

HUNTINGTON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Tradition of Excellence in Education since 1657



Budget Includes Tax Levy Below State-Mandated Limit *while maintaining and enhancing district programs*

Dear Huntington Resident:

Enclosed for your review is information on our proposed 2016/17 school district budget, which includes a tax levy below the state-mandated limit and maintains our commitment to a strong educational program.

Superintendent James W. Polansky, his administrative team and faculty/staff members have put forth considerable effort to realize cost efficiencies while at the same time expanding student opportunities. The coming year's budget was designed to maximize savings and align budget line items with our students' ever-changing educational needs.

The Huntington School District continues to receive accolades locally, regionally and beyond. Huntington has been, once again, included in the top three percent of the Washington Post's "America's Most Challenging High Schools," reflecting the quality of district academic programs, as well as student achievement. Our Performing Arts program has, again, contributed to the district's recognition as among the nation's "Best Communities for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation. Our Fine Arts students continue to exhibit their work in local and regional galleries and competitions. The Huntington High School Robotics team has made unprecedented strides in a very short time, recently winning the New York City regional FIRST competition at the Jacob K. Javits Center to qualify for the upcoming national competition in St. Louis.

Our interscholastic athletic teams have been recognized for their accomplishments on the local, county, state and national levels. Several of our teams from the most recent season qualified for, placed and/or won in state championship competition. The Blue Devil boys' track 4x400m relay team earned gold at the Millrose games with a record-breaking time, and continues to thrive on the national stage as among the best in the country. Most importantly, for the first time in over 10 years, every district school has been identified as "In Good Standing," a result of the hard work and dedication of all members of our school community in terms of providing the best education possible for all students and recognizing the unique strengths, interests and talents of each.

This year's proposed budget maintains class sizes at all grade levels below district guidelines and expands enrollment in elective and Advanced Placement (AP) courses at the high school, including addition of the acclaimed AP Capstone Diploma program. Huntington will be one of very few districts on Long Island to offer the Capstone opportunity. Additional budgetary consideration has been given to the district's rapidly expanding technologies, specifically in terms of infrastructure and data support as well as the continuation of our 1:1 computing device initiative.

The proposed capital proposition includes components that will further district compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and improve handicapped accessibility in many of our buildings. It also includes upgrades to the electrical panel and foundation repairs at Huntington High School, among other items. As a reminder, approval of the capital reserve proposition will have no impact on the tax levy or tax rate.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I'd like to thank you for your past support of our budgets. We have worked diligently to ensure that this budget provides for continued excellence in education for our students, while remaining mindful of its primary funding source.

Thank you for taking the time to review this brochure and for your continued support of the Huntington School District.

Sincerely,

Tom DiGiacomo

Tom DiGiacomo

President, Board of Education

Voter Information

Election Day:

Tuesday, May 17, 2016
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Huntington High School
Oakwood & McKay Roads
Huntington, New York

Board of Education:

Residents will have an opportunity to elect two members to the Huntington Board of Education on Election Day, Tuesday, May 17.

Eligibility:

- U.S. citizen.
- 18 years of age or older.
- Resident of Huntington School District for at least 30 days.
- Registered to vote in a general election or with the school district.

Questions? Call the District Clerk's Office at 673-2126 during regular business hours.

Absentee Ballots:

Applications for absentee ballots may be applied for at the District Clerk's office at the Administrative Offices, 50 Tower Street, Huntington Station, at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter or up to the day before the election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. Absentee ballots must be returned by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17 for them to be counted in the 2016 election and budget vote.

Inspection of Budget:

The public may inspect a copy of the proposed budget on the district website (www.hufsd.edu), the District Clerk's office (District Office, 50 Tower Street) or at any school building on school days between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Huntington-Union-Free-School-District/566089583408611>

Important Capital Project Proposition on the Ballot

Protecting the substantial investments taxpayers have made over the years in our school facilities requires constant vigilance. In order to keep our buildings and grounds well maintained, safe and efficient, school trustees have placed an important capital project proposition on the ballot. **Passage of this proposition will not increase taxes.**

Since the funds for the proposed projects already exist in the capital reserve, the district will not have to borrow any money, incur interest or raise taxes. The district will also be eligible for state aid on a percentage of the expenditures associated with the projects.

