



Annual budget vote set for May 15

2018-19 budget proposal focuses on creating future-ready students

Residents of the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk School District will head to the polls on Tuesday, May 15, to vote on a proposed \$47,738,365 spending plan for the 2018-19 school year. The proposal calls for a \$1,908,942 spending increase and a tax levy increase of 2.68 percent, which is the district's calculated tax levy "cap." Budget approval requires a simple majority of voters (50 percent plus one).

"This proposed budget reflects many of the priorities our community members shared with us earlier this year," said Superintendent Dr. Brian Bailey. Through a parent survey and a community forum, residents shared suggestions about ways the district could improve students' learning experience as they prepare for life after graduation. (See "Community input" on page 8). Bailey said the proposed budget is the first big step toward the goal of creating future-ready students while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

If the budget is approved by voters, RCS would continue all current programs and services, and would take steps to enhance school security, boost instructional support for at-risk students and offer better mental health and social emotional supports for all students.

The plan will reallocate some staff members to meet the growing STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) initiatives in the elementary schools. It will also allow educators at the middle and high school to identify spaces for future alternative learning environments.








Students work on a STEAM-inspired project building 3-D models. The proposed budget would allow elementary students to have more opportunities to do STEAM initiatives.

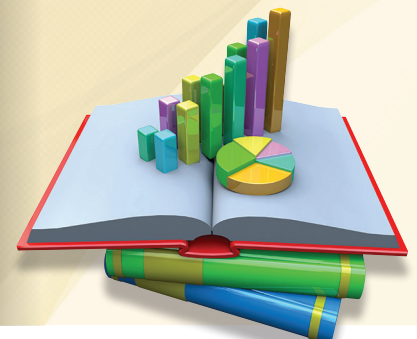
BUDGET at a Glance

Vote Information:

TIME: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
WHERE: RCS High School
Gymnasium
2025 Route 9W
Ravena, NY

What's on the ballot:

-  Proposed budget: \$47.7 million
-  Budget increase: **+\$1,908,942 (4.17%)**
Estimated tax levy increase: **2.68%**
-  Proposition to buy six buses
-  Election of three candidates to the RCS Board of Education
-  Community library budget and Board of Trustees election



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Learn more at: www.rcscsd.org

HIGHLIGHTS BY-THE-NUMBERS



1,921

Students in grades UPK-12.

67

Middle and high school students are members of the National Junior Honor Society and National Honor Society.

21

High school students are members of the Tri-M Music Honor Society.

5

Athletes qualified for NYS championships so far this year.

23

College-level courses are offered to RCS High School students.

74

Clubs and extracurricular activities are available for students to participate in K-12.

118

Graduates in the class of 2017.

Pardon our appearance

Renovations continue at high school

Capital project improvements continued through the 2017-18 school year and are set to conclude in the upcoming 2018-19 year.

Construction of a new high school gymnasium will wrap-up this month, which means voters may have the opportunity to cast their ballots in the new space during the budget vote.



Similar to last year, residents will park in the parking lot between Route 9W and the high school and enter through the pool entrance doors. There will be signs leading residents to the polls.

For more information about the capital project improvements, go to rcscsd.org/about-us/capital-project

Budget Q & A

Q What is the tax levy limit, or tax cap?

The tax levy limit is the highest allowable tax levy (before exemptions) that a school district can propose as part of its annual budget for which a simple majority of voters (50 percent plus one) would be required.

Q Is the proposed budget within the district's tax levy?

Yes, the proposal calls for a tax levy increase of 2.68 percent, which is the district's calculated tax levy "cap." A simple majority of voters (50 percent plus one) is required for budget approval.

Q What if the proposed budget is defeated?

When a budget is defeated, a school board can either present the same budget or a revised budget for a second

vote, or adopt a contingency budget. If the budget is defeated twice, a school board must adopt a contingent budget.

For RCS, a contingent budget for the 2018-19 school year would mean reducing the proposed budget by \$661,737, cutting back in areas such as equipment, classroom supplies and professional development.

Q Who is eligible to vote?

Residents of RCSCSD who are U.S. citizens, at least 18 years old and residents of the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote are eligible. Voters not registered on the Albany County Voter Registry must show identification and proof of residency (at least 30 days).

Any voter may be asked for ID

See page 6 for absentee ballot information.

