



# Budget Newsletter

## VOTE

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### Proposed 2017–18 School Budget

### Revised 2017 Bond Referendum

### Board of Ed Trustees

(as of May 1)

Candidates Running for  
Lawrence Gross' seat  
*(Mr. Gross is not seeking reelection)*

Nikolas Kron  
Jeffrey Shi

Candidates Running for  
Susan Healy's seat  
*(Ms. Healy is not seeking reelection)*

Ilya Aronovich  
Rebecca Sassouni

**Tuesday, May 16**  
**7 a.m. – 10 p.m.**

**Baker School**  
69 Baker Hill Road  
*For registered voters  
living north of the LIRR*

**South High School**  
341 Lakeville Road  
*For registered voters  
living south of the LIRR*

## Proposed 2017–18 School Budget

### *Board's Plan Maintains Programs & Small Class Size*

After extensive public discussion and input, during a lengthy and open process that started in our schools, the Board of Education has adopted the Proposed 2017–18 School Budget in the amount of \$223,311,165. This amount is a 1.9 percent increase over last year's budget. The tax levy increase is 1.26 percent over the 2016–17 amount.

The proposed budget will:

- Preserve all current programs at the elementary and secondary levels
- Safeguard elementary class sizes, in accordance with Board guidelines
- Maintain early-morning, elementary drop-off programs
- Continue the fee-based, early-morning elementary enrichment courses
- Maintain training and professional development for faculty and staff

Board President Barbara Berkowitz said, "When we talk about the district's high rankings and our students' outstanding achievements, we must remember that these accomplishments start in the classroom. It is imperative that we continue to meet the needs of *all* students. Each child has but one opportunity to go through each grade. Our goal is for every child to have a successful, positive experience in school—and this extends to our private and other nonpublic school students, as well."

Dr. Teresa Prendergast, superintendent of schools, said, "We remain committed to being a premier school district on Long Island, in the state, and in the country. We will continue to deliver an innovative, high-quality education to our students. I'm very grateful to have the support of the community and the Board as we make progress toward these shared goals."

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***Great Neck's tax levy has been consistently  
below the 2 percent state limit.  
The tax-levy limit for 2017–18 is 1.26 percent.***

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### *New York State's Property Tax Cap*

This school year is the sixth in which school districts must abide by New York State's tax-cap legislation. This law requires districts to limit tax-levy increases to 2 percent or the rate of inflation—whichever is lower. The tax-levy limit for 2017–18 is 1.26 percent. Multiple factors affect the actual limit. John Powell, assistant superintendent for business, explained that the tax-levy limit "incorporates changes to the tax base, the rate of inflation, payments in lieu of taxes, debt payments, capital project expenditures, transportation equipment purchases, and pension increases above a certain percentage."

Please refer to the district Web site ([www.greatneck.k12.ny.us](http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us)) to calculate your Budget tax (click on School Tax Estimator) and Bond tax (click on Bond Impact Estimator).

### *Revenues in 2017–18*

To balance the 2017–18 budget, the district will appropriate \$2.2 million in fund balance and reserves, which are unspent funds from prior years. These funds

*(continued on back page)*



*Reading is a favorite activity at Parkville.*



*Holocaust survivor tells his story at South Middle.*



*Calligraphy at North Middle's International Night.*



*STEAM Global Cardboard Challenge at Kennedy.*



*South High's award-winning Robotics Team.*

## Pride in Our Students & Our Schools

*Our community values education and has high expectations for its students and its schools. The following awards and achievements are from May 2016–April 2017.*

- **Adelphi University Quill Awards for Outstanding Journalism:** high school newspaper takes 1 first place and 3 honorable mention awards
- **Advanced Placement Scholars of the College Board:** 458 high school students
- **All-Eastern Honor Ensembles:** 2 high school bass singers, 2 high school violinists
- **All-County Music Festival:** 107 participants, grades 5-12; 8 special recognitions
- **All-National Honor Ensembles Mixed Choir:** 2 high school bass singers
- **All-State Music Conference:** 9 high school participants
- **Best Communities for Music Education in America:** awarded to district for the 11th time since 2005
- **Brookhaven National Laboratory/Long Island Regional High School Science Bowl:** 1 first place winning team
- **DECA International Career Development Conference:** 7 high school winners; 1 first place
- **Finger Lakes Regional FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition:** high school team wins two top awards
- **Health Occupations Students of America New York State Competition:** high school students take 37 top awards
- **Honor Orchestra of America:** 1 high school performer
- **I-SWEEP Olympiad:** 2 high school bronze winners
- **Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Young Musicians Concert:** 1 high school ensemble
- **Long Island Language Teachers 2016 American Sign Language Contest:** 4 high school winners
- **Long Island Junior Science & Humanities Symposium:** 4 high school winners; 1 first place
- **Long Island Psychology Fair:** 9 high school winners
- **Long Island Science Congress:** 32 high school winners; 1 first place
- **Long Island Science & Engineering Fair:** 9 high school winners; 1 first place
- **Mathcounts Competitions:** middle school team wins second place award
- **Nassau County Boys North High School Fencing Team:** fourth place County Champions; 1 individual gold medal
- **Nassau County Boys South High School Fencing Team:** third place County Champions; 2 individual gold medals
- **Nassau County Girls North High School Fencing Team:** second place County Champions, Small School Champions
- **Nassau County Girls South High School Fencing Team:** County Champions, Large School Champions, Overall Season Champions, Coach of the Year
- **Nassau County High School Student Juried Art Competition & Exhibition:** 2 high school winners
- **Nassau County's Long Island Scholar Artist:** 1 high school student
- **National Council of Teachers of English Award:** 4 high school winners
- **National French Exam:** 17 high school winners
- **National Latin Exam:** 80 secondary school winners; 50 gold-level winners
- **National Merit Scholarship Competition:** 25 finalists, 37 commended high school students
- **National Spanish Exam:** 219 high school winners; 22 gold-level winners
- **Neuroscience Research Prize Finalist:** 1 high school winner
- **Regeneron Science Talent Search (former Intel):** 7 high school scholars
- **Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology:** 5 high school semifinalists
- **W!SE Blue Star School:** 1 high school

## A Message from the Superintendent of Schools

Dear Community Members,

Great Neck Public School residents will have an opportunity to vote on the Proposed Budget and Bond Referendum for the 2017–2018 school year on Tuesday, May 16, 2017.

