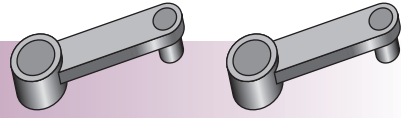


An eye on the **BOTTOM LINE!**



Residents will vote on three different issues:

- On a proposed \$22,801,764 budget for 2005-06 that reflects a 6.09 percent increase in spending, as compared to the 2004-05 budget.
- On a proposition to renew its transportation facilities lease located at Snyder Avenue.
- To elect three candidates to fill positions on the Board of Education.

Proposed budget

The local tax levy is projected to increase from \$6,388,474 to \$6,735,702, or 5.44 percent. The average property tax rate is expected to increase by less than 3 percent, in part because property tax values in general have risen in the district. At this point, however, school officials can not project the actual tax rates that would result from the proposed budget because two factors that affect the rates have not yet been determined:

- **Each taxing jurisdiction within the school district computes assessment values for every property within its borders. Residents have the right to challenge those assessments.** Until those cases are settled, the jurisdictions cannot compute all of their assessed values. The assessed values for the five jurisdictions within the district are completed by July 1.
- **Annually, the New York State Office of Real Property Services (ORPS) develops equalization rates that are used to assure the equitable allocation of property taxes among the jurisdictions within the school district.** That information is provided to the district after July 1.

Programs will be maintained

The proposed budget includes funding for all current instructional programs, extracurricular activities and

athletic programs. In addition, funding is included for an additional teacher at the kindergarten level to accommodate anticipated enrollment growth. No other new positions are included in the budget. The budget includes funding for the purchase of four new school buses. This will allow the district to upgrade its aging fleet by replacing older, high-mileage and high-maintenance vehicles with new vehicles.

Mandatory costs are rising

The district is anticipating significant cost increases in several areas over which school officials have no control. These include mandatory retirement contributions, health insurance, energy and fuel costs, and special education programs.

A significant portion of the increase in the proposed budget is a result of the increases in required payments to the state retirement systems and the rising health insurance costs. These two items combined represent approximately 40 percent of the increase in the proposed budget.

- An additional \$77,000 has been budgeted to cover rising natural gas and fuel costs for district buses and maintenance vehicles.
- Special education costs are projected to rise by \$124,000, reflecting increases in the utilization of selected services.

These mandatory cost increases represent approximately 55 percent of the proposed budget increase.

Proposition

Shall the Board of Education of the Greater Johnstown School District be authorized to renew its lease with respect to its transportation facilities located at Snyder Avenue, Johnstown, New York, for a period not to exceed five (5) years and at a rent not to exceed \$90,000 for each year of the renewed lease?

Board of Education

Residents will elect candidates to fill three vacancies on the Greater Johnstown School District Board of Education.

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POSTAL CUSTOMER

The annual budget vote for the 2005-06 fiscal year by the qualified voters of the Greater Johnstown School District will be held at Pleasant Avenue School, Jansen Avenue School, Knox Junior High School, Johnstown Public Library and Ephratah Fire House on Tuesday, May 17, 2005, from noon to 9 p.m. Your polling location is listed within this brochure or can be found at www.johnstownschooldistrict.org or call 762-4611.



Greater
Johnstown
School District

Budget Vote



Tuesday, May 17th

Budget Vote

on Tuesday, May 17th

Residents of the Greater Johnstown School District will go to the polls on **Tuesday, May 17** to vote on a proposed \$22,801,764 budget for the 2005-06 school year. That represents a 6.09 percent increase over last year's budget. The average property tax rate is expected to increase by less than 3 percent. Voters will also elect three candidates to serve on the Board of Education. Please take the time to learn about the proposed school budget and remember to vote on **May 17**. Polls are open from noon to 9 p.m. Voters must be U.S. citizens, age 18 or older and residents of the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote. Advanced registration is required.

