

# Minisink Valley NEWS

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



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## Voters to decide on \$97.4 million proposed school budget with a 1.50 percent tax levy increase

### *2017-18 proposal preserves and grows student programs*

On Tuesday, May 16, voters in the Minisink Valley Central School District will decide on a \$97.4 million proposed budget for the 2017-2018 school year. This budget increases spending by 1.39 percent, or \$1.3M from the current year, and includes a 1.50 percent tax levy increase.

The proposed 1.50 percent increase in the tax levy – total amount of money to be raised through property taxes – is within the district's maximum allowable tax levy limit of 3.93, as defined by state law. As a result, residents will be eligible to receive the state's property tax rebate, and budget approval will require a simple majority (50 percent plus one).

"We are pleased to propose a budget that advances our mission to prepare all our students for the college and career challenges of our time, while balancing the needs of our taxpayers in a fiscally responsible manner," said Superintendent Brian C. Monahan.

Residents will also decide on bus purchases (Proposition 2), and elect four candidates to the Board of Education.

### **Cost containment, increased Foundation Aid and tax levy**

The district established its own self-funded health insurance plan during the 2016-17 school year. The self-funded plan allowed the district to enhance employee benefits while containing costs for the 2016-17 school year.

Under the previous plan, the district would have incurred an 18 percent cost increase in health insurance benefits for 2017-18. Under its own self-funded plan, the district projects



*High school seniors Sean McQuillan and Owen Straub, a programmer-builder team in the Robotics Club, test their robot in preparation for the May 13, 2017 New Jersey / New York Botball Tournament.*

a 5 percent cost increase in health insurance benefits – a savings in excess of \$1 million for 2017-18.

An estimated increase in Foundation Aid of \$673,000 or 2.67 percent, combined with the following savings and revenue, will help balance Minisink's 2017-2018 school budget:

- Decreases in pension rates reduced projected expenditures by approximately \$500,000
- Tuition costs for out-of-district placements were reduced due to declining enrollment, resulting in cost savings of approximately \$750,000
- Projected decreases in natural gas and telephone rates should result in savings of \$25,000
- Tax levy increase of 1.50 percent would generate approximately \$645,000 in new revenue

**For more information visit  
[www.minisink.com](http://www.minisink.com)**

**BUDGET VOTE**  
**Tuesday, May 16**  
**Noon to 9:00 p.m.**

**VOTER INFORMATION**  
see page 4

### BUDGET AT A GLANCE

PROPOSED 2017-18 BUDGET  
**\$97,407,064**

BUDGET-TO-BUDGET  
SPENDING INCREASE  
**\$1,336,241 (+1.39%)**

PROPOSED TAX LEVY  
INCREASE **1.50%**

### ALSO ON THE BALLOT...

#### **BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES**

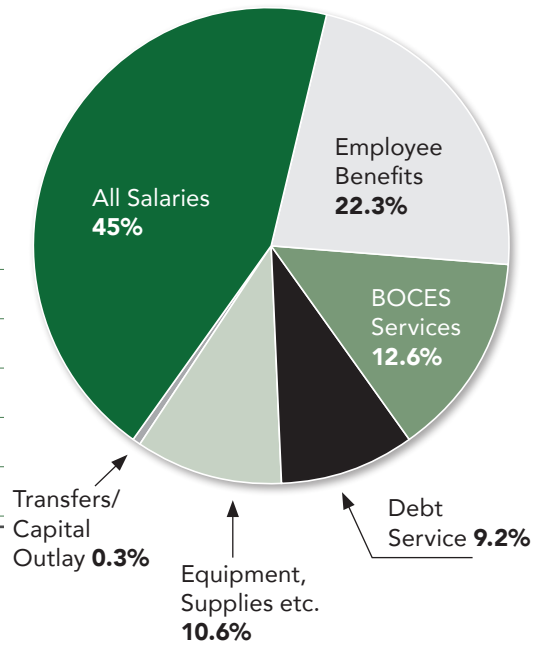
Residents will elect four members to the board of education. There are three 3-year-term seats commencing July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2020, resulting from the conclusion of the office terms of Shawn Cahill, Alfred Gibbs and John Odland. The recent passing of board member Paul Rickard vacated a non-expired seat, to be filled on or about May 16, 2017, and ending June 30, 2018. Voters will decide from the following candidates: Shawn Cahill, James Emery, Joseph Geidel, Alfred Gibbs, and John Odland.

