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tional personnel. Further staffing cuts brought the total to 36 positions.

GASD received good news when the state released its final school aid figures in April—the district received more aid than anticipated. The board opted to return over \$1.1 million of those funds to the taxpayers to reduce property taxes. The remainder was used to reinstate nine positions which include one elementary teacher, one guidance counselor, one social worker, four teacher aides, one Spanish teacher, and one hall monitor coordinator.

- Utilities—Gasoline for school buses, heating fuels and electricity. The increase in bus fuel drove student transportation up over 12 percent.
- Employee benefits—Rising health care premiums and increases in state mandated employee retirement contributions account for over 35 percent of the budget increase.

**POLLING PLACES: OPEN 12 NOON TO 9 P.M.**

- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #1 ..... MCNULTY SCHOOL  
Ward 1 - Districts 1,2,3  
Ward 2 - District 1,2  
(also former Common School District #11 residents, Town of Amsterdam)
- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #2 ..... BACON SCHOOL  
Ward 3 - Districts 1,2,3,4  
Town of Amsterdam, District 1 (including former Common School District #7)
- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #3 ..... CURIE SCHOOL  
Ward 2 - Districts 3,4  
Ward 4 - Districts 1,2,3,4  
Ward 5 - District 1,2,3
- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #4 ..... BARKLEY SCHOOL  
Ward 5 - District 4
- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #5 ..... TECLER SCHOOL  
Ward 1 - District 4  
Town of Amsterdam, Dist. 2,4,5 (Hagaman, Perth, Harrowers)
- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #6 ..... MINAVILLE TOWN HALL  
Town of Florida
- SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT #7 ..... TRUAX SCHOOL  
Town of Amsterdam (Truax, Swart Hill, Glenville Dist. 3)

**Driving the budget**

As in recent years, the biggest increases in the school budget are items over which the district has little control. Included in those items are:

- Debt Service—Portions of voter-approved construction and renovation projects will come due in '06-'07. The district pays those costs and then the state reimburses the district the following year.

**Making the decision to consolidate elementary schools**

With an initial budget reflecting a 32 percent spending increase, the GASD board of education faced difficult decisions.

“The board believed that the community would not support a budget of that size. So, it looked at staffing and programming at all levels, as well as overhead expenses, looking for ways to make the needed cuts,” says GASD Superintendent Ron Limoncelli.

The board ultimately decided to reduce teaching staff at the elementary level from the current 80 teachers to 63. Further analysis showed that that staff reductions would as many as 36 students in some classrooms and as few as 18 in others. In addition, the move would leave nearly one third (28) of the elementary classrooms vacant.

“After making the decision to reduce the elementary staff, we faced another decision,” explains GASD Board of Education President Gerald Cinquanti. “Do we pay the overhead to heat and maintain empty classrooms or do we close one of the elementary schools to reduce overhead. We felt the district as a whole would be better off closing the school and spending the savings on staff.”

After examining class sizes, educational impact, future budget estimates, population trends and student transportation costs the board decided to close Clara Bacon Elementary. Even with closing one school, the district still has nine empty classrooms available for future enrollment growth.



**Grants: Increased outside revenues help improve education opportunities without increasing the tax burden**

Various state, federal, and private agencies have awarded the Greater Amsterdam School District over \$9 million in grants to provide students with extra academic support. The district's office of State and Federal Projects works in cooperation with administrators and teachers to apply for these funds which include:

- ▲ **Title I grant:** \$500,000 to operate the McNulty Academy for International Studies and Literacy and \$300,000 to develop in International Baccalaureate program at Lynch Middle School.

- ▲ **Title I grant:** This \$1,377,038 grant, targeted at high poverty schools, will help to ensure that all children have the same opportunity to meet challenging state academic standards.
- ▲ **Reading First grant:** This \$1,150,000 grant will be spent over three years. The award will improve early literacy instruction primarily by educating teachers on the latest scientific-based reading research.
- ▲ **School Accountability and Improvement grant:** A total of \$65,000 will

