



Harborfields HIGHLIGHTS

The Official News Source of Harborfields Central School District

THE PROPOSED 2016-17 BUDGET:

- Implements a full-day kindergarten program.
- Preserves all current programs and services for students.
- Maintains athletic, music and art programs, as well as co-curricular programs.
- Preserves all current elective course options and opportunities.
- Maintains current class size guidelines.
- Provides for academic enhancements and restores programs and activities, detailed on page 3.
- Represents a tax levy increase of 1.52%, which exceeds the tax levy cap of 0.37%. While the increase exceeds the state's tax levy cap, it is still the lowest increase in 20 years.
- Requires a supermajority vote (60% or more) for approval.

Proposed Budget Preserves 'Tradition of Excellence'

On Tuesday, May 17, voters within the district will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed spending plan for 2016-17. As many in the community are aware, preparing the budget has been a collaborative process between the Board of Education, the administration and the community. The Board held numerous budget workshops, listened to the input of residents and prepared a plan in response to this feedback. As always, the district is appreciative of all who participated in the process.

Planning for the 2016-17 budget has been a difficult task, given the number of financial challenges we are faced with for this year. Specifically, the CPI was set at a record low of 0.12

percent, resulting in a tax levy cap for Harborfields of 0.37 percent.

To present a budget within the tax levy cap of 0.37 percent would not allow the district to introduce a full-day kindergarten program for next year. Furthermore, additional enhancements

and/or restorations provided in the proposed budget would not be included.

In response to community input, the Board has adopted a budget proposal that reflects a tax levy increase of 1.52 percent – an amount that exceeds the tax levy cap, yet is still below the “2 percent” commonly referenced in the media. In fact, even though the levy increase exceeds the cap, it is less than the district's tax levy increases in more than 20 years. **The proposed spending plan maintains all current programs and services for students and includes converting from a half-day kindergarten program to a full-day program.** For a complete list of what is included in the proposed budget, please see page 3.

As always, residents are invited to attend the public budget hearing, which will be held on Tuesday, May 10, at 7:45 p.m. at Oldfield Middle School. Please take the time to learn about the proposed budget and make an informed choice at the voting polls on Tuesday, May 17. Polls will be open from 2-9 p.m. in the Oldfield Middle School auditorium.



What A Year It's Been!



- Harborfields High School earned a Gold Award in U.S. News and World Report's Best High Schools list for 2016. HHS ranked third in Suffolk County and 54th in the state.
- Niche.com ranked Harborfields Central School District No. 15 among the best school districts and No. 16 for the best teachers in its 2016 New York State rankings.
- Niche.com ranked Harborfields High School No. 1 in Suffolk County and No. 25 in the state in its 2016 ranking of best public high schools in New York.



- Harborfields High School earned a nomination by the New York State Education Department to the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award Program.
- The New York State Education Department named Thomas J. Lahey Elementary School and Harborfields High School to its High Performing Reward Schools.
- A Harborfields High School senior was named a 2016 National Merit finalist.
- 10 Harborfields High School students were recognized as Commended Students in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

- 41 Harborfields High School students were recognized as 2015 AP Scholars.
- 20 Harborfields High School students were recognized as 2015 AP Scholars with Honor, 32 were recognized as AP Scholars with Distinction and one student was recognized as a 2015 National AP Scholar.
- Harborfields High School offered 16 Advanced Placement courses, 13 honors-level courses and eight college credit-bearing courses from sponsoring collegiate institutions during the 2015-16 school year.
- Approximately 95 percent of district graduates continue their formal education.
- Harborfields High School students consistently score higher than the national average on all areas of the SAT, including SAT subject tests.
- Oldfield Middle School offers five accelerated sections to students in the eighth grade.
- Harborfields students in grades 3-8 consistently score above average levels of proficiency on New York State ELA and math assessments.
- 48 Harborfields students were selected to the 2016 SCMEA All-County Music Festival.
- Six Harborfields High School students placed in the Young Professionals Chamber of Commerce's 13th annual Business Competition.
- 35 students were inducted into the National Art Honor Society.
- Six Harborfields High School students were selected to participate in the Huntington Arts Council's High Arts Showcase XII Exhibit.
- One student won an Award of Excellence at the Huntington Arts Council's High Arts

Showcase XII Exhibit, and another student was chosen to have her artwork displayed on the cover of the Huntington Arts Council's newspaper, Arts Cultural News.