The projects on the May 17 ballot include:

- Installation of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant ramps, restrooms, wheelchair lift and counter (various buildings): \$1,585,000
- Fire-rated doors (Flower Hill Primary, Jack Abrams STEM, Finley Middle): \$346,000
- Electrical panel upgrade and foundation repairs (Huntington High): \$330,000
- Wireless Clock System (Jack Abrams STEM): \$100,000
- Entryway Security Vestibule (Jefferson Primary): \$75,000

Total: \$2,436,000

The district's capital reserve accounts would still contain \$6.2 million following expenditure of the monies for the proposed projects. Note that capital reserve monies can be used only for capital expenditures.

Your Vote Counts on Tuesday, May 17

Vote at Huntington High School 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Sample Ballot

On Election Day voters will be asked to vote on Proposition No. 1 to fund school district operations from July 1, 2016- June 30, 2017:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Huntington Union Free School District, Town of Huntington, Suffolk County, New York be authorized to expend \$123,100,263, the amount set forth in the proposed budget and to accumulate the balance proposed in the said budget during the school year beginning July 1, 2016, and to levy the necessary tax therefore.

Residents will also be asked to vote on Proposition No. 2 to expend monies that already exist in the Building Improvement Fund for a variety of projects in district buildings. Passage of this proposition will not result in a tax increase:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education be authorized to expend funds from the Capital Reserve (Building Improvement) Fund, which was established on May 20, 2008 pursuant to Section 3651 of the Education Law, for the following capital improvement projects: (1) District-wide ADA Compliance improvements including, but not limited to, restrooms, doorways, office counters, locker rooms, and/or entrance ways in the approximate amount of \$1,585,000.00; (2) renovation/upgrade to the High School electrical panel and foundation in the approximate amount of \$330,000.00; (3) replacement/upgrade of doors at Finley Middle, Flower Hill Primary and Jack Abrams STEM Schools in the approximate amount of \$346,000.00; (4) a wireless clock system at the Jack Abrams STEM School in the approximate amount of \$100,000.00; and (5) a security vestibule at Jefferson Primary School in the approximate amount of \$75,000.00; and to make expenditures from the Reserve Fund for the cost of other work required in connection therewith, including preliminary costs and costs incidental thereto in an amount not to exceed the estimated total cost of two million, four hundred thirty six thousand dollars (\$2,436,000.00), provided that the Board of Education may allocate funds amongst the various projects within the overall total expenditure at its discretion.

The complete line-by-line proposed budget is available for public inspection on the district website at www.hufsd.edu, in each school building, at the central administrative offices located at 50 Tower Street in Huntington Station and at the Main Street and New York Avenue branches of the Huntington Public Library.

Call 673-2126 for more information or to request a copy of the budget.

This year's transportation budget reflects the costs associated with transporting 5,230 eligible students residing within in the Huntington School District, primarily to the eight district schools, but also to 38 parochial/private schools and 18 special needs schools on Long Island as required by law. The district currently contracts for 54 large buses and 82 vans to transport students. The 2016/17 budget maintains all current mileage limits for student transportation.

More information about the budget and capital reserve fund propositions can be found on the Huntington School District's website at www.hufsd.edu.

Huntington School District

2016/17 Proposed Budget

Description	Adopted Budget 2015/16	Proposed Budget 2016/17	Amount Change
General Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Education • Central Administration • Buildings Operations and Maintenance 	\$10,943,956	\$10,958,057	\$ 14,101
Instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision • Curriculum • Salaries • BOCES 	63,806,544	65,519,810	1,713,266
Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public, private and parochial school 	10,109,881	10,297,723	187,842
Employee Benefits	33,986,417	35,101,804	1,115,387
Debt Service/ Inter-fund Transfers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest/Bond Principal • Capital • Special Aid 	1,547,939	1,222,869	(325,070)
Grand Total	\$120,394,737	\$123,100,263	\$2,705,526
Budget % Increase		2.25%	

Visit the Huntington School District's website at www.hufsd.edu for the latest news and information about our schools and students.