2006-2007 Budget

**EXPENDITURES**

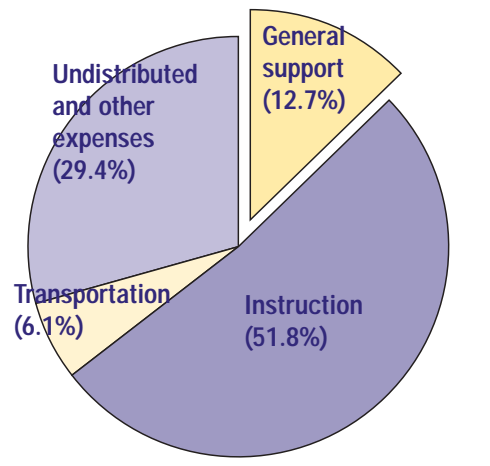
	2005-2006	2006-2007	Increase (decrease)
<b>General support</b>			
Board of Education	\$41,115	\$25,215	\$(15,900)
Chief school administrator	155,864	161,753	5,889
Finance	431,379	449,367	17,988
Staff	158,048	167,177	9,129
Central Services	3,709,007	4,079,270	370,263
Special Items	643,965	860,646	206,681
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$5,149,378</b>	<b>5,743,428</b>	<b>\$594,050</b>
<b>Instruction</b>			
Administration & Improvement	\$1,400,533	\$1,341,635	\$(58,898)
Regular school	13,361,546	13,716,502	354,956
Program for pupils with disabilities	5,326,719	5,306,811	(19,908)
Occupational education	853,421	876,190	22,769
Summer school	96,190	99,050	2,860
Instructional media	830,216	717,330	(112,886)
Pupil services	1,344,659	1,339,637	(5,021)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$23,213,283</b>	<b>23,397,155</b>	<b>\$183,872</b>
<b>Pupil transportation</b>			
District transportation services	\$508,245	\$664,248	\$156,003
Bus garage	33,875	46,100	12,225
Contract transportation services	1,908,800	2,052,175	143,375
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,450,920</b>	<b>2,762,523</b>	<b>\$311,603</b>
<b>Undistributed</b>			
Employee benefits	\$9,314,547	\$10,330,041	\$1,015,494
Debt service	2,266,861	2,662,245	395,384
Transfer to Special Aid Fund	210,000	265,000	55,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$11,581,408</b>	<b>\$12,992,286</b>	<b>\$1,410,878</b>
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$42,604,989</b>	<b>\$45,160,393</b>	<b>\$2,555,404</b>

**REVENUE ESTIMATE**

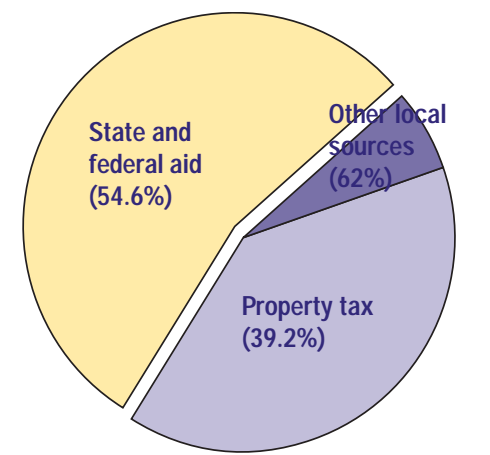
	2005-2006	2006-2007	Increase (decrease)
Local sources	\$1,564,424	1,558,000	\$(6,424)
State sources	22,065,307	23,845,007	1,779,700
Federal sources	772,500	809,000	36,500
Interfund transfer	100,000	100,000	0
Fund balance	903,118	857,021	(46,097)
Reserve for encumbrances	100,000	300,000	200,000
Property taxes	17,099,640	17,691,365	591,725
<b>*GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$40,120,904</b>	<b>\$42,828,247</b>	<b>\$2,707,343</b>

*\* Includes allowance for uncollected taxes*

**EXPENDITURES**



**REVENUES**



**PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCREASE**

Employee benefits (insurance, retirement)	39.7%
General support (district administration, finance, )	23.2%
Debt service (payments for completed capital projects)	15.5%
Pupil transportation	12.2%
Instruction	7.2%

2006-2007 Budget

### How are school tax rates and tax bills determined?

An overview of the steps in this annual process

#### School Decision

**1** The GASD Board of Education decides on a **TAX LEVY** for the coming school year. This is the total amount of money that the Board determines will be needed to balance the school budget after State Aid and other revenue sources are taken into account.

#### Town Decisions

**2** Our school district includes parts of eight municipalities. In the spring, each municipality prepares an **ASSESSMENT ROLL** for that year listing all parcels of property and the assessed value of each. Information from these rolls is shared with the school district every June.

#### PROJECTED TAX RATES PER \$1,000 OF ASSESSED VALUE

	2005-06	2006-07	Change
City of Amsterdam	\$24.4529	\$26.3602	\$1.9073
Town of Amsterdam	181.1323	176.0859	(5.0464)
Florida	29.8643	30.7477	0.8834
Mohawk	48.9057	46.6628	(2.2429)
Perth	29.5717	32.2034	2.6317
Duanesburg	56.8671	59.5188	2.6517
Glenville	29.1105	31.5289	2.4184
Charlton	24.4529	23.3314	(1.1215)

#### State ORPS Decision

**3** The State Office of Real Property Services (ORPS) attempts to "equalize" property assessments. It compares properties in each municipality and how they are assessed relative to the market value of similar properties within the municipality. They then calculate an **EQUALIZATION RATE** for each municipality. The equalization rate represents the state's judgement of how closely the assessed values in that municipality match true market values of the properties.

