

CAPITAL education

2017 SPECIAL
BUDGET EDITION

Where do I vote?

See page 4 for a list

New programs, no tax-levy increase in proposed 2017-18 school budget

Albany voters will consider a school budget with no tax-levy increase for the second year in a row and the third time in seven years when they go to the polls Tuesday, May 16.

Thanks to a significant increase in state funding, the City School District of Albany's proposed 2017-18 budget carries no tax-levy increase and supports new investments designed to boost student achievement and serve the district's rapidly growing enrollment.

The \$240.2 million plan would continue to support all current academic, social-emotional and extracurricular programs and services for the district's nearly 9,700 students. That includes full-day prekindergarten, music instrument instruction at all schools beginning in third grade, middle- and high-school foreign language programs and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes at Albany High School.

The proposed budget also would invest in new initiatives throughout the district.

Those include equitable staff and programs for the district's new middle school at 50 North Lark St., a Newcomer Program to serve the district's growing immigrant and refugee population, and redesigned alternative-education programs for students who struggle in traditional classrooms (see at right and page 3 to learn more about these proposals).

The proposal also supports the district's

Academic Plan, which focuses resources for students in five areas: Prekindergarten-grade 2 literacy, social-emotional supports from kindergarten-grade 12, college and career readiness, safety and security, and administrative support.

In addition, the budget would invest state funding to continue to build Community Schools models at five elementary schools and at the Alternative Learning Center. These initiatives, developed with families and community partners, would provide additional services for students and families during and beyond the school day.

If the budget is approved, the district's average tax-levy increase over the past seven years would be less than 1 percent. Over the same period, district enrollment has increased by 13 percent – nearly 1,100 students.

The budget proposal includes \$7.2 million in new state aid for 2017-18. District and board representatives were busy throughout the fall and winter meeting with state leaders to advocate for additional funding for critical programs and services. The district is grateful for the additional support the state provided.

Some \$5.85 million in the proposed budget

SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE

Tuesday, May 16
7 a.m.-9 p.m.

comes from the district's fund balance.

The proposed budget also will fund \$34.2 million in payments to charter schools.

Some 47.5 percent of the budget's estimated revenue – \$114 million – would come from local property taxes. State aid would contribute 43.7 percent, or \$105 million. The remainder would come from a variety of sources (see estimated revenue chart and graph on page 2).

Please visit the 2017-18 Budget News section at www.albanschools.org for more information. You also can call 475-6065 to schedule a presentation for your group before the May 16 vote.

Equity a priority for new middle school

The proposed 2017-18 City School District of Albany budget supports equitable staffing and programs for a new middle school that will open in September at 50 North Lark St., addressing the district's rapidly growing enrollment.

In January, voters approved \$6.5 million in renovations with no additional cost to taxpayers to prepare 50 North Lark to serve students in grades 6-8.

The new middle school will help alleviate overcrowding at Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School and William S. Hackett Middle School. It also will bring the district closer to its long-term enrollment plan to have all sixth-graders be in middle school.

"Our goal is to provide students at 50 North Lark with an equitable middle-school experience, meaning the school will have the academic and social-emotional supports that all students need to succeed," said Interim Superintendent Kimberly Young Wilkins, Ed.D.

Veteran district administrators Malik Jones and Kandie Antonetti will serve as co-principals of the new middle school. Jones currently is principal at Montessori Magnet School. Antonetti is principal at West Hill Middle School, which will merge into 50 North Lark. (The Alternative Learning Center, currently housed at 50 North Lark, will move to 395 Elk St. See page 3 to learn more.)

The proposed budget calls for \$1.3 million to fund positions at the school, including an assistant principal, home school coordinator, two guidance counselors, two social workers, a behavior specialist and a psychologist.

Of the 68 positions proposed for 50 North Lark, about 50 are transfers from other schools in the district and 18 are new hires.

Students at the new school would have access to academic intervention services as well as health and social-emotional services supported by the budget proposal.

The budget also would invest in AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) for sixth-graders at 50 North Lark. AVID is a college- and career-readiness system that supports students for success in rigorous academic programs. The program is currently offered at the district's other middle schools.

The school will be enrolled with an interim feeder pattern for 3-5 years while the district completes the ongoing process of planning for long-term elementary and middle school facilities and enrollment needs.