Building a better tomorrow

What is included in the proposed budget:

- An additional \$50,000 for professional development of faculty and staff including, but not limited to, trainings on the transformational use of technology; mindfulness and trauma sensitivity; improving instruction; Next Generation Standards; and literacy.
- \$50,000 for an additional school resource officer.
- \$30,000 to create a satellite mental health space to provide students with more mental health services and support their social/emotional wellbeing.
- A 0.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) Instructional/Assistive Technologist—by restructuring current personnel.
- Two 0.5 STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, music) staff members—one at each elementary school—by restructuring current personnel.
- Addition of a behavioral specialist—by restructuring current personnel.
- Increased Career Development and Occupational Studies opportunities including additional work opportunities for all students.
- Addition of a 10-week “boot camp” for struggling high school students who will have a subject-specific specialist to help them succeed.
- \$8,000 for salaries and transportation for summer symposiums that will transition students from eighth to ninth grade, focusing on readying students for high school.
- Continuing investment in expanding student access to instructional technologies with the purchase of 300 Chromebooks. This will give students more opportunities to explore, collaborate and connect with workplace and the world of information.

2018 Ravana-Coeymans-Selkirk Top 10 Students:

1. Jenna Hannay—Valedictorian

Plans to study: Computer Science

2. Ryan Zampella—Salutatorian

Plans to study: Mathematics

3. Griffin Racey

Plans to study: Mathematics

4. Yasemin Menekse

Plans to study: Biology

5. Amelia Rossi

Plans to study: Environmental Science

6. Alexander Higgins

Plans to study: Public Policy

7. Druhan Gordon-Stacey

Plans to study: Engineering

8. Richard Mosher

Plans to study: Philosophy

9. Dayle Matott

Plans to study: Veterinarian Technician

10. Kathryn Pilhofer

Plans to study: Therapy



The RCS Top 10 students hold the highest grade point averages in the Class of 2018.



Estimated tax rate for 2018-19

Town	2017-18 Tax Rate	Estimated 18-19 Rate	Estimated Tax Bill	Increase
Bethlehem	\$20.02	\$20.56	\$3,084	\$81.00
Coeymans	\$20.02	\$20.56	\$3,084	\$81.00
New Scotland	\$20.43	\$20.98	\$3,147	\$82.25
New Baltimore	\$27.06	\$27.78	\$4,167	\$108.00

Figures are for estimated tax bills for homes assessed at \$150,000. This does not include NYS STAR savings or the RCS Community Library levy.

Tax rates shown are per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The 2018-19 tax rates and dollar increases are estimates only, since assessed values and equalization rates will not be finalized until August 2018. Final tax rates are set by the Board of Education in August.

Property in New Baltimore is partially assessed, leading to a higher tax rate.



BUDGET SUMMARY

New York state law requires all school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories: program, administrative and capital.

Program	2017-18	2018-19
Amount	\$35,364,362	\$36,612,198
% of total	77.1%	76.7%

Includes salaries and benefits of all teachers and staff who deliver pupil services, such as guidance, health and library/media; textbooks; co-curricular activities; athletics and transportation costs (except bus purchases).

Administrative	2017-18	2018-19
Amount	\$3,519,706	\$3,709,016
% of total	7.7%	7.8%

Includes salaries and benefits of administrators, supervisors and administrative clerical staff; public information and printing; curriculum and staff development; school board costs; tax collection and some legal costs.

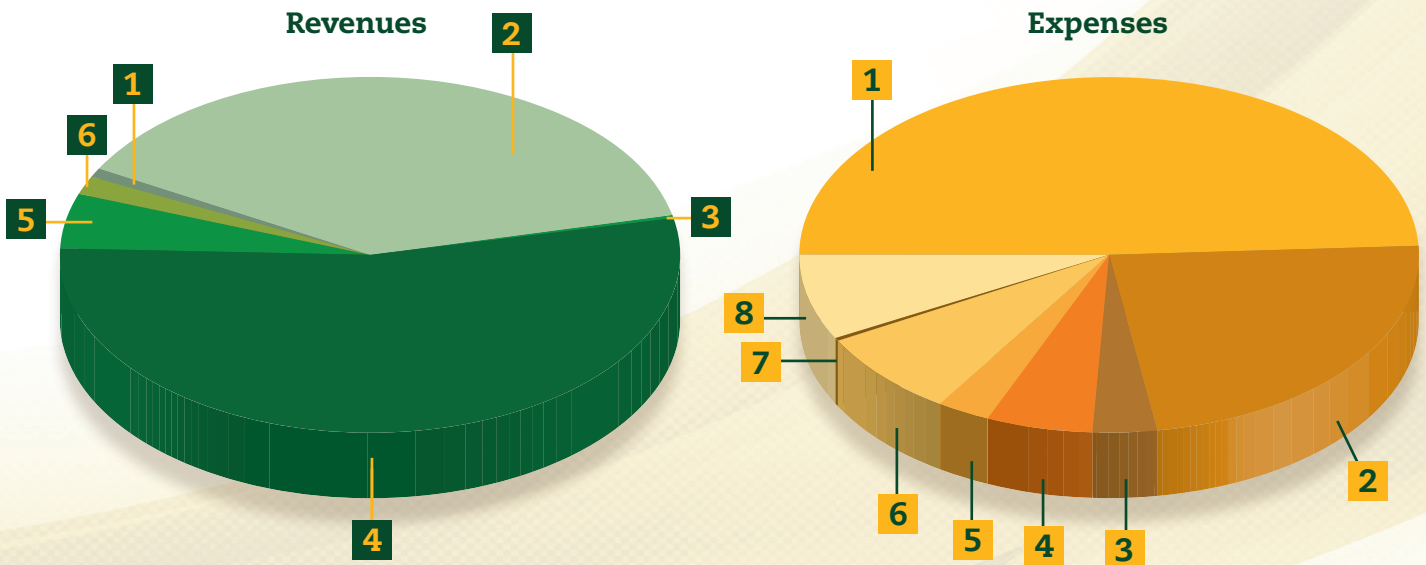
Capital	2017-18	2018-19
Amount	\$6,945,355	\$7,417,151
% of total	15.2%	15.5%

