



South Lewis Central School District Newsletter

The Proposed 2026-27 Annual Budget Newsletter

One District. One Building. One Family.



Celebrating our future. Honoring our past.

Public Hearing

Tuesday, May 12, 2026 6:30 PM Board Room

Voting

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 12:00 PM-8:00 PM Auditorium

2026-27 Budget News

2.79% Tax Levy Increase

Dear South Lewis Central School Community:

The Board of Education recently adopted the 2026-27 budget. This budget will have a 2.79% tax increase. This year, once again, we are below the allowable tax cap limit which has been in place since 2012. This budget has been particularly challenging due to significant increases in healthcare costs, commercial insurance increases and significant spikes in utility expenses. However, the District has worked extremely hard to adopt a budget that is responsible to the taxpayer while continuing to provide strong programs, services, opportunities and facilities for our students and school community.

Over the 14 years since this tax cap legislation has been enacted, our average tax increase has been 1.81%. This average tax increase is inclusive of all associated costs with the nearly \$70 million in capital improvements to our facilities and campus over this time. Additionally, we have enhanced many of our supports and opportunities for our students, staff and community during these years. We are also proud of the programs in place that save our families thousands of out-of-pocket expenses each year providing free breakfast and lunch to all students, free school supplies and free school-based health center and dental program services. We also are honored to host numerous community events on our campus each year free of cost including youth sports and recreation activities, Cornell Cooperative Extension competitions, dance recitals, adult league basketball, lifeguard trainings, kayak certifications and senior citizen water aerobics to just name a few. South Lewis CSD is truly the hub of the community and genuinely appreciates the continued support and partnerships.

This year we will have two school district propositions on the ballot in May. The first proposition is for the 2026-27 South Lewis overall school budget of \$35,009,478. The second is to finance the purchase of four (4) diesel 65-passenger school buses and one (1) SUV for student transportation for a total maximum aggregate cost of \$721,567.

In addition to these two propositions, the voters of South Lewis CSD will also elect three (3) Board of Education members. Two (2) seats will be for five-year terms. One (1) seat will be for a one-year term. The candidates receiving the two highest vote totals will be awarded the five-year terms. The candidate with the third highest vote total will be awarded the one-year term. The expiring seats with the five-year terms are currently held by Jessica Carpenter and Blake Place. The one-year term is currently held by Lucy Austin who was appointed to the position after the resignation of Dawn Ludovici last July. There are four candidates, incumbent Jessica Carpenter, appointed member Lucy Austin, Katie Carpenter and Kristin Thomas for the three spots. The District will be sending out an informational "Meet the BOE Candidates" flyer prior to the vote.

A Public Hearing for the budget and the two propositions will be held before the Board meeting on Tuesday, May 12th in the South Lewis Board Room at 6:30 PM. The annual budget vote and Board of Education election will be held the following Tuesday, May 19th from Noon to 8:00 PM in the South Lewis Auditorium.

Lastly, if you are interested in learning more about the South Lewis Central School budget or would like a speaker at your organization, please call me at 315-348-2500.

Sincerely,



Douglas Premo
Superintendent of Schools

Levy or Rate?

People often confuse the words **tax levy** and **tax rate**. The levy is the amount of money the district needs to generate from the local taxpayer to meet its budget demands. We are projecting that the local levy will be \$10,070,478 (2.79% increase over last August's levy). We cannot state accurately what tax rate that levy will require until August.

Why? The tax rate required to yield the tax levy is dependent upon state-provided assessments, which are not completed until late summer. Please remember that the school district does not generate those rates. Therefore, though we can calculate a levy with some certainty, we can only estimate a rate.

Mini-Renovation Project

South Lewis Central School District seeks to maximize state aid in order to make the most of the district's tax dollars. Continuing a strategy from last year, a mini-renovation project is again being proposed this year that will include HVAC improvements in select classrooms at the Elementary-Middle-High School building. This mini-renovation project takes advantage of capital project aid from the state. If this work was not performed as part of a capital project, the district would incur the full cost of the work. By including the \$100,000 budget for this work in a mini-capital project within the proposed annual budget, the district will receive approximately \$85,000 in additional aid during the 2027-28 school year. This is part of a long-range strategy in which the building aid returned in the following year will continue to fund additional mini-renovation projects as a regular part of the district's budget.