Students attending 50 North Lark will be from Arbor Hill Elementary School, North Albany Academy, Schuyler Achievement Academy, Sheridan Preparatory Academy and West Hill.

Jones and Antonetti already have visited with their soon-to-be new students this spring, and they look forward to more opportunities to get to know students and their families before the new school year begins.



The City School District of Albany's proposed budget would support 1,073 spots for full-day prekindergarten in the district's 12 elementary schools and at 16 community locations, benefiting students like the Delaware Community School prekindergarteners pictured at their school's "Living Literature Day" on March 16.

2017-18 budget proposal at a glance

Total – \$240.2 million

Tax-levy increase – Zero

• The tax levy is the total amount of money the school district needs to collect from property owners. For the second consecutive year there is no increase in the proposed tax levy.

Voting day

- Tuesday, May 16. Polls open 7 a.m.-9 p.m.
- Call 475-6015 if you're not sure where to vote.

What the budget supports

- Full-day prekindergarten (1,073 spots) in all 12 elementary schools and at 16 community locations
- Three themed elementary schools
- The bilingual Dual Language Program at Delaware Community School
- Band, chorus and orchestra starting in third grade
- Sports teams – 57 for grades 7-12
- Programs that allow Albany High School students to gain college credit while in high school
- Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses at Albany High
- AVID college- and career-readiness programs at Albany High and in each middle school

What's new in the budget?

- Equitable staffing and programs for the new middle school at 50 North Lark St. (see story at right to learn more)
- Revamped alternative-education programs to serve students who don't succeed in a traditional classroom (see page 3 to learn more)
- A Newcomer Program for refugee and immigrant students in

grades 6-12 with limited English skills (see page 3 to learn more)

- Community Schools initiatives at Arbor Hill Elementary, Giffen Memorial Elementary, Schuyler Achievement Academy, Sheridan Preparatory Academy, TOAST and the Alternative Learning Center
- 1 district-wide fine arts instructional supervisor
- 1 district-wide elementary instructional supervisor in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math)
- 1 district-wide library, media, assessment and technology instructional supervisor
- 4 assistant principals – 1 each at ASH, Arbor Hill Elementary, Schuyler Achievement Academy and TOAST
- 2 reading teachers – 1 each at ASH and Giffen Memorial Elementary
- 5 teaching assistants – 1 each assigned at ASH, Delaware Community School, Pine Hills Elementary, Schuyler Achievement Academy and district-wide
- 2 behavior specialists – 1 each assigned district-wide and at Schuyler Achievement Academy
- 2 psychologists – 1 each assigned at Albany High and Abrookin
- 1.5 social workers – 1 assigned at Albany High and 0.5 at Abrookin
- 1 academic intervention services English language arts teacher at Myers
- 2 academic intervention services math teachers at Myers
- Expansion of AVID college- and career-prep programs to the new middle school and Delaware Community School

Your tax bill: making sense of the numbers

Q: How are my final school tax bill and tax rate set?

A: Your school tax bill and tax rate are determined by combining four factors, three of which are outside the district's control:

1. School tax levy: The total amount of money a school district needs to collect from property owners each year – \$114 million in the 2017-18 proposed budget. There is no increase proposed for 2017-18, the fourth consecutive year and the fifth time in seven years that the district's proposed tax-levy increase has been less than 1 percent. The zero proposed increase is below the district's tax "cap" for 2017-18 of 0.96 percent.

2. The state School Tax Relief Program, or STAR: Partial school tax exemptions for owner-occupied homes. Basic STAR savings next year will be \$637. Enhanced STAR savings for senior citizens will be \$1,343 (*Please note that the estimates provided in the table to the right include only these first two factors.*)

3. Property assessments: Estimates of the value of how much a property would sell for under normal conditions. This information is determined by the City of Albany.

4. Homestead vs. non-homestead proportion: Each summer, the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services finalizes the assessments and allowable proportion of local taxes to be paid by homeowners and business owners. Therefore, this information is not available yet. This is the final factor in determining the school tax rate.

Once all factors are set, the final tax rate determines how much of the total tax levy each property owner pays. The Board of Education typically sets the annual school tax rate in August.

Q: How will the proposed 2017-18 budget affect my taxes?

A: **The City School District of Albany is not increasing the school tax levy for 2017-18.** However, your overall tax bill may change:

