



Proposed
Budget
2013-2014

COPIAGUE. Connections

COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS - A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

Proposed Budget Continues to Support Quality Educational Programs, **STAYS WITHIN TAX LEVY CAP**

On Tuesday, May 21, Copiague School District community residents will be asked to vote on the proposed budget for the 2013-2014 school year.

The Board of Education and administration have been diligent in their joint efforts to develop a budget that maintains the core educational program, continues to raise student achievement, maintains current class size guidelines where possible, provides safe and secure educational facilities, and maintains financial stability throughout these challenging economic times. The proposed budget for 2013-14 is \$106,910,556.

"We are pleased with this figure," said Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig, "as it takes into account the economic climate, acknowledges that a number of people in our community are experiencing difficult times, and slows the growth for future increases, yet maintains all of the academic and extracurricular programs that our students currently enjoy and our parents expect, which many other school districts are having difficulty maintaining."

For the second year in a row, the Board and administration had to work within the confines of the property tax levy cap when constructing the proposed budget. The property tax levy cap limits the school district tax levy, not the individual tax bill of resident taxpayers. The levy limit allows for certain exemptions and is based on a complex eight-step formula. This year, the proposed tax levy for the Copiague School District is 3.84 percent, which is within the cap.

To stay within the cap, the district made slight reductions to staff through attrition and reengineered in-district processes and programs to become more efficient models. The proposed budget also includes more than \$4.2 million in reserves and fund balance. Additionally, the budget features more than \$1.2 million in benefits and salary savings for 2013-14, due to a renegotiated contract with the Copiague Teachers Association.

"This is a monumental deal," said Board of Education President Michael Greb. "By renegotiating their contract, COPTA has shown support, strength and unity for the community of Copiague. It is a big step forward toward continued financial stability for our district."

All residents are encouraged to take an active role in deciding the future of the Copiague School District by voting on Tuesday, May 21. Voting on the proposed school budget will take place at Great Neck Road Elementary School from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

POINTS *of* PRIDE

- Forty-four current students and members of the Class of 2012 at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School earned Advanced Placement Scholar Awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP examinations taken last spring.
- Combining her love of fishing with writing, Copiague Middle School eighth-grader Claudia Motley placed first in the junior division of the 2012 Youth Essay Writing Contest sponsored by the Long Island Outdoor Communications Network, On the Water magazine and the Coastal Conservation Association New York.
- Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School seniors Lizbelle Taveras and Stewart Peña were presented with the New York State Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Suffolk Zone Award.
- Twenty-five student-musicians from the Copiague School District were selected to participate in the Suffolk County Music Educators Association All-County Festival.
- Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School seniors Sean Benedetto and Lauren Handy committed to continuing their academic careers while playing college athletics by signing National Letters of Intent.
- Students in the Copiague Middle School TAG program competed at the Brookhaven National Laboratory-sponsored Magnetic Levitation competition held at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City. At the event, the Copiague students took home five trophies. The district congratulates Jackson Bright and Aaron Eng for teaming up to take both first and third place in the Gravity Speed category, and Ajhani Carroll and Jahmay Cuffy, Ziair Clark, and Kianna Joyner and Julia Brzozka, who placed first, second and third in the Futuristic Appearance category.
- Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School senior Maurice Epps placed third in the state at the New York State and Federation Track and Field Championship, held March 2 at Cornell University. At the meet, Maurice high-jumped a new personal record of 6-06, besting his previous record of 6-04.
- The Copiague chapter of DECA won three first-place trophies, three second-place trophies and nine gold medals at the State Career Conference held in Rochester, N.Y.
- Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School students Nicole Donato, Chris Falci and Shayla Hernandez were selected as finalists in the National Photographer's Forum 33rd annual College & High School Photography Contest sponsored by Nikon.
- Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School students Nadia Dudley, Andy Huynh and Anthony Vetere submitted winning entries in the New York State "Kids Safe Online" poster art contest sponsored by the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' Office of Cyber Safety.
- Julia Woelk, a junior at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, won first place in New York State Sen. Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.'s first annual Amazing Animal Photo Contest.

