Waverly Central Schools
May 2026- Budget Edition
News

A Message From the Superintendent

2026-27 Proposed Budget and State of the Schools

Dear Waverly Community,

As we present the proposed 2026–27 school budget, I want to begin with a simple message: Waverly is in a strong and steady place.

This year's proposed budget is **$47,456,247**, representing an increase of **$33,681**, or **0.07 percent** over last year. In a time when many districts are navigating significant financial turbulence, maintaining this level of stability while continuing to grow is something our entire community can take pride in.

State of the Schools

Our district continues to show strong growth in academic accountability. Based on the 2025–26 accountability rankings, the district and all of our schools are in good standing. That is not just a metric, it reflects the daily work of our teachers, staff and students pushing forward together.

Our Wolverines continue to excel across the board:

- In the classroom, with high levels of achievement and engagement
- On the playing fields, where teams are competing at elite levels
- In the community, where service and character remain central

This spring has been especially exciting:

- Track athletes currently holding top seeds in the section
- Softball and tennis competing for division titles
- Baseball ranked **4th in the state**
- Girls Flag Football ranked **2nd in the state**
- Four members of Future Business Leaders of America are **advancing to Nationals** in San Antonio this June

These are not isolated successes, but the result of a culture built on commitment, opportunity and pride in representing the "W."

Investing in Our Future

We have officially broken ground on the NY Forward Riverfront Park Project, a transformative initiative that will:

- Provide 13 acres of outdoor classroom space
- Include walking and biking trails
- Create hands-on opportunities for students to design, build and maintain a community resource

This project reflects exactly who we are: a district where learning extends beyond walls and into real-world experiences.

We are incredibly grateful to the Village of Waverly, Carantouan Greenways and our many local partners who have committed time, equipment and expertise to bring this vision to life.

Continued on page 2

School Budget
VOTE & Board of Education Election
Tues. May 19
Noon-8:00 p.m.

Superintendent's Message, *continued*

Facilities and Long-Term Planning

Our recent capital work at the High School and Lincoln Street is now complete.

We will begin the **Elm Street project this fall**, including:

- A secure vestibule
- Cafeteria upgrades
- A new nurse's suite

Through strategic planning and a **97 percent reimbursement rate**, we have modernized our facilities while positioning the district for long-term stability. These spaces were designed not just for students, but for the broader community, strengthening Waverly as a place to live, learn and grow.

Fiscal Responsibility in Challenging Times

Across New York State, school districts are facing growing financial pressure, particularly due to healthcare costs. This year:

- Our healthcare expenses increased by **8 percent**, which is manageable, compared to last year's 20 percent increase
- We continue to work proactively with Smith Brothers to explore sustainable solutions

The budget also includes **bus leases**, as we prepare for the state's 2027 transition deadline toward electric buses. At this time, uncertainty remains at the state level, as the final budget in Albany has not yet been approved. We are operating based on the Governor's initial proposal from February and will continue to adjust as needed.

Tax Impact

This budget reflects a **3.65 percent tax levy increase**, structured as follows:

- **2 percent impact on homeowners**
- **1.65 percent offset by new tax revenue** from Three Sisters Solar and Midwestern Pet Foods, as they transition off PILOT agreements and onto the tax rolls

For the average taxpayer, this equates to approximately: **$65 per $100,000 of assessed property value.**

While our allowable tax cap exceeds six percent, the Board of Education and district leadership made a deliberate decision to remain well below that threshold while still meeting student needs.

Gratitude

I want to recognize:

- **Kathy Rote**, our CFO, for her exceptional work in building this budget
- Our **Board of Education** for their thoughtful leadership and guidance
- Our **operations and support staff**, who continue to manage rising costs with care and creativity

Waverly is a special place. There is a steady rhythm here, one built on people showing up for each other, doing the work and keeping students at the center of every decision.