- A fourth-grade student at Thomas J. Lahey Elementary School earned a perfect score in the WordMasters Challenge.
- Seven Oldfield Middle School students placed in the American Mathematics Competitions 8 contest.
- Two Harborfields High School students presented their research at the Long Island Science and Engineering Fair.
- One Harborfields High School student placed first in the DECA State Competition, while eight students were top 10 finalists.
- Athletic teams continue to earn Suffolk County Scholar Athlete and Most Outstanding Sportsmanship team honors.
- The athletic program and its student-athletes boast numerous recognitions, including New York State champions, league champions, Most Outstanding Sportsmanship teams, and All-County, All-League, All-Conference, All-State and All-Academic individuals and teams.



Comparison of the Proposed Budget and a Budget Within the Tax Levy Cap

THE PROPOSED BUDGET

Tax Levy Increase: 1.52%

The proposed budget maintains all current programs and services for students and includes the following additions:

Implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten

- A full-day kindergarten program, which will replace the half-day program.

Restoration and Enhancement of Programs

- Enhancement of grades 3-12 co-curricular program.
- Third-grade string orchestra program.
- HHS music elective.
- HHS Theater 1 & 2 courses.
- HHS Italian I course.
- Participation in the Long Island School for the Arts for qualifying high school juniors and seniors.

Improved Special Education Services

- One special education teacher.
- Two special education teaching assistants.
- Teaching assistant in OMS Testing Center.

Compliance with New York State Mandates

- Restoration of full-time librarian at OMS/HHS.
- One partial K-12 teacher for English as a New Language.
- One AIS teacher.

Additional Points of Information

- Exceeds the statutory tax levy increase of 0.37%.
- Requires supermajority (60% or more) to pass.
- Residents are not eligible for property tax rebate of \$130 next year.
- Includes an additional allocation of approximately \$125,000 to reserves, to provide for sustainability of programs in the future.

Annual estimated increase of \$154.40 per year for an average house assessed at \$4,000.

A "TAX CAP" BUDGET

Tax Levy Increase: 0.37%

The tax levy cap budget of 0.37 percent continues to maintain all current programs and services for K-12 students, including class size, yet will most likely result in the following reductions to items included in the proposed budget:

- Full-day kindergarten program (the district would maintain its half-day program).
- Reduction to BOCES Cultural Arts program.
- Reduction of 0.2 music elective at the high school.
- Reduction of 1.0 librarian at OMS/HHS.

- Within the statutory tax levy cap.
- Requires a simple majority (50% or more) to pass.
- Residents are eligible for property tax rebate of \$130 next year.
- Includes an additional allocation of approximately \$125,000 to reserves, to provide for sustainability of programs in the future.

Annual estimated increase of \$42.84 per year for an average house assessed at \$4,000.

Budget Questions & Answers



Q: Is the proposed budget within the tax levy cap?

A: No. The proposed budget results in a tax levy increase of 1.52 percent, which exceeds the district's tax levy cap for 2016-17. As the increase exceeds the district's tax levy cap, the approval of the proposed budget will require a supermajority vote of 60 percent on May 17.

Q: What happens if the budget is defeated?

A: If voters defeat the proposed budget, the district has the option of putting forth the same budget for a second vote on the third Tuesday in June, presenting an amended budget or adopting a contingency budget. If the proposed budget fails for a second time, the district must adopt the contingency budget, in which the tax levy increase is zero percent.

Q: Will residents be eligible for the property tax rebate as included in the state budget?

A: It is important to note that the property tax rebate has changed for next year. The rebate is set at \$130 for households that are eligible for the STAR exemption and have a household income of less than \$275,000. This rebate is lower than what most households have received the past two years. Residents would not receive this rebate should the proposed budget be approved, as the spending plan exceeds the district's tax levy cap. This would not affect residents receiving a rebate check the

following year should the district's budget remain within the tax levy cap for 2017-18.

Q: How does declining enrollment in the district affect the budget?