Budgeted Revenues

Description	2015/16	2016/17	Amount Change
State Aid	\$14,061,588	\$15,963,840	\$1,657,252
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,338,584	1,007,068	(331,516)
Appropriated Fund Balance	1,829,014	1,500,000	(329,014)
Reserves	1,175,000	1,000,000	(175,000)
Property Taxes (Levy)	101,990,551	103,629,355	1,638,804 (1.61% increase = below cap)
Total	\$120,394,737	\$123,100,263	\$2,705,626

Estimated Tax Rate to Fund the Budget

Description	2015/16	2016/17
Estimated tax rate per \$100 of assessed valuation for school district	\$225.78 (actual)	\$229.41
Estimated percentage increase (for school district taxes only; dependent on district's assessed valuation received from Town in fall 2016)		1.61%
Projected increase per household based on average home assessment for school district		\$130.68 Before the STAR program
Total Assessed Value (Tentative for 2016/17)	\$45,172,531	\$45,172,531



School Budget Supports Student Learning and Achievement ...

- The proposed school budget continues Huntington's 359 year commitment to providing a top notch education for the young people of our community by maintaining our exceptionally strong academic program for approximately 4,550 students in grades K-12.
- Maintains the district's full day kindergarten program.
- Provides for an extensive line-up of Regents, Honors and Advanced Placement courses in every academic area.
- Allocates \$248,662 for new textbooks, \$59,683 for new workbooks, \$47,514 for new library books, \$100,000 for new computer software and \$233,772 for new instructional equipment, including computers and tablet devices.
- Continues the district's 1:1 computing device initiative.
- Funds 64 athletic teams for high school and middle school students, 99 coaching positions and a full-time athletic trainer.
- Provides a complete program of adult-supervised, after-school extracurricular activities, including dozens of clubs for students.
- Funds comprehensive art, music and physical education opportunities, including band, orchestra, chorus, marching band, music ensembles and specialized art courses.
- Funds student drama club productions, newspapers, concerts, science fairs and the district art show.
- Maintains the district's K-5 Dual Language Program.
- Includes a comprehensive special education program for students with disabilities and support services for all students.
- Continues the SEARCH and Math Olympiad programs for academically talented fifth and sixth graders.
- Initiates the Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone diploma program at Huntington High School with the first course in the Capstone sequence (AP Seminar).
- Augments the district's commitment to the high school science research program and robotics programs.
- Furthers STEM initiatives throughout the district.



The Huntington School District mirrors our nation's population, with students and teachers of every race, creed and ethnic background. It is in this atmosphere that our young people are challenged academically, artistically, musically and athletically and where they grow socially and culturally. Lasting friendships are frequently forged. New experiences are enjoyed and personal horizons are expanded. Our schools are a model of brotherhood and understanding. Our diversity makes us stronger.

Huntington School Board Candidates

Bill Dwyer



Elected to terms on the Huntington School Board in 2008 and 2013, Bill Dwyer and his wife, Karen have resided in Huntington for the past 18 years. They are the parents of three sons; Ethan, a twelfth grader at Huntington High School, Brendan, a freshman at SUNY Old Westbury and Bradley, a senior at Syracuse University.

Mr. Dwyer earned a B.S. degree in mathematics at Providence College and a second B.S. degree in mechanical engineering at Washington University in St. Louis. He obtained a Master of Science degree in aeronautics and astronautics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Currently employed as an account executive for an educational technology company based in Hauppauge, Mr. Dwyer works with school districts throughout the Northeast to help them maximize their investment in software to benefit their operations.