**PROPOSITION 2:**  
**Purchase of School Buses – \$968,035**  
See page 3 for more information.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES...

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY

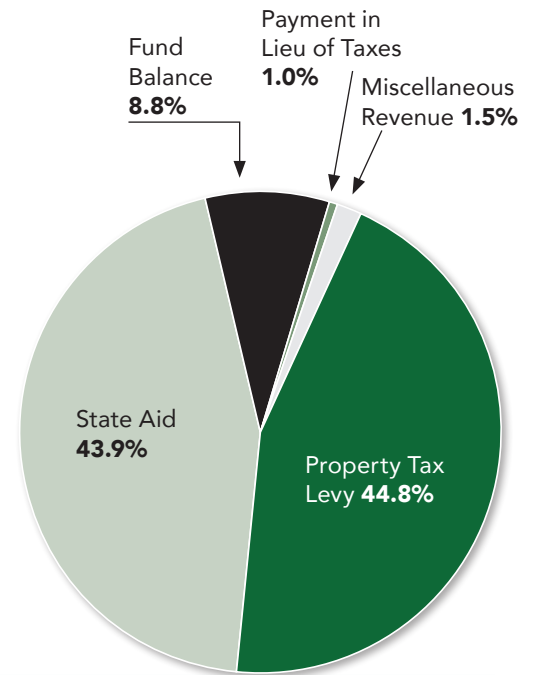
	2016-17 BUDGET	2017-18 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE
All Salaries	\$42,179,953	\$43,875,152	\$1,695,199
Employee Benefits	\$21,711,584	\$21,714,062	\$2,478
Debt Service	\$8,858,795	\$8,941,077	\$82,282
BOCES Services	\$13,481,588	\$12,264,744	-\$1,216,844
Equip./Supplies/Textbooks/Contractual Items	\$9,588,930	\$10,347,029	\$758,099
Transfers/Capital Outlay	\$250,000	\$265,000	\$15,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$96,070,850</b>	<b>\$97,407,064</b>	<b>\$1,336,214</b>



WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM...

ESTIMATED REVENUES

	2016-17 BUDGET	2017-18 PROPOSED	\$ CHANGE
State Aid (all sources)	\$43,036,622	\$42,780,023	-\$256,599
Local Revenues			
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$1,529,155	\$975,362	-\$553,793
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$685,000	\$1,464,500	\$779,500
Use of Fund Balance	\$7,856,303	\$8,578,952	\$722,649
Property Tax Levy	\$42,963,770	\$43,608,227	\$644,457
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$96,070,850</b>	<b>\$97,407,064</b>	<b>\$1,336,214</b>



2017-18 school year budget summary

New York State law requires school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories – program, administrative and capital—and compare them to the previous year’s costs. Minisink’s three-part budget breaks down as follows:

PROGRAM	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Amount</b>	<b>\$72,995,186</b>	<b>\$73,717,348</b>
<b>% of total</b>	<b>75.98%</b>	<b>75.68%</b>
Includes salaries and benefits of all teachers and staff who deliver pupil services (guidance, health, library/media, etc.), textbooks, equipment, and co-curricular activities, athletics and transportation costs (except bus purchases).		

ADMINISTRATIVE	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Amount</b>	<b>\$6,840,691</b>	<b>\$7,454,144</b>
<b>% of total</b>	<b>7.12%</b>	<b>7.65%</b>
Includes salaries and benefits of administrators, supervisors and administrative clerical staff, public information, printing, curriculum and staff development, school board costs, general insurance and professional fees.		