We are proud to serve as the educational heart of this community and we are grateful for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,



Dr. Eric A. Knolles
Superintendent of Schools

Kids, Community and Each Other

Important Information for Voters

On Tuesday, May 19, Waverly residents will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed 2026-27 school budget and the proposition to lease school buses, as well as elect two members to the Board of Education. The polls will be open from noon to 8:00 p.m. in the High School. Residents will see the following on the ballot:

Proposition 1: School Budget

Shall the Board of Education of the Waverly Central School District expend the sum of $47,456,247 for the 2026-27 school year and levy the necessary tax therefore?

Proposition 2: School Bus Lease

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to enter into a lease for three 66-passenger buses for an annual cost not to exceed $125,000 per year for a maximum of five years, at a total cost of $625,000, 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.

Board of Education Member Election

Select two candidates to serve as members of the Board of Education.

Board of Education Candidates:

Cory Robinson

Beau Roskow

Voter Eligibility

Voters must be US citizens who are at least 18 years of age and have been a resident of the district for 30 days prior to the vote.

Absentee Ballots

If you are unable to appear in person on Tuesday, May 19, you may vote by absentee ballot. To receive an absentee ballot, please pick up an application in the District Office.

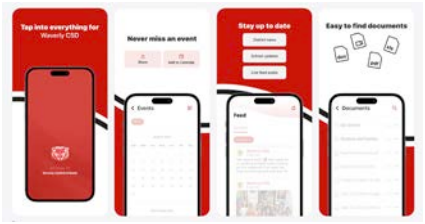
If you would like the absentee ballot mailed to you, return the application seven days before the vote.

If you will pick up the absentee ballot, return the application at least one day before the vote. ***Absentee ballots must be returned no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 19***.

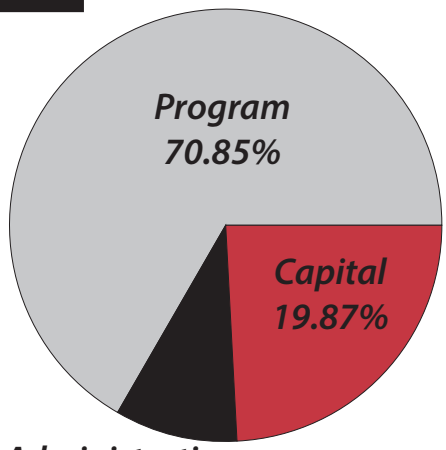
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Three-part budget breakdown



Program $33,624,013 70.85%

The Program Component includes all instructional program expenditures, including the salaries and benefits of teachers and any school administrators or supervisors who spend a majority of their time performing teaching duties, and all transportation operating expenses. This total includes regular instruction, education of those with special needs, occupational education, curriculum and staff development, summer school and pupil services such as health, guidance, library, co-curricular activities, athletics and transportation.

Capital $9,427,992 19.87%

The Capital Component includes all transportation capital, debt service and lease expenditures; and costs resulting from court judgments, administrative orders, settled or compromised claims. It also includes all facilities costs of the district, including facility lease expenditures, annual debt service and total debt for all facilities financed by bonds and notes of the district, costs of construction, acquisition, reconstruction, rehabilitation or improvement of school buildings and all expenditures associated with custodial salaries and benefits, service contracts, supplies, utilities and maintenance repair of school facilities.

The 2026-27 Capital Outlay Exception project will include electrical renovations at the Elm Street Elementary School including renovations to the stadium audio system, power distribution system and low voltage data system.

Administrative $4,404,242 9.28%

The Administrative Component includes office and central administrative expenses, travel expenses, salaries and benefits of all certified school administrators and supervisors who spend a majority of their time performing administrative or supervisory duties, all expenditures associated with the operation of the school board, the superintendent, general administration, the school business office, any consulting costs not directly related to student services and program planning and all other administrative activities.

Where Does the Money Come From?



State aid 65.72% | *Local tax levy 17.48%* | *Other* 16.79%*

**Other includes: Operating balance - 5.90%; BOCES aid - 6.14%; Miscellaneous - 2.78%; Payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) - 1.15%; SACC Program - .38% and Interest/Earnings - .44%*

How is the Budget Money Spent?