Copiague School District
Copiague N.Y. 11726

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Copiague School District

PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget: \$106,910,556

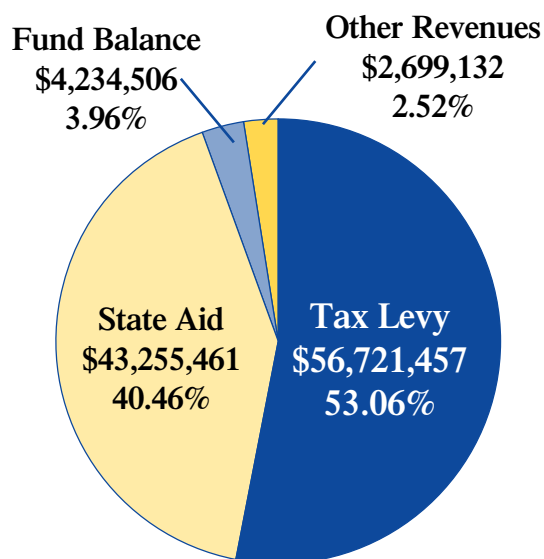
Budget Increase: 3.40%

67¢ Per Day Increase
on an Average Home Assessed at \$3,600

BUDGET 2013-2014 GOALS:

- Provide an expenditure and revenue plan that is student-centered, which is focused on increased achievement
- Support a staff development plan consistent with the Copiague School District Professional Development Plan to ensure that classroom strategies and practices are aligned with New York State Standards and Assessments
- Support a staffing plan that ensures all children meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards
- Provide facilities for students, employees, and the community that are safe, well-maintained and conducive to the activities of the District
- Continue the review of existing instructional programs, administrative support services, and all co-curricular and interscholastic activities to evaluate equity and efficiency in determining their continuation or modification
- Continue to implement the District's technology plan
- Actively seek out new revenue sources and implement cost containment strategies to minimize the tax burden and broaden student programming
- Total budgetary and tax rate increase will be in line with Board of Education and community expectations
- Present a budget for voter approval that:
 - o Provides full disclosure
 - o Is easy to understand
 - o Is free from error
 - o Is sensitive to the needs of our District residents

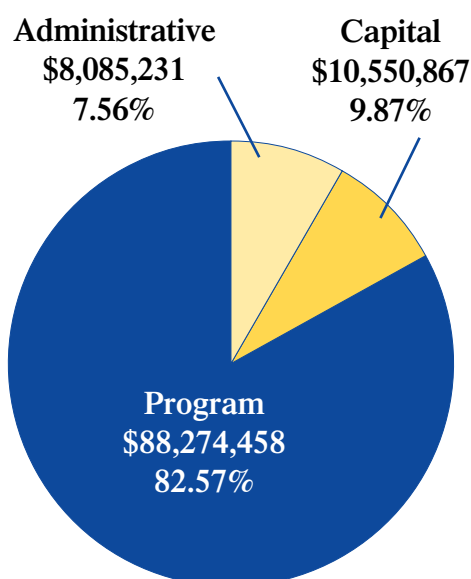
REVENUE BREAKDOWN



2013-2014 PROPOSED BUDGET

	Budget 2012-2013	Proposed 2013-2014	Increase (Decrease)
Salaries	\$46,414,980	\$47,323,459	\$908,479
BOCES	18,686,628	19,650,049	963,421
Fringe Benefits	18,739,166	20,621,643	1,882,477
Transportation	9,487,824	9,616,527	128,703
Contractual	2,707,305	2,656,477	(50,828)
Utilities	1,270,000	1,280,000	10,000
Tuition	1,670,000	1,385,200	(284,800)
Debt/Interest	2,210,978	2,203,982	(6,996)
Supplies	924,433	846,961	(77,472)
Textbooks	363,108	368,223	5,115
Repairs	602,000	655,600	53,600
Equipment	118,200	102,435	(15,765)
Transfer to Other Funds	200,000	200,000	0
TOTALS	\$103,394,622	\$106,910,556	\$3,515,934

EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN



WHAT IS A THREE-PART BUDGET?