CAPITAL	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Amount</b>	<b>\$16,234,973</b>	<b>\$16,235,572</b>
<b>% of total</b>	<b>16.90%</b>	<b>16.67%</b>
Includes salaries and benefits of maintenance and custodial staff, debt service on buildings and school bus purchases, utilities, tax certiorari and court-ordered costs.		

# 2017-18 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

*New and reinstated positions and programs will expand student opportunity and enhance curriculum*

- **Elementary School:** Addition of two K-2 reading teachers, and two Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teachers
- **Middle School:** Expansion of the foreign language curriculum with the reinstatement of two teaching positions for grade 7; currently foreign language is only offered to students in grade 8
- **High School:** Addition of one English language arts (ELA) teacher, and one social studies teacher will increase scheduling options and elective offerings, including AP English through Syracuse University
- **District-wide:**
  - Addition of a Technology Integration, Professional Development and Testing supervisor will advance the district's technology capabilities, and enhance student achievement through the integration of technology instruction in the classroom, and through more consistent professional development for teachers
  - Addition of one physical education teacher will address class-section needs at the elementary and intermediate schools, and provide adaptive physical education for special education students
- **Athletics:**
  - Addition of varsity girls-golf and modified boys/girls lacrosse
  - Addition of two coaches for varsity and modified girls lacrosse and cross-country
- **Extra-curricular:** Reinstatement of six 5:15 p.m. late bus runs will encourage student engagement in extra-curricular activities.

## REQUIRED SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

The information provided below is the "School District Budget Notice" as required by state law. School districts must distribute this notice, as prescribed, to all district residents.

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2016-17 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2017-18 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2017-18 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$96,070,850	\$97,407,064	\$ 96,222,606
Increase/Decrease for the 2017-18 School Year		\$ 1,336,214	\$ 151,757
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		1.39%	0.16%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.26%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 42,963,770	\$ 43,608,227	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable			
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **			
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy			
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 42,963,770	\$ 43,608,227	\$ 42,963,770
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 1,721,979	\$ 2,797,928	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 42,095,365	\$ 41,853,568	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$ 41,241,791	\$ 40,810,299	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ 853,574	\$ 1,043,269	
Administrative Component	\$ 6,840,691	\$ 7,454,144	\$ 6,864,826
Program Component	\$ 72,995,186	\$ 73,717,348	\$ 73,229,625
Capital Component	\$ 16,234,973	\$ 16,235,572	\$ 16,128,155

\*Pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law a contingency budget would require reductions of \$1,184,458 in program and other operations including equipment purchases and limit or eliminate facility usage by the community.

\*\* List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)

Description	Amount
Proposition II - Purchase of School Buses	\$ 968,035

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2017-18 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$ 829

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2017-18 by the qualified voters of the Minisink Valley School District, Orange County, New York, will be held at the Intermediate & Otisville schools in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 between the hours of 12:00pm and 9:00pm, prevailing time, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

<sup>1</sup> The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

### PROPOSITION 2: Purchase of 12 School Buses

Also on the May 16 ballot, voters will decide on a proposition for the purchase of 12 school buses in the amount of \$968,035, as part of the district's continuing 10-year replacement plan. Anticipated bus purchases include two 66-passenger, one 72-passenger, three 30-passenger, three 29-passenger/wheelchair, and three 20-passenger/wheelchair buses.

State transportation aid will fund approximately 75 percent, or \$726,056, of the bus purchase costs, over a five-year period.

Recognizing that older, high-mileage vehicles cost more to keep on the road, the replacement plan is designed to evenly spread out the cost of maintaining a 94-vehicle fleet that is both safe and efficient.

By continuing the bus replacement plan, the proposed purchases would allow the district to retire 11 high-mileage buses - 140,000 to 231,000 miles - that are increasingly more costly to maintain.

Planned replacements minimize the tax impact from year-to-year by maintaining a consistent investment in new buses. State aid in support of the bus replacement plan helps prevent fluctuations in bus purchase expenditures from one year to the next.

**Minisink Valley CSD**

P.O. Box 217, Rte. 6, Slate Hill, NY 10973

**Board of Education**

Joseph Flaherty, *President*, William Cooper, *Vice-president*, Shawn Cahill, Kathlee DeRose, Alfred Gibbs, John Odland Catherine Prezioso, Thomas Salamone

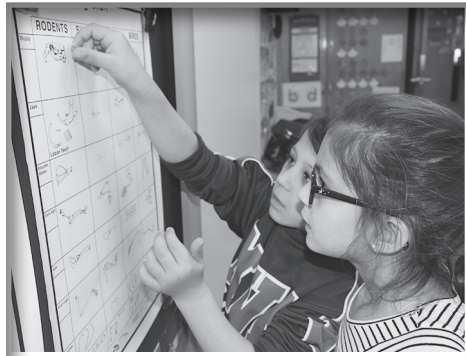
**Superintendent of Schools**

Brian C. Monahan

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Following the dissection of owl pellets, third grade students use a bone sorting chart to match their findings to the exact prey.

**VOTER INFORMATION**

**Who may vote?**

You may vote if you are 18-years old or older, a U.S. citizen, a district resident for at least 30 days, and a registered voter for either a general election or a school board election.

**How do I register?**

You can register at the district clerk's office, Minisink Valley Central School District, Route 6, Slate Hill, New York, until May 11, 2017, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., on days when school is in session. Proof of residency is required.

**When is the vote?**

Tuesday, May 16, noon to 9 p.m.

**Where do I vote?**

Residents of District #1 Towns of Greenville, Minisink and Wawayanda vote in the Intermediate School gym A, Route 6 campus.

Residents of District #2 Towns of Mount Hope, Mamakating and Walkkill vote at the Otisville Elementary School.

**How do I get an absentee ballot?**

Applications may be downloaded from the Budget page of the district's website or obtained at the office of the school district clerk. Absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 16, 2017.

**Questions? 355-5115**

**BUDGET Questions & Answers**

**Q** Does the district risk future increases in health insurance costs by maintaining its own self-funded health insurance plan?

**A** The district, in close consultation with its employee benefits advisor, took steps to minimize risk by securing stop-loss insurance at \$250,000, and by obtaining approval from the state legislature and the governor to establish a health insurance reserve.

These two measures, combined with the ability to periodically inform our employees on how to best utilize their health benefits, should provide the district with a sustainable plan, and allow greater flexibility to allocate future budget funds to further student opportunities and achievement.

**Q** What is the status of the CPV PILOT and the timing of the revenue to be realized by the PILOT agreement?

**A** The district met with county officials to clarify the terms and timing of future PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) payments associated with the Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) project.

The agreement specifies that, during the current construction phase, the district shall receive a land development PILOT payment of approximately \$25,000 for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years. Under the agreement, the project is scheduled to be completed in early 2018.

Assuming the plant becomes operational at that time, the district shall receive an initial payment of approximately \$900,000 in the 2018-19 school year. Thereafter, the PILOT payments to the district are to increase over the 20-year agreement.

**Q** Why did pension costs decrease approximately \$500,000?

**A** Both the NYS Employees' Retirement System and the NYS Teachers' Retirement System have diversified investment portfolios. In recent years, the stock market has shown steady improvement, generating better-than-expected return rates in retirement plan investments for both entities.

Plan actuaries determine the contribution amounts needed to sustain the pension benefits for future and existing retirees. The contribution amount required of school districts to fund the pension system each year is reduced by the investment income generated by the portfolios of each pension system.

The bulk of the district's pension savings was generated by a decrease in the projected contribution rate for the Teachers' Retirement System, from 11.72 percent in 2016-17, to 9.8 percent in 2017-18.