Information from the New York State School Report Card is not in the 2026-27 Budget Brochure. The information is available at the South Lewis website:

www.southlewis.org

or

**by contacting the South Lewis Central
School District Office**

315-348-2500



PROPOSED COMPONENT BUDGET

2026-27 ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET PROPOSAL

BOARD OF EDUCATION	\$ 21,400
CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	319,725
FINANCE	478,528
LEGAL SERVICES	5,000
PERSONNEL	46,000
PUBLIC INFORMATION	106,609
OTHER CENTRAL SERVICES	66,000
BOCES ADMIN., PROPERTY INS., DUES	401,000
CURRICULUM AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT	333,551
SUPERVISION	910,735
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	690,765
 TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET	 \$3,379,313
 2025-26 ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET	 \$3,170,166

Administrative Budget:

The Administrative component of the budget includes salaries and benefits for all certified school administrators; expenditures associated with the district's central administrative offices, including the school board, superintendent, school business office, and principals; as well as other administrative activities.

2026-27 PROGRAM BUDGET PROPOSAL

LEGAL SERVICES	\$ 15,000
INSTRUCTION	14,010,959
TRANSPORTATION	1,664,221
BUS GARAGE	60,650
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	6,865,780
OTHER TRANSFERS	72,000
COMMUNITY SERVICES	8,000
 TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET	 \$22,696,610
 2025-26 PROGRAM BUDGET	 \$21,482,002

Program Budget:

This component of the budget includes salaries and benefits of teachers, supervisors who spend a majority of their time performing teaching duties, and operating expenses for instructional and transportation programs.

2026-27 CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSAL

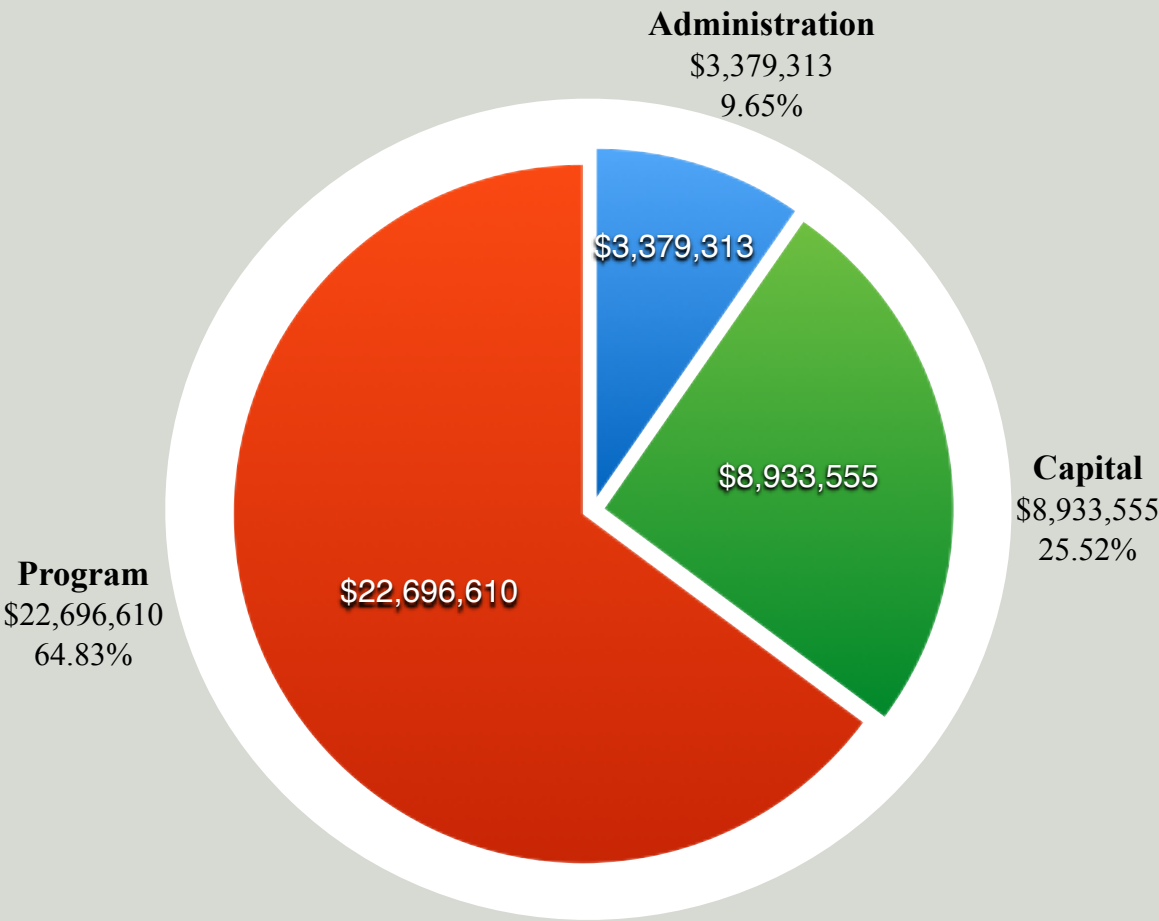
Capital Budget:

This component of the budget includes funds for the purchase of school buses, principal and interest payments on debt service, and all operational, cleaning, and maintenance costs for district facilities, including salaries and benefits, service contracts, supplies, and utility costs.

OPERATION OF FACILITIES	\$2,016,100
MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES	313,050
JUDGMENTS AND CLAIMS	3,000
REFUND OF TAXES	10,000
BUS PAYMENTS	660,113
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	816,358
DEBT SERVICE	5,014,934
TRANSFER TO CAPITAL FUND	100,000
 TOTAL CAPITAL BUDGET	 \$8,933,555
 2025-26 CAPITAL BUDGET	 \$7,184,964



2026-27 PROPOSED COMPONENT BUDGET



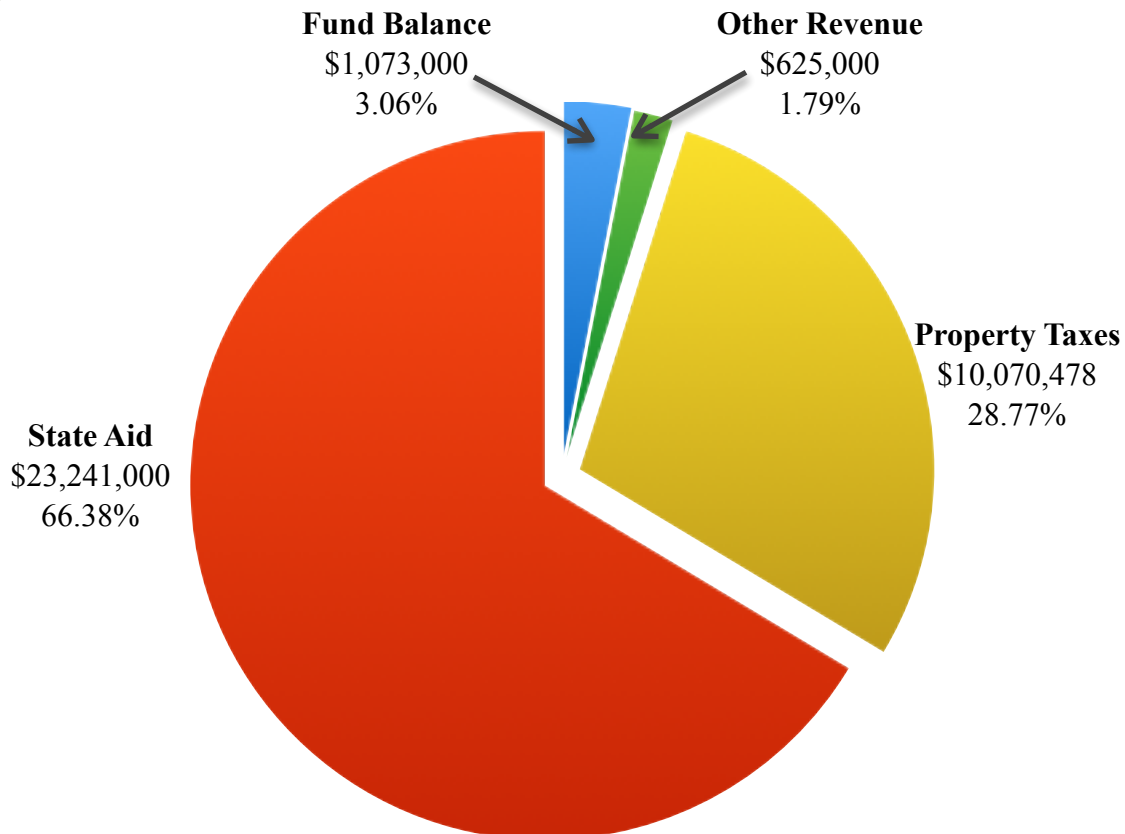
School District Tax Report Card

	Budgeted 2025-26	Budgeted 2026-27	Percent Change
Total Spending	\$31,837,132	\$35,009,478	9.96%
Estimated School Tax Levy	\$9,797,138	\$10,070,478	2.79%
Enrollment	1068	1068	0%
Consumer Price Index			2.63%