The District is mandated by New York State to present its budget to the public in three parts: Administrative, Capital, and Program. Below are brief explanations of what is included under each part.

Program – The program component of the budget represents all personnel, equipment, supplies, and contractual items related to the instruction of students. Items include regular and occupational instruction, continuing and co-curricular education, instruction for pupils with disabilities, libraries, guidance, nurses, psychologists, social workers, interscholastic sports, and student transportation items. Employee benefits of program staff are also included.

Capital – The capital component includes the operation and maintenance of buildings and grounds, principal and interest payments of bonds, and salaries and benefits for buildings and grounds employees and security staff.

Administrative – The administrative component of the budget represents the items necessary to support the educational process. Included under the administrative component (but not limited to) are expenses for the Board of Education, District Clerk, District meetings, District Office support operations, instructional leadership, and insurance and employee benefits for the administrative personnel.



UNFUNDED MANDATES...STILL NO RELIEF

Board of Education members and administrators often speak of unfunded mandates that affect the escalating cost of education. These are federal or state requirements that the District must comply with and implement without funding from the government.

The following list shows a portion of the diverse unfunded mandates, which account for 17-18 percent of any school budget:

INSTRUCTIONAL

- Common Core Learning Standards
- Annual Professional Performance Review
- Dignity for All Students Act
- Test Scoring (Grading and Substitutes)
- Teacher Mentoring
- Home Instruction
- Graphing Calculators
- ESL/Bilingual Instruction
- Academic Intervention Services

- Five-Year Plan
- Wicks Law
- Pesticide Applications
- Gym Partitions
- Backflow Water Protection
- Building Condition Survey

- Segregation of Duties (staffing impact)
- Charter Schools
- IRS Regulations
- Litigation Defense

OTHER

- Non-Public School Transportation (15-mile radius)
- Defibrillators (AED's)
- Fingerprinting
- Character Education / Social Services
- Printing State Documents

FACILITIES

- AHERA Inspections

FINANCIAL

- Auditing:
 - External
 - Internal
 - Claims
- Fixed Asset Accounting



DRIVING FORCES BEHIND THE PROPOSED BUDGET

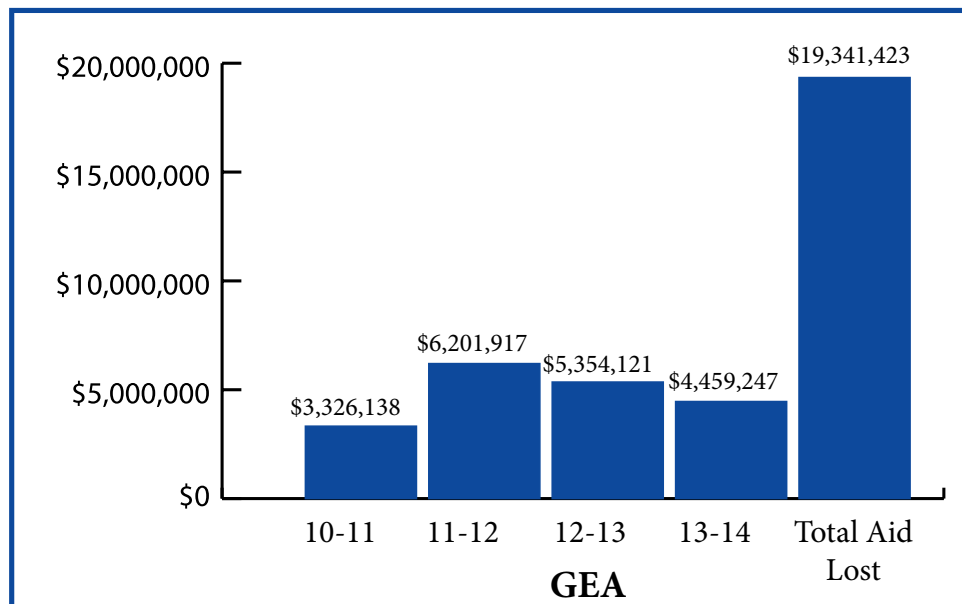
WHAT WILL 67 CENTS A DAY PROVIDE?