A: Enrollment for the 2016-17 school year is expected to decline by 103 students. However, an additional 3.0 K-6 teachers were added to the proposed budget in order to maintain class size guidelines. The proposed budget also reflects a decline of 1.0 teacher at the high school level due to an anticipated enrollment decline.

Q: How will the proposed budget impact taxes?

A: A complete copy of the proposed budget and a tax calculator are provided on the district's website, www.harborfieldscsd.net, and at each school building office. Residents can log on to the website and use the tax calculator to determine the impact of the proposed budget. For those who don't have access to the web, listed at right is the formula for calculating your estimated tax increase for the proposed 2016-17 budget. When using the formula, please be sure to include the assessed value, after all exemptions, including STAR. If you are unsure of your assessed valuation, please contact the Town of Huntington or log on to Harborfields' website, which provides access to the Town

of Huntington's tax receiver's website.

Q: Since the proposed budget exceeds the tax levy cap, how will the ballot read on May 17?

A: The ballot will include the following language: "Adoption of this budget requires a tax levy increase of 1.52%, which exceeds the statutory tax levy increase limit of 0.37% for this fiscal year and, therefore, exceeds the state tax cap and must be approved by sixty percent of the qualified voters present and voting."

**ESTIMATED TAX
INCREASE:
ASSESSED VALUATION
x .0386**

**EXAMPLE: FOR A PROPERTY
ASSESSED AT \$4,000:
ESTIMATED TAX INCREASE:
\$4,000 x .0386
= \$154.40**

New York State law provides that all district budgets be identified in three categories:

Administrative Expenses

- Curriculum Development
- Staff Development
- In-Service Development
- Personnel
- District Audit
- Tax Collection
- Central Printing/Mailing
- District Votes

Program Expenses

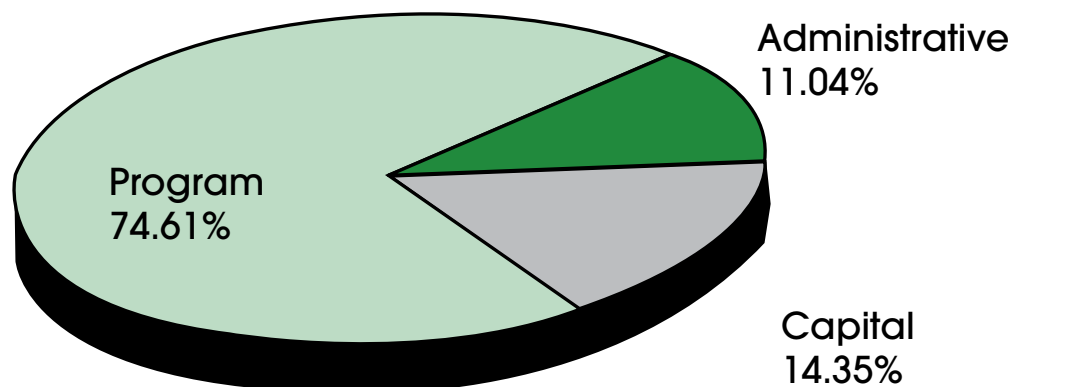
- All Student Services
- Instructional Support
- Transportation Operation
- Instructional Salaries and Benefits

Capital Expenses

- All Facilities Costs
- Debt Services
- Operations/Maintenance
- Supplies
- Utilities
- Personnel