#### Calculations

**4** In June, the school district uses the total assessed value of land in each town (#2) and the state equalization rates (#3) to calculate the percentage of the school tax levy (#1) that must be paid by landowners in that town that year. In other words, the district calculates each

town's portion of the overall school tax burden.

**5** Each town's portion of the tax levy is then divided by the total assessed value of land in that municipality to determine the school **TAX RATE** per one thousand dollars of assessed value for that municipality.

#### Printing & Mailing

**6** By late June, individual tax bills are printed and mailed to land owners. Individual tax bills are calculated using:

- The assessed value of each land parcel
- Any applicable exemptions (STAR, etc.)
- The tax rate that municipality for that year

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### SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

#### Voter eligibility

You may vote if you are 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, a resident of the Greater Amsterdam School District for at least 30 days prior to May 16, 2006 and a registered voter.

#### Absentee ballots

Absentee ballots are available to anyone who will be out of the area for work, school or vacation; hospitalized; permanently disabled, or confined to home due to illness. For applications contact, Dorothy Phoenix, clerk of the board, at 843-5217. Absentee ballots will be counted only if they are returned to the clerk of the board no later than 5 p.m. on election day.

#### Board of Education

Gerald Cinquanti  
*President*

Kevin D. Bechtel  
*Vice President*

Michael Cinquanti

Michael G. Daylan

Gerard C. DeCusatis

Richard A. DiMatteo

Ariel Santiago

James Walrath

Ronald E. Limoncelli  
*Superintendent*

	Budget Adopted for the 2005-06 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2006-07 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2006-07 School Year*
Total budgeted amount	\$ 42,604,989	\$ 45,160,393	\$ 44,613,207
Increase (or decrease) for the 2005-06 school year		\$ 2,555,404	\$ 2,008,218
Percentage increase (or decrease) in each proposed budget		6.00%	4.71%
Change in the consumer price index		3.60%	
Resulting est. property tax levy for the 2005-06 school year		\$ 17,691,365	\$ 17,144,179
1. Administrative Component	\$ 3,834,449	\$ 4,212,241	\$ 4,162,412
2. Program Component	\$ 32,379,791	\$ 33,911,464	\$ 33,500,057
3. Capital Component	\$ 6,390,749	\$ 7,036,688	\$ 6,950,738

\* Should the voters fail to approve the proposed 2006-07 budget, proposed appropriations would need to be reduced by \$547,186 to meet the requirement of a contingency budget. Items eliminated from the budget would include: one elementary teacher, one guidance counselor, one social worker, four teacher aides, one Spanish teacher, one hall monitor coordinator, all club advisors, staff development, curriculum writing, curriculum and staff development purchase services, computer installment purchases, maintenance and custodial equipment, purchase of buses and gasoline and diesel for athletic and field trips. Unemployment payments for laid-off employees would increase.

#### BASIC STAR EXEMPTION IMPACT

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings Based on a Hypothetical Home Within the School District with a Full Value of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000)

	Budget Adopted for the for the 2005-06 School Year	Budget Proposed for the for the 2006-07 School Year
Basic STAR tax savings	\$ 733.59	\$ 699.94
School tax increase/decrease	\$ 67.99	\$ -112.15
Net Basic STAR tax savings	\$ 665.60	\$ 587.79

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2006-07 by the qualified voters of the Enlarged Amsterdam City School District, Montgomery County, New York, will be held at various polling site(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2006, between the hours of 12 noon and 9 p.m., prevailing time in the various polling site(s), at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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

#### THE GREATER AMSTERDAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

Amsterdam

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Amsterdam



## Budget 2006 2007

Residents to vote on Tuesday, May 16  
**2006-07 budget raises tax levy 3.46 percent**



Greater Amsterdam School District residents will go to the polls on Tuesday, May 16 to vote on a proposed \$45.16 million budget that represents a 6.00 percent increase in spending. Based on current revenue estimates, this budget will carry a tax levy increase of 3.46 percent.

Voters will also elect two members to the board of education.

The six percent spending increase is substantially less than the 32 percent originally presented in the preliminary budget.

"The preliminary budget represented the cost of maintaining services, staff, and programming at current levels. The school board believed that the tax burden would be too great and worked to find ways to reduce expenditures and to increase non-property tax revenues," says Superintendent Ronald Limoncelli.

#### A Brief Overview

Proposed budget	\$45,160,393
Dollar increase	\$2,555,404
Percentage spending increase	+ 6.00%
Estimated tax levy increase	3.46%

#### Major staffing cuts

The initial goal was to get the budget to the state-determined contingency level. Since the majority of a school budget is labor and employee benefits, the board looked at these areas to find the greatest cost savings. The board first decided to not replace retiring teachers and non-instruc-

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Where students succeed and community cares

Amsterdam 5

Amsterdam 6