As a participating member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Huntington Village Lacrosse Club, Mr. Dwyer has been active in the community. In his free time, he enjoys family outings to the games of New York's professional sports teams.

Bari Fehrs



Bari Fehrs is seeking her second term on the Huntington School Board. A 27-year resident of Huntington, she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at New York Institute of Technology.

A past three-year president of the district's PTA Council as well as the Southdown Primary School and J. Taylor Finley Middle School PTAs, Mrs. Fehrs has been involved in the Huntington School District for 14 years. She also served as a volunteer coach for the Huntington Sports League.

Mrs. Fehrs has been a member of the district's Comprehensive Health Advisory Committee, District Shared Decision Making Committee and District Safety Committee and has served as a Board member/volunteer for the Booster Club.

Employed as an office manager of a local medical practice, Ms. Fehrs leads an active lifestyle and enjoys running and reading in her free time. She has two children currently attending Huntington High School, a daughter who is a freshman and a son who is a senior and who will be attending the University of Tampa in the fall. She has another son who graduated with Huntington's Class of 2013 and is studying at Nassau Community College.

Huntington School Board Candidate

Carmen Kasper



A longtime educator, Carmen Kasper has resided in the district for the past 10 years.

She obtained an undergraduate degree from Federico Villarreal National University in Lima, Peru and later studied education at SUNY College at Old Westbury before earning a master's degree at Hofstra University in Teaching English as a Second Language. She obtained her administrative certification at Long Island University-C.W. Post College.

During her career, Ms. Kasper taught English, kindergarten, first, second and seventh grades in Peru, served as a bilingual resource specialist at Western Suffolk BOCES, as a Spanish teacher at Eastern Suffolk BOCES and worked as a BOCES regional summer school coordinator. She has also worked as a fourth and fifth grade Spanish teacher in the Copiague school district's Saturday Institute.

Ms. Kasper was the Huntington School District's director of world languages, ESL and dual language programs for 14 years before retiring last June. She now enjoys teaching, spending time with her friends and two sons and three grandchildren, traveling, reading and physical training.

The proposed budget also provides transportation, textbooks and related services as required by New York State law to approximately 1,000 Huntington School District residents who are students attending private and parochial schools in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Huntington: Providing Quality Education since 1657

Huntington One of Best U.S. Communities for Music



The Huntington School District has once again been recognized by the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation as one of the "best communities for music education" in the country. The national awards program identified the top 3.5% of districts with exemplary dedication to their music programs.

School districts that have been recognized by the NAMM Foundation are often held up as models for other educators looking to boost their own music education programs.

Huntington's music faculty and student-musicians are understandably taking pride in receiving the national award. To qualify for the Best Communities designation, Huntington officials answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program and community music-making programs. The NAMM Foundation, with the assistance of researchers at The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas, evaluated districts on these factors.

Districts demonstrating an exceptionally high commitment and access to music education were cited with recognition.

Huntington: Providing Quality Education since 1657

Huntington Provides an Exceptional Academic and Co-Curricular Experience

The proposed budget will enhance Huntington's outstanding elementary grade educational program, keeping the lower class size guidelines in place, allowing for the purchase of new textbooks, workbooks, library books, instructional equipment and supplies. The district continues to modernize the infrastructure of each building using a mix of state funds and capital reserve account monies, avoiding the need to issue bonds and incur interest expenses.

The district has also benefited from the generosity of the Huntington Foundation, Band Parents Association, Booster Club and PTA organizations that enhance the program offered in all eight buildings.

Huntington High School students are continuing to challenge themselves in a series of rigorous science courses. The district has modernized numerous lab rooms and outfitted them with the equipment and supplies needed to pursue a wide array of experiments and scientific study.

The academic program at the high school and at all other grade levels in the district is among the finest in the state. This year our students have won awards in dozens of academic competitions and members of the Class of 2016 have gained acceptance into many of the finest colleges and universities in the country. Huntington graduates are counted among the leaders in every profession.