PROPOSED BUDGET REVENUE COMPARISON

	2025-26 Estimated Revenue	2026-27 Estimated Revenue	Dollar Increase/ Decrease	Percent Increase/ Decrease
Property Taxes	\$9,797,138	\$10,070,478	\$273,340	2.79%
State Aid	\$20,642,415	\$23,241,000	\$2,598,585	12.59%
Other Revenue	\$582,500	\$625,000	\$42,500	7.3%
Fund Balance	\$815,079	\$1,073,000	\$257,921	31.64%
Total	\$31,837,132	\$35,009,478	\$3,172,346	9.96%

ESTIMATED REVENUE & FUND BALANCE FOR THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR





VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

Voters at a school election must have all of the following qualifications:

- A citizen of the United States
- At least eighteen (18) years of age
- A resident within the district for a period of at least thirty (30) days prior to the day of the vote

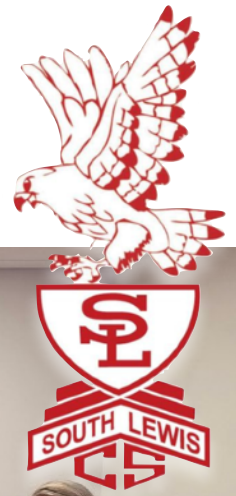
If the budget is defeated, the School Board's options are to:

- ♦ Put the same budget up for vote a second time,
- ♦ Submit a revised budget to the voters, or
- ♦ Adopt a contingency budget and seek voter approval directly on non-contingent expenditures.



ONE DISTRICT • ONE BUILDING • ONE FAMILY

BOARD OF EDUCATION



Sitting left to right: Blake Place, Jessica Carpenter, Patrick D'Ambrosi, Mark Lemieux, Lucy Austin
Back row: Richard Ventura, Andrew Liendecker, BOE President, Justin Szucs, BOE Vice President, Thomas Burmingham

BOARD OF EDUCATION Term Expires

Andrew Liendecker, President	June 30, 2027
Lucy Austin	June 30, 2026
Thomas Burmingham	June 30, 2028
Jessica Carpenter	June 30, 2026
Patrick D'Ambrosi	June 30, 2030
Mark Lemieux	June 30, 2029
Blake Place	June 30, 2026
Justin Szucs, Vice President	June 30, 2029
Richard Ventura	June 30, 2030

Qualifications

- ◆ Must be able to read and write
- ◆ Must be a qualified voter of the district
- ◆ Must be and have been a resident (but need not be a taxpayer) of the district for a continuous and uninterrupted period of at least one year immediately before the election
- ◆ May not have been removed from any school district office within the preceding year
- ◆ May not be a current employee of the school board
- ◆ May not simultaneously hold another incompatible public office

Candidates for the two (2) five-year term seats and one (1) one-year term seat on the Board of Education will be listed on the ballot. Voters will vote for three (3) candidates to fill the three (3) seats.

Candidates receiving the two (2) highest vote counts will be awarded the five (5) year term seats.

The candidate receiving the third highest vote count will be awarded the one (1) year term seat.



SEATS EXPIRING

Lucy Austin
Jessica Carpenter
Blake Place

CANDIDATES

Lucy Austin
Jessica Carpenter
Katie Carpenter
Kristin Thomas

THE FOLLOWING PROPOSITIONS WILL APPEAR ON THE VOTING BALLOT



PROPOSITION #1

Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Lewis Central School District, Lewis County, New York, be authorized to levy the necessary tax for and appropriate a sum not to exceed \$35,009,478 for the purpose of the General Fund Budget for the 2026-27 school year.

PROPOSITION #2

Shall the Board of Education of the South Lewis Central School District be authorized to purchase and finance four (4) 65-passenger diesel student transport vehicles and one (1) SUV for student transportation, including necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment and all other costs incidental thereto, and expend a total sum not to exceed \$721,567, which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and said amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and, in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District, in the principal amount not to exceed \$721,567, shall be issued.



SOUTH LEWIS CENTRAL SCHOOL

District Office
P.O. Box 10
Turin, NY 13473

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Turin, New York
Bulk Rate
Permit No. 4

CAR-RTE-SORT

Occupant or Box Holder



South Lewis Central School

Home of the Falcons