Includes salaries and benefits of maintenance and custodial staff; debt service on buildings; school bus purchases; utilities; general insurance; and tax certiorari and court-ordered costs.



REVENUES: Where the money comes from

Revenue category	2017-18 Budget	2018-19 Proposed	Increase/Decrease	Percent of Proposed
1 Local Revenue	\$439,530	\$408,000	-\$31,530	0.85%
2 State and Federal Aid	\$17,535,243	\$18,351,649	\$816,406	38.44%
3 Federal Medicaid	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	0.21%
4 Real Property Taxes	\$24,732,166	\$25,395,903	\$663,737	53.20%
5 Payments in Lieu of Taxes	\$2,272,484	\$2,396,813	\$124,329	5.02%
6 Fund Balance	\$750,000	\$1,086,000	\$336,000	2.28%
Total	\$45,829,423	\$47,738,365	\$1,908,942	



EXPENSES: Where the money is spent

Expense category	2017-18 Budget	2018-19 Proposed	Increase/Decrease	Percent of Proposed
1 Instruction	\$22,431,885	\$23,561,974	\$1,130,089	49.36%
2 Employee Benefits	\$10,648,076	\$10,656,000	\$7,924	22.32%
3 General Support	\$1,543,293	\$1,636,863	\$93,570	3.43%
4 Operations/Maintenance	\$2,679,523	\$2,811,037	\$131,514	5.89%
5 Administration/Improvement	\$1,294,733	\$1,431,368	\$136,635	3.0%
6 Transportation	\$3,536,237	\$3,599,187	\$62,950	7.54%
7 Interfund Transfers	\$130,000	\$150,000	\$20,000	0.31%
8 Debt Service	\$3,565,676	\$3,891,936	\$326,260	8.15%
Total	\$45,829,423	\$47,738,365	\$1,908,942	

Need an absentee ballot?

Download an absentee ballot application from the website, www.rcscsd.org, or pick one up at the District Office, 15 Mountain Road, Ravena, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk's office by 5 p.m., May 15.



Four candidates vie for three Board of Education seats

On May 15, residents will vote to fill three seats on the Board of Education. Candidates will be elected to three-year terms to begin July 1. Candidates will appear alphabetically on the ballot: Howard Engel III, Kristin Hill-Burns, Taknika Mickey, Edward Reville.

For more information, visit www.rcscsd.org/budget-taxes

Howard (Bray) Engel III is a life-long member of the RCS community and lives in Selkirk with his wife and three children. Engel is an English teacher at Averill Park High School, where he also takes on the roles of faculty advisor, coach and bus driver. He sits on the RCS Board of Education, serving on the policy committee. He is also a member of the RCS Sports Association and RCS Building Committee.

Kristin Hill-Burns resides in Ravena with her husband and two children. She is currently employed as an IT asset management analyst for New York Independent System Operator. Hill-Burns is currently a member of the Board of Education, sitting on the policy committee. She is a board member for the RCS District Youth Basketball program. She also volunteers for the Coeymans Firehouse and assists for the Hudson Valley Little League.

Taknika Mickey lives with her three children in Coeymans and is the office manager for Pinnacle Human Resources, LLC. Mickey is a member of the RCS Sports Association, Student Veterans of America, Capital District Black Chamber of Commerce and Women @ Work. She volunteers with Big Brothers, Big Sisters of the Capital Region and has been nominated to serve as vice commander for American Legion Post 1040.

Edward (Teddy) Reville lives in Selkirk with his wife and three children. He is a vice president at Performance Industrial in Albany. Reville is currently a member of the Board of Education, sitting on the finance/audit committee. He is a member of the RCS Sports Association. Reville is also a coach for Hudson Valley Little League and director and coach for Ravena Youth Basketball.