Instructional salaries 26.62% | *Other salaries 8.02%* | *Fringe benefits 25.16%* | *Other* 9.83%* | *Debt service 12.83%* | *BOCES services 17.53%*

**Other includes: Equipment - 1.28%; Contractual - 6.13%; Materials and supplies -1.94%; Textbooks - .48%*

Celebrating Literacy and Individuality

During March, Lincoln Street students, staff and families celebrated reading in a variety of fun and meaningful ways, beginning with PARP (Pick a Reading Partner) Week and its Candyland-themed daily activities. On March 5, families joined us for Family Literacy Night, where students and their families enjoyed hands-on reading activities and took home a free book to keep the fun going. *Read Across America* also was celebrated with a special visit from high school seniors, who read with our students in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday.

The month wrapped up with a schoolwide read-a-thon. Students tracked their reading minutes each day, with the top class in each grade earning a pizza party. As an added incentive, students worked toward a goal of 5,000 minutes to see Mrs. Hall get slimed at a school assembly. In total, the students read an impressive 35,683 minutes and raised $4,250. All proceeds support the Lincoln Street parent group, PEP, which helps fund field trips and student activities throughout the school year.

Thank you to our staff and families for supporting Literacy Month and to our PEP group for their continued support.



Students and staff came together April 13-17 to celebrate individuality and community during "Our Differences Make Us Special" Week.



Classrooms explored a variety of picture books that highlight diversity and inclusion, including *All of Us* by Kathryn Erskine, *The Magic of Diversity* by Becky Merritt, *All My Stripes* by Shaina Rudolph and Danielle Royer and *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon* by Patty Lovell. Each story encouraged students to appreciate and celebrate the differences that make us who we are.

Students also decorated individual quarters of a circle, which were later combined to create a vibrant, schoolwide mural symbolizing how each unique piece contributes to a larger, beautiful whole. The celebration concluded on Friday with "Me Day." Students wore crowns decorated at home with their families, while the entire school showed their spirit in tie-dye. It was a meaningful opportunity to build connections and remind our students that each of them is special, unique and belongs.

FBLA Excels at State Leadership Conference

Ten members of Waverly's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter recently attended the State Leadership Conference in Rochester. The annual event brings together students from across the state to develop leadership skills, explore career pathway and compete in a variety of business-related events.

Throughout the conference, Waverly students participated in workshops led by business professionals and educators, covering topics such as entrepreneurship, financial literacy, digital communication and career readiness and had an opportunity to network with peers from other districts, strengthening their communication and teamwork skills.

In addition to workshops, members competed in objective testing and live presentations.

Waverly competitors included:

Trevor Blauvelt and Carson Rockwell
Financial Planning
Hannah Carpenter, **Madison Cron** and **Chase Wheeler**
Graphic Design
Sophia Nierstedt
Public Speaking
Agribusiness
Krishan Kamath
Personal Finance
Economics
Benjamin Steadman-Keanon
Cybersecurity
Healthcare Administration
Logan Robinson
Introduction to Programming
Grace Spaulding
Organizational Management

Logan Robinson earned second place, and the team of Hannah Carpenter, Madison Cron and Chase Wheeler came in third, securing spots at the National Leadership Conference in San Antonio, Texas, this June to compete alongside top students from across the country.



The conference marked the conclusion of Grace Spaulding's term as District 8 State Vice President. The past year, she represented schools across the region, supporting events, communicating with advisors and members and promoting FBLA's mission of leadership, service and career development. Grace represented Waverly with pride and professionalism.

Waverly's FBLA chapter continues to grow, providing students opportunities to explore business careers, build leadership skills and engage in community service and this group represented Waverly with excellence.



Waverly Central School District
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Our Mission:

Inspire.

Educate.

Learn.

Succeed.

Grow.

Touch-A-Truck Brings Lessons to Life

Our annual Touch-a-Truck event, the culminating activity of the transportation unit, was held on April 2.

Throughout the unit, students explored how vehicles of all kinds move, learning about force and motion through books, classroom experiments and hands-on activities.



Touch-a-Truck brought those lessons to life, giving students the opportunity to see and interact with a variety of vehicles, including a bus, police car, ambulance, construction equipment and boats.

This event is made possible through the collaboration of our staff and the support of our community.

Thank you to everyone who planned and participated in this memorable experience for our students.