The Blue Devil athletic program is viewed with envy by many districts. The proposed budget provides for 64 sports teams, more than 1,000 roster spots and the equipment, supplies and scheduling opportunities needed to keep Huntington among the elite. Our athletes routinely receive NCAA Division I scholarships and are given special consideration when applying for colleges as a result of the recruitment process. This spring, many former Blue Devils are starring on their college teams.

The Huntington Booster Club continues to generously support the program and has contributed nearly \$400,000 in recent years to benefit student-athletes in grades 7-12.

Huntington Robotics Excels



The Huntington High School robotics team includes many hardworking members. This year's squad won the New York City regional and advanced to the world championships in St. Louis. Huntington is among more than 2,700 FIRST high school robotics teams in the country. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) encourages the pursuit of careers in engineering and science by showing students how interesting and fun those fields can be. The budget funds a robotics team at Finley Middle School, too.

Huntington Mock Trial Team



In only its second year, Huntington High School's mock trial team reached the Suffolk Final Four round. Team members are able to gain firsthand knowledge of civil and criminal law and courtroom procedures. Over the past two years, the team has compiled a record of 11 -2, sparkling among the 26 competing Suffolk high school teams.

School Budget/Tax Cap Questions and Answers

How does the New York State property tax cap work?

New York's new property tax cap law establishes a tax levy limit for each school district. The limit allows an increase from year to year of the lesser of two percent or the rate of inflation, based on a multi-step formula. School districts are then allowed to take certain exemptions that result in a limit (cap) of more than two percent or the inflation rate. If a school district's proposed tax levy increase is at or below its limit, a simple majority vote is needed for budget approval. If a district's proposed tax levy increase exceeds the levy limit, a supermajority of voters (60 percent or more) would be required for budget passage. Note that HUFSD's proposed 2016/17 budget **does not** exceed the established limit.

What was the Huntington UFSD permitted to exempt from its tax levy limit?

There are a limited number of specific exemptions to the tax cap that school districts may take. For 2016-17, there were no exemptions for which HUFSD qualified.

Does the tax levy indicate how much my taxes will rise?

No. The tax levy is the amount of money the school district can raise through property taxes. The amount an individual will pay to contribute to the levied amount is the *tax rate*. Tax rates paid by individual taxpayers may differ greatly from one household to another, based on assessed property values and equalization rates, and may exceed two percent.

Why did I recently receive a tax credit and will I receive one next year?

The Property Tax Freeze Credit was a two-year tax relief program that reimbursed qualifying New York State homeowners for increases in local property taxes on their primary residences. District taxpayers received the credit in 2014/15 because the school district developed a budget that included a tax levy at or below the established "cap." In recent months, district taxpayers received a similar rebate because this year's school tax levy was well below the cap and the district also developed the required Government Efficiency Plan. Although the district tax levy will be below the cap for 2016/17, this particular tax credit program applied for two years only.

How was the proposed budget developed?

School administrators and teachers, after extensive planning and study, submitted budget requests in the fall. These requests were extensively reviewed and reduced wherever possible and a draft budget was developed and submitted to the school board. The administration and trustees examined the budget line-by-line, debating priorities, discussing goals and finalizing the proposed budget.

What will happen if voters reject the proposed tax levy and the school budget does not pass?

If district voters reject the proposed budget on May 17, the school board may put up the same or a revised budget for a second vote, or adopt a contingency budget with a tax levy no greater than that levied the previous year – essentially a zero percent cap. If voters reject the spending plan twice, schools must adopt the contingency budget with that same zero percent cap. Should the district operate under a contingency budget, certain items, including the purchase of equipment, cannot be included. For 2016/17, the difference between the proposed budget and a contingency budget amounts to \$1,638,804.

Has the district done anything to trim spending and costs to hold down taxes?