Expenditures by Component

	Budget 2015-16	Proposed Budget 2016-17	Difference
<i>Administrative Component</i>			
Board of Education	\$90,072	\$90,611	\$539
Central Administration	640,768	637,426	(3,342)
Finance	865,119	876,308	11,189
Legal Services	81,000	81,000	0
BOCES, Personnel Services	75,886	75,886	0
Public Information	105,691	105,691	0
Maintenance of Plant	129,543	132,802	3,259
Other Central Services	222,850	222,850	0
Insurance, BOCES & Other Items	646,064	663,549	17,485
Curriculum Development & Supv.	449,787	459,821	10,034
Supervision Regular School	2,466,365	2,466,746	381
Res. Evaluation & Planning	7,300	7,300	0
Instruction (Net of Supervision)	581,830	553,978	(27,852)
Employee Benefits	2,678,626	2,777,734	99,108
Total Administrative Component	\$9,040,901	\$9,151,702	\$110,801
<i>Program Component</i>			
Legal Services	\$135,000	\$135,000	\$0
Instruction (Net of Supervision)	39,853,514	41,782,362	1,928,848
Contract Transportation	4,937,839	5,108,271	170,432
Employee Benefits	14,374,887	14,573,713	198,826
Transfer to Special Aid Fund	220,000	220,000	0
Total Program Component	\$59,521,240	\$61,819,346	\$2,298,106
<i>Capital Component</i>			
Operation of Plant	\$4,509,465	\$4,432,555	(\$76,910)
Maintenance of Plant	830,699	896,485	65,786
Employee Benefits	1,942,100	1,911,431	(30,669)
Debt Service	4,629,550	4,648,050	18,500
Total Capital Component	\$11,911,814	\$11,888,521	(\$23,293)
TOTAL BUDGET	\$80,473,955	\$82,859,569	\$2,385,614



HOMEOWNER EXEMPTIONS

Homeowners in the Town of Huntington will still receive property tax exemptions under the School Tax Relief program. New York State reimburses the school district for homeowners' STAR savings. There are two STAR exemptions, Basic STAR and Enhanced STAR.

Anyone who owns his or her home and lives in it while earning less than \$500,000 is eligible for the Basic STAR exemption. The Enhanced STAR exemption is available on the primary residence of Town of Huntington residents age 65 and up with yearly incomes below \$84,550. To receive this exemption, age and income documentation must be provided by applicants by the following Dec. 31 and must be renewed annually.

Additional exemptions are available to senior citizens and persons with disabilities with limited incomes, as well as veterans, volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. For more specific information, as well as applications and instructions, please contact the town assessor's office.

Town of Huntington residents may also be eligible for the Home Improvement Exemption. This exemption does not apply to new home assessments, additions to homes where the original home is less than 5 years old, or additions that expand the living area of the home by double (or more).

Board of Education Candidates



**MARGE
ACOSTA**

Marge Acosta, a resident of the district for 25 years, has four children, one of whom graduated from Harborfields High School, and two grandchildren who attend Washington Drive Primary School. Ms. Acosta is a retired teacher after 36 years of educating students in the area of science at the elementary, secondary and college levels and alternative education. She serves on the Harborfields Full-Day Kindergarten Committee and Washington Drive Primary School PTA and is a member of several other organizations.

Ms. Acosta notes that two essential programs currently absent from Harborfields that would afford students the opportunity for inquiry-based learning, are full-day kindergarten and a "comprehensive, in-depth" STEM education program.

"If elected, I would utilize the research and cost-analysis skills I gained as a community activist on election integrity and environmental issues to investigate success programs throughout the state," said Ms. Acosta. "I believe we can partner with local organizations, legislatures, universities and industry groups to obtain the needed funding and expertise to implement these necessary programs."



**CHRISTOPHER
KELLY**

Christopher Kelly, a resident of the district for the past eight years, has three daughters, one of whom is currently a fifth-grader at Thomas J. Lahey and another who will enter kindergarten this fall at Washington Drive. Mr. Kelly is a market data business advisor at a major bank in New York City.

Outside of his professional life, Mr. Kelly has served as the chairperson of the Council of PTAs' "Get Out the Vote" Committee since last May and has coached soccer in a local league for the past six years.

"I believe I have a unique set of analytical skills that I can bring to the Board, which will help to continue the tradition of excellence within the schools," Mr. Kelly said.

From his perspective, the most pressing issue for the district is facing the reality of budget constraints brought on by the state's tax cap legislation while continuing to maintain the standard of excellence the community has come to expect.

"I am fully behind the Board's philosophy to restore, maintain and enhance our programs," he said. "To do this, we need to develop better long-term planning to anticipate and manage future budget challenges."

Voters will have the opportunity to elect two members to the Board of Education, each for a three-year term. Candidates run at-large, meaning that the two candidates who receive the largest number of votes will be elected. On Tuesday, May 10, the Council of PTAs will sponsor a Meet the Candidates Forum at Oldfield Middle School at 6:30 p.m. Additional information regarding the Board of Education candidates can be found on the district website at www.harborfieldscsd.net.