The quality and educational excellence of the Great Neck Public School district has always been one of the community's greatest assets. For several months, the Great Neck Board of Education has held Budget workshops, listened to our community, and worked closely with our administrative team to develop a Budget that is fiscally sound and enhances our innovative programs for students.

Since the introduction of the New York State Tax Cap Legislation in 2012, the average Great Neck Public School tax-levy increase has been less than 1.8 percent. The district has a history of sound fiscal management, and we are confident that this Budget will enable the district to meet the needs of our students and further support the district's vision for learning.

The Proposed 2017–2018 School Budget is \$223,311,165. This represents a budget-to-budget increase of \$4,163,800, and a projected tax-levy increase of 1.26 percent, which is our maximum allowable tax-levy "cap" for the year. The Budget will appear as *Proposition No. 1* on the voting ballot.

*Proposition No. 2* on the ballot is a proposal to authorize the approval of a capital improvement project, which will be funded by a \$68,339,262 Bond, along with a \$9,507,955 appropriation from our reserves. A detailed list of the capital improvement projects for each school can be found on the district Web site ([www.greatneck.k12.ny.us](http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us)). Additional information will be shared with residents in a separate Bond Referendum newsletter.

The Great Neck Public School district is known for its rigorous curriculum for core subjects, its wide-range of Advanced Placement and elective course-offerings, and its belief that extra-curricular activities and athletics play a key role in the education of the whole student. With 80 percent of the Proposed Budget going toward program, the expenditure portion of the Budget is specifically targeted to advance the goals of the district, maintain our commitment to class size, and create a community for learning where students, parents, and staff are joined in the pursuit of academic excellence and personal growth in a caring environment. For more detailed information on the Budget, please visit our Web site.

We remain committed to being a premiere school district and to delivering a high quality, twenty-first-century education in support of our instructional and extracurricular programs. The Budget and Bond will continue support of these programs and will preserve and enhance the wonderful educational opportunities for our next generation of learners.

We urge you to vote on the Budget, Bond Referendum, and Board of Education candidates on Tuesday, May 16, between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Thank you for your ongoing support of public education in Great Neck.

Dr. Teresa Prendergast  
Superintendent of Schools



*Saddle Rock students build STEAM projects.*



*Folk dancing during Baker's International Week.*



*iPads are an integral part of learning at Lakeville.*



*South Middle's Mathcounts team winners.*



*North High's Debaters win at Westchester Classic.*





# GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

345 Lakeville Road • Great Neck, NY 11020  
(516) 441-4000  
www.greatneck.k12.ny.us

### Board of Education

Barbara Berkowitz, president  
Lawrence R. Gross, vice president  
Donald L. Ashkenase, trustee  
Susan Healy, trustee  
Donna Peirez, trustee

### Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Teresa Prendergast

### Editor

Jessica K. Vega

### Writers

Jason Martin  
Jessica K. Vega

**DATED MATERIAL**

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### Proposed 2017–18 Budget *(continued from page 1)*

will help to cover contractual salary increases, hikes in health-insurance premiums, and other planned expenditures. Anticipated increases in revenue will also offset expenses. For example, Great Neck collects tuition from other school districts that enroll their students in programs offered here. These enrollments continue to grow and it is anticipated that they will yield nearly \$2.5 million in revenue in 2017–18.

#### ***Validation of Fiscal Practices***

Great Neck is one of only seven school districts—and 21 public entities overall—in New York State to earn a AAA rating from Moody’s Investors Service. This rating means that the district’s financial obligations are judged by Moody’s to be of the highest quality and, therefore, subject to the lowest level of credit risk. In the annual, New York State-required external audit of the school district, the certified public accounting firm of Cullen & Danowski, LLP, reports favorably on Great Neck’s management of finances, emphasizing a strong financial position, wise investments, an internal control system of checks and balances, and procedures that are supported by Board policies.

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***Great Neck maintains a AAA rating, making the district’s financial obligations the highest quality and subject to the lowest level of credit risk.***

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#### ***Fifth-Lowest Class I Property Tax Rates***

Great Neck’s 2016–17 school tax rate for single-family homes, or Class I properties, was the fifth lowest of the 62 school districts in Nassau County.

#### ***Substantial Services for Nonpublic School Students***

The district, in accordance with State law, allocates over \$6.5 million to provide services to private and nonpublic school students, including bus transportation, textbooks, health services, special education services, school library materials, and computer software loan programs.

#### ***For More Information***

The 2017–18 Proposed Budget may be viewed on the district Web site (www.greatneck.k12.ny.us). Printed copies of the Budget are available at the Phipps Administration Building, 345 Lakeville Road. Reference copies can be found in the schools and public libraries. For details about the Budget, Voter Registration, Absentee Ballots, and Voting, please call (516) 441-4020.