Voters to decide on school bus proposition

The school bus replacement plan at RCS is a long-term program that seeks to maintain safe and reliable buses with a fleet where the average age of a bus does not exceed 10 years. Transportation Director Jennifer Houck said that a newer fleet, managed by an experienced team of mechanics, has resulted in a 96 percent passage rate on Department of Transportation inspections.

To continue the replacement plan, the district is asking voters to consider the purchase six new buses at an estimated cost not to exceed \$720,463.92. The proposed purchase includes four 65-passenger diesel buses with cameras, air conditioning and five-year extended warranties at a cost not to exceed \$122,446.81 each; and two 65-passenger gasoline buses with cameras, air conditioning and five-year extended warranties at a cost not to exceed \$115,338.34 each.

The state would reimburse the district for 57 percent of the purchase, or \$410,664, over five years. The district would pay for the remaining cost, \$309,799 using short-term bond anticipation notes, paid off over five years from the General fund.

Community library vote

Residents will vote on the RCS Community Library budget and elect two trustees. The library has a proposed budget of \$580,000 for the 2018-19 fiscal year, an increase of \$10,090 from the current year. Two candidates seeking election to the library board of trustees are Laurel Dickerson and Sheila Schwartz.

School District Budget Notice: 2018

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2017-18 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2018-19 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2018-19 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$45,829,423	\$47,738,365	\$47,076,628
Increase/Decrease for the 2018-19 School Year		\$1,908,942	\$1,247,205
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		4.17%	2.72%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.13%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	24,732,166	25,395,903	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	n/a	n/a	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	n/a	n/a	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	n/a	n/a	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	24,732,166	25,395,903	24,732,166
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$802,462	\$794,034	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$23,929,704	\$24,601,869	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$23,929,704	\$24,601,869	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$0	\$0	
Administrative Component	\$3,519,706	\$3,709,016	\$3,623,017
Program Component	\$35,364,362	\$36,612,198	\$36,263,460
Capital Component	\$6,945,355	\$7,417,151	\$7,190,151

* In The event that the voters of the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk School District fail to approve the proposed budget two times, the Board of Education would have to adopt a contingent budget. A contingent budget limits the property tax levy to a zero percent increase. In that event the school would have to eliminate most equipment purchases as well as limit the increase in the administrative portion of the budget. The administrative portion would need to be at or below the same percentage of the previous year.

** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements.)

Description	Amount
Bus Purchase	720,463.92

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2018-19 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings¹

\$597

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2018-19 by the qualified voters of the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk school district, Albany County, New York, will be held at the High School in said district on Tuesday, May 15, 2018, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., prevailing time in the High School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

¹ The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

STAR Savings

STAR is New York State's School Tax Relief Program, which provides partial school property tax savings to eligible homeowners. Most New Yorkers who own and live in their homes are eligible for STAR savings on their primary residences. There are two STAR programs with different eligibility requirements. The Basic STAR exemption is available to homeowners with incomes below \$500,000. The Enhanced STAR exemption is available to senior citizens (age 65 and older) with yearly household incomes not exceeding \$86,000. Income eligibility for 2018 is calculated using information from the 2016 tax year.

Board of Education

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*Produced in cooperation with
the Capital Region BOCES
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Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk**CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT****15 Mountain Road****P.O. Box 100****Ravena, New York 12143****518.756.5200**

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Community input emphasizes creative learning solutions



As the district begins the process of developing a long-term strategic plan, the main priority is to prepare RCS students for the global community. Like other districts across the state, RCS administrators anticipate fiscal challenges this year and in future years.

“The district has to invest wisely and consider how to best use our time, staff and resources,” Superintendent Brian Bailey said. “These three things combine to make meaningful programs for our students.”

Focused on improving student outcomes, district leaders began the conversation with parents in November, distributing a survey about service in the schools. As a result of the findings, the district is developing a better system of communication with families at district, school and individual levels.

Parents, students, community members, local business and political leaders, and district staff all came

together in February for the “Future Forum” to discuss how to prepare the next generation of RCS students for the workplace and the world.

Student engagement, future readiness and community partnerships were the three focus topics at the forum. Each group spoke about these topics, while note-takers recorded participants’ thoughts. The notes were then summarized and written on large poster paper. Participants were asked to review the summaries and prioritize the three areas that they believe would best ensure student success at RCS.

Forum feedback produced insight into the following opportunities for growth in the district:

- Developing systems that allow for mentoring.
- Involving students in the world at large with community service and service-learning.
- Promoting student ownership over learning.
- Understanding the needs of all learners and capitalizing on their skills/interests.
- Building and strengthening relationships between the schools and the community.
- Encouraging kids to think beyond the classroom and consider community impact.
- Expanding job sharing programs and broadening potential internships.
- Teaching and reinforcing resiliency, allowing students to learn through failure.
- Emboldening students to develop a personal vision for their place in the world, supporting them by teaching life skills and goal setting.