alumni Banquet, 4 p.m.

July

- 2 ES and HS Report Cards
- 4 Independence Day
- 17-19 Lake Country Players: *Finding Nemo, Jr.*

Watkins Glen Central School District

303 12th Street
Watkins Glen, NY 14891
607.535.3219
www.wgcsd.org

Board of Education

Keith Caslin, President
Theresa Butler, Vice President
Chad Hendrickson
Barbara Schimizzi
Joe Stansfield
Astra Titus
Tracey VansKiver

*****ECRWSS**

Postal Customer

Superintendent

Kai D'Alleva

Non-profit
US POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #115
Elmira, NY

Absentee ballots

If a voter wishes to receive an absentee ballot by mail, a written application must be submitted to the district clerk on a form provided by the clerk no later than seven days before the vote. Absentee ballot applications are available at www.wgcsd.org/page/business-office.

If a voter wishes to pick up an absentee ballot personally, the application must be received by the clerk at least one day before the election. Persons designated by the Schuyler County Board of Elections as "permanently disabled" pursuant to the provision of the election law will automatically receive an absentee ballot.

The absentee ballot must be filed with the district clerk by 5 p.m. on the day of the vote, May 19, 2026.

Call Renee Angle, district clerk, at 607-535-3220 with questions.