Polling Places

For residents of the City of Johnstown

- Ward 1 – Pleasant Avenue School
- Ward 2 – Jansen Avenue School
- Ward 3 – Knox Junior High School
- Ward 4 – Johnstown Public Library

For residents of the Town of Johnstown

- District 1 – Knox Junior High School
- District 3 – Pleasant Avenue School
- District 4 – Pleasant Avenue School
- District 5 – Johnstown Public Library
- District 6 – Jansen Avenue School

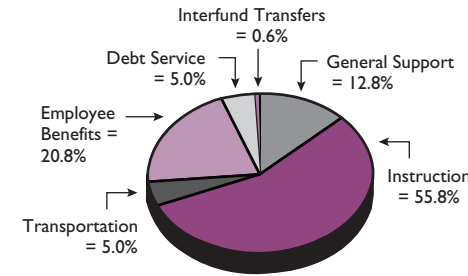
For residents of the Towns of Ephratah and Palatine

- Ephratah Fire Department

The Proposed 2005-06 School Budget

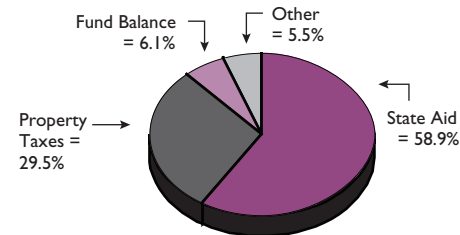
EXPENDITURES

	2004-05 Budget	Proposed Budget	Percent Change
General Support	\$2,759,014	\$2,913,956	5.62%
Instruction	12,194,544	12,714,419	4.26%
Pupil Transportation	1,084,651	1,142,341	5.32%
Employee Benefits	4,243,552	4,758,923	12.14%
Debt Service	1,136,125	1,137,125	0.09%
Interfund Transfers	75,000	135,000	80%
TOTAL	\$21,492,886	\$22,801,764	6.09%



REVENUES

	2004-05 Budget	Proposed Budget	Percent Change
State Aid	\$13,054,612	\$13,407,937	2.71%
Property Taxes	6,388,474	6,735,702	5.44%
Fund Balance	913,000	1,395,000	52.79%
Other	1,136,800	1,263,125	11.11%
TOTAL	\$21,492,886	\$22,801,764	6.09%



Required format

School districts are required to provide information in the format below.

	Budget adopted for 2004-05	Budget proposed for 2005-06	Contingency budget for 2005-06
Total budgeted amount	\$21,492,886	\$22,801,764	\$21,846,068
Budget increase (decrease)	478,652	1,308,878	\$353,782
Percentage increase (decrease)	2.28%	6.09%	1.64%
Consumer Price Index increase	2.30%	2.70%	--
Resulting estimated property tax levy for 2005-06	\$6,338,474	\$6,735,702	\$5,713,666

BUDGETS ARE COMPRISED OF THREE PARTS:

	2004-05 Budget	Proposed Budget	Contingency Budget
Administrative component	\$ 2,182,389	\$ 2,356,728	\$2,249,652
Program component	15,646,085	16,652,476	16,145,856
Capital component	3,664,412	3,792,560	3,450,560
Total	\$21,492,886	\$22,801,764	\$21,846,068

What happens if voters don't approve the 2005-06 budget?

Under state law, school boards can submit a budget to voters a maximum of two times.

If a budget is defeated twice, the board **must** adopt a contingency budget, which would put a cap on new spending. Based upon a formula, this year's spending cap is 3.24 percent. *(Some exclusions are allowed.)*

If a contingency budget is adopted, the spending plan for Johnstown would be \$21,846,068.

The contingency budget assumes that certain expenditures (including four school buses and the district's technology upgrades) and student supply items will not be purchased. In addition, some district employees may not be eligible for certain salary increases in 2005-2006 if the proposed budget is defeated. There have been no other assumptions made. The Board of Education will review the options available if the proposed spending plan is not approved by the voters.

If a contingency budget is put in place, under state law there can be no more votes on a budget for this year.

Also, there can be no referendum to reinstate any of the specific components that were removed from the budget to meet the spending cap imposed by a contingency budget.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact:

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption savings based on a hypothetical home within the school district with a full value of \$100,000.

	Adopted Budget 2004-05	Proposed budget 2005-06
Basic STAR tax savings	\$562.07	\$565.42
School tax increase (decrease)	\$10.46	\$54.00
Net Basic STAR tax savings	\$551.61	\$511.42