**HANSEN
LEE**

Hansen Lee, a resident of the district for the past 20 years, is currently a trustee on the Board of Education. He has served on the Board since 2013 as a trustee. He also served as a member of the District Advisory Committee and Capital Improvement Subcommittee.

For three years, he served as a board officer with the Harborfields Alumni and Community Educational Foundation, for which he managed grant applications. He volunteers as the district photographer and offers his contributions to assist with school programs. Mr. Lee has three children, one of whom is a student at Oldfield Middle School and two of whom are graduates of Harborfields High School.

“My vision for the district is to have Harborfields Central School District lead the way as innovators and initiators of the best educational programs possible for all students that enables them to reach their maximum potential and be as successful as possible,” said Mr. Lee. He believes the most pressing issues to be addressed by the Board of Education are technology, staffing, programs and revenue. “The end result will be that Harborfields will be considered leaders in education, serving as the role model for all school districts to follow,” he said.



**JOSEPH C.
SAVAGLIO**

Joseph C. Savaglio, a resident of the district for 27 years, has four children, two of whom currently attend schools within the district and two who graduated from Harborfields High School in 2006 and 2011. Mr. Savaglio works in real estate management with experience in asset management, appraisal services, brokerage and consulting. He earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration in finance from Long Island University.

Mr. Savaglio has experience serving on various corporate, nonprofit and charitable boards, including the National Association of Realtors, the New York State Association of Realtors and Shriners Hospitals for Children. He also served as an administrator of multimillion dollar budgets, facilities, assets and personnel.

Mr. Savaglio notes that he is an advocate for the implementation of full-day kindergarten, expansion of curriculum in technology, arts, music and sports programs, and special education services and programs. “We need to carefully balance schools’ needs with acceptable property taxes,” he said.



**COLLEEN
WOLCOTT**

Colleen Wolcott, a resident of the district for the past 15 years, has two children, one of whom attends Washington Drive Primary School. Ms. Wolcott is the owner of Gold Coast Impression, LLC, a small marketing and graphic design firm in Huntington.

She is an active member of several organizations, including president of the Harborfields Special Education PTA, board member of the Harborfields Alliance for Community Outreach, member of the Harborfields Alumni and Community Educational Foundation, a group leader with the Long Island Survivors of Suicide organization and outreach facilitator for Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Respite.

Ms. Wolcott notes that she has been an active district member because she is “passionate about ensuring that all Harborfields students receive the academic and life skills they need to live productive, happy lives.”

“As the SEPTA president for the past two years, I have developed good relationships with the administration, teachers and families within the district,” said Ms. Wolcott. “I believe that I have a great understanding of Harborfields programs and policies, as well as our strengths and areas that could use some additional support.”

Harborfields Central School District
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Diana Todaro, *Superintendent of Schools*



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page of our website.

VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

A person shall be entitled to vote if he or she is 18 years of age or older, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the school district for 30 days preceding the meeting at which the person offers to vote.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Absentee ballots are provided upon proper application to any qualified voter who will be unable to vote in person due to illness or physical disability, hospitalization, incarceration (unless incarcerated for conviction of a felony), or travel outside the voter's county of residence for employment or business reasons, studies or vacation on the day of the election.

Absentee ballot applications must be received by the district clerk or designee at least seven days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the election if the ballot is to be issued to the voter in person.

In order to obtain an absentee ballot, residents must first complete an application for an absentee ballot. The application is available on the district's website under the "District News – Budget Information" section, or may

be obtained by stopping by the office of the district clerk, located at 2 Oldfield Road. Absentee ballots applications can also be requested by phone by calling the district clerk's office at 631-754-5320, ext. 300.

REGISTERING TO VOTE

Community members who wish to vote at the annual budget vote and election for Harborfields should register in advance through the Suffolk County Board of Elections, the same as if they were voting in any other election (town, county, state, etc.). Any community member not already registered with the Suffolk County Board of Elections may appear on the day of the budget vote and, once it is determined that he or she meets the criteria discussed above, his or her name will be added to the poll list and he or she may cast a ballot.



REMEMBER TO VOTE!

Tuesday, May 17
Polls Open 2-9 p.m. @
Oldfield Middle School auditorium