During the budget process, the administration and school board examined every single program and position. Efforts have been made to reduce costs, especially those not affecting classroom instruction. Budget managers are under strict instructions to look for savings wherever they can be found and to keep costs down. Budget requests were reduced and all areas of spending were subject to economizing.

How does this budget improve the district's classroom education?

This budget maintains the district's full-day kindergarten program, maintains class sizes at or below established guidelines at all levels and funds a wide range of course offerings and co-curricular activities at the secondary level. Every school will be provided with the supplies and materials that our academic program demands. This budget also contains funds to purchase desktop and laptop computers, laptop carts, tablet devices, SMART-Boards, SMARTTables and other technologies.

Does this budget reduce the district's debt?

The Huntington School District has one of the lowest debts levels on Long Island and in the state. There are monies included in the proposed budget to reduce the district's current long term debt even further by July 1, 2017. The district's particularly low debt level contributes to its favorable Moody's Aa1 rating.

A campaign to save energy continues to provide results. Since February 2001, the district avoided nearly \$4.5 million in energy costs through ongoing conservation efforts. The drive has not impacted classroom instruction. At Huntington High School alone, well over \$2 million in costs have been averted.

Focus on Huntington's Top Students

Rachel Carpenter



A long run of academic and co-curricular excellence has culminated with Rachel Carpenter being named valedictorian of Huntington High School's Class of 2016.

Ms. Carpenter is in the process of finalizing her college plans. She has completed many of Huntington's most challenging courses, including a long list of Advanced Placement classes.

A cheerful, well-liked and widely admired young woman, Ms. Carpenter has seamlessly transitioned to life at Huntington High School. "When I first moved here four years ago, I had no idea I would have been in the position I am in now," she said. "I have the people of Huntington High to thank for my growth and success."

Popular with her classmates and teachers, Ms. Carpenter places a premium on a balanced education, complete with studies in a variety of academic areas and with a slate of extracurricular activities that complement her personal interests.

Ms. Carpenter spent the mid-winter recess touring through Costa Rica with many of her best friends. It was a long anticipated trip and one that she will cherish for the rest of her life.

As she glides toward graduation in four short months, Ms. Carpenter is savoring every moment she has left at the high school. "Overall, my senior year has been nothing short of wonderful," she said.

Olivia Stamatatos



Olivia Stamatatos' academic record speaks for itself. The senior is salutatorian of the Class of 2016. A graceful and humble young woman, she is respected and admired by her classmates and teachers.

"I would never find myself in this position without the love and support of my family, especially my parents and siblings," Ms. Stamatatos said. "They have always encouraged me to reach my fullest potential and be the best person I can be."

Ms. Stamatatos has benefitted from working with teachers and other adults both in and out of school. "The teachers of Huntington High School have not only provided me with a high quality education, but have also built strong relationships with me and have always made me feel welcome," she said.

The teenager has a formidable academic presence in all of her classes, but she works just as hard outside of the classroom in whatever she decides to take on in her life. An accomplished ballet dancer, Ms. Stamatatos has impressed crowds with her performances on stage.

Ms. Stamatatos intends to pursue a college major in biochemistry in order to gain a deeper understanding of underlying factors that contribute to the curative properties in natural substances."

"My senior year has been fantastic," Ms. Stamatatos said. "Contrary to what I initially expected, this year has been one of the least stressful years in my high school career. I still cannot believe how quickly time has passed. With the dwindling time I have left at Huntington, I intend to revel in future experiences and enjoy these last weeks with my peers."

Huntington Union Free School District
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School Budget Vote and Trustee Election
Tuesday, May 17, 2016
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
at Huntington High School

****ECRWSS****
To: POSTAL CUSTOMER

Huntington Union Free School District



Our Mission: Recognizing the strengths of our district's traditions, its history of community support, the diversity of our population and our commitment to educational excellence, the mission of the Huntington Union Free School District is to educate students by effectively teaching an enriched body of knowledge through the active participation of all students, building upon their unique talents and abilities to produce creative, self-assured, responsible citizens who are capable of critical thought and action.