- **Maintain all academic programs for children in grades K-12**
- **Support current athletic and extracurricular programs based upon student interests**
- **Continue the commitment to our superior educational technology program**
- **Honor the District's commitment to be prudent, accountable, and sensitive to the financial needs of the taxpayers**
- **Preserve the District's financial stability**

Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) \$19 Million in State Aid Losses

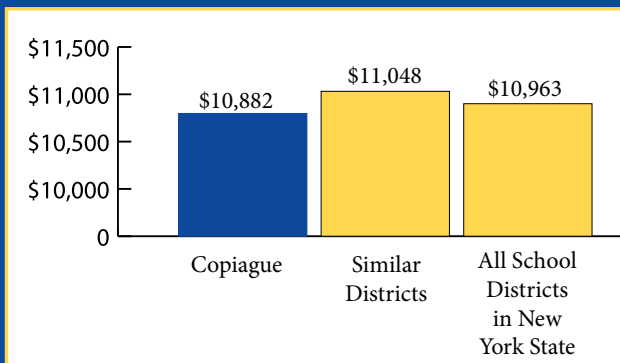
The Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) law was first introduced for the 2010-11 fiscal year as a way to help close New York State's then \$10 billion budget deficit. Under the legislation, a portion of the funding shortfall at the state level is divided among all school districts throughout the state and reflected as a reduction in school district state aid. GEA is money that is deducted from state aid originally promised to school districts based on state aid formulas that are part of law. The state has broken its promise under law by not fully funding state aid to Copiague, thus making it very challenging to maintain programs for children.

The chart below, from New York State Education Department school aid data, shows that since the 2010-11 school year, Copiague has lost more than \$19 million in state aid due to the GEA.



COST PER PUPIL

Through prudent fiscal management, the District has been able to lower the cost of per pupil expenditures in general education while still increasing student achievement. Based on the New York State School Report Card Fiscal Accountability Supplement, Copiague's cost per pupil in general education is lower than both similar districts and all New York State school districts. The below chart uses data from the 2010-2011 school year, which is the most recent data available from the state.



COMPUTATION OF ESTIMATED TAX LEVY

2013-2014 Proposed Budget	\$106,910,556
Less Estimated Revenue	- \$45,954,593
Subtotal	\$60,955,963
Less Appropriated Fund Balance	- \$4,234,506
Estimated Tax Levy 2013-2014	\$56,721,457

THE IMPACT OF A CONTINGENCY BUDGET

If voters defeat the proposed budget twice, the effects of a contingency budget would present significant negative consequences to a school district such as Copiague. Under the enacted "tax cap," if a district has to adopt a contingency budget, it may not increase its current tax levy by any amount from the previous year, essentially a zero percent cap.

In 2005-2006, the District was forced to operate on contingency and, as a result, student achievement was negatively impacted, programs were affected, staffing was reduced, class sizes were increased, and community programs that rely on the use of our buildings were devastated. It was several years before the negative effect of this one-year contingency budget was reversed and conditions began to improve. It will be doubly difficult to recover from a contingency budget in these challenging economic times. Operating on a contingency budget would impact services, place students at a disadvantage when compared to their peers across the island, and could have a detrimental effect on the value of homes in the community.

If the District were forced to adopt a contingency budget for next year, we would be obligated by law to operate under the restrictions of such a budget, which require:

- Charging a fee for the use of buildings and fields by community and outside groups
- Potential program reductions
- Elimination of summer school enrichment programs
- No purchasing of student supplies
- No purchasing of equipment

VOTING WILL TAKE PLACE ON

MAY 21

10:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M.

**GREAT NECK ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1400 GREAT NECK ROAD**

Questions & Answers

Q: What does this budget support?

A: The proposed 2013-2014 school budget supports all current academic and co-curricular programs and the goals that the Board of Education and administration have established for the District. It also includes cost-saving measures in order to reduce the financial impact on taxpayers. It is important to note that this budget is within the District's allowable "tax levy limit."

budget, the school board may put up the same or a revised budget for a second vote or adopt a contingency budget.

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

A: 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.

Q: What is a "tax levy limit?"

A: For school districts, the "tax levy limit" is the highest allowable tax levy (before exemptions) that a school district can propose as part of its annual budget for which only the approval of a simple majority of voters (50 percent plus 1) is required. A maximum allowable tax levy is the tax levy limit plus certain exclusions. A school district adds these exclusions to its tax levy limit and still maintains voter approval by a simple majority. Any proposed tax levy amount above this limit will require budget approval by a supermajority (60 percent or more) of voters.

Q: What happens if the proposed budget is defeated twice?

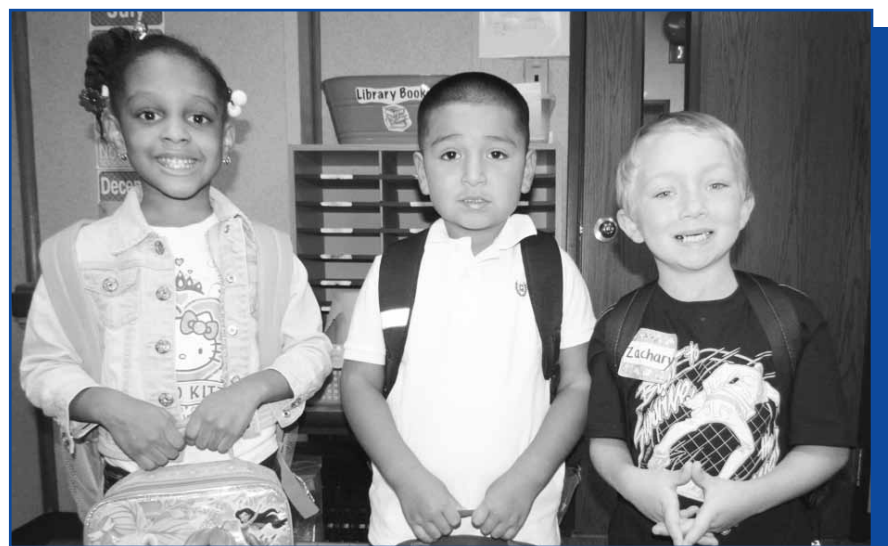
A: If the proposed budget is defeated twice by voters, the District must adopt a contingent budget. Under the new law, a District that adopts a contingent budget may not increase its current tax levy by any amount—which would impose, in effect, a zero percent cap.

Q: Where can I get more information?

A: Complete copies of the proposed 2013-2014 Copiague School District budget are available in the District office, each school building, and the Copiague Memorial Public Library. Budget information is also available on the District website: www.copiague.k12.ny.us.

Q: What happens if voters reject the proposed budget?

A: If voters reject the proposed



VOTER REQUIREMENTS

- You are a U.S. Citizen.
- You are 18 years of age or older.
- You have been a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- You are registered to vote in the general elections or are registered to vote in the school elections.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

The District Clerk must receive applications at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter. All completed ballots must be in the hands of the District Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the election. For further information, call 631-842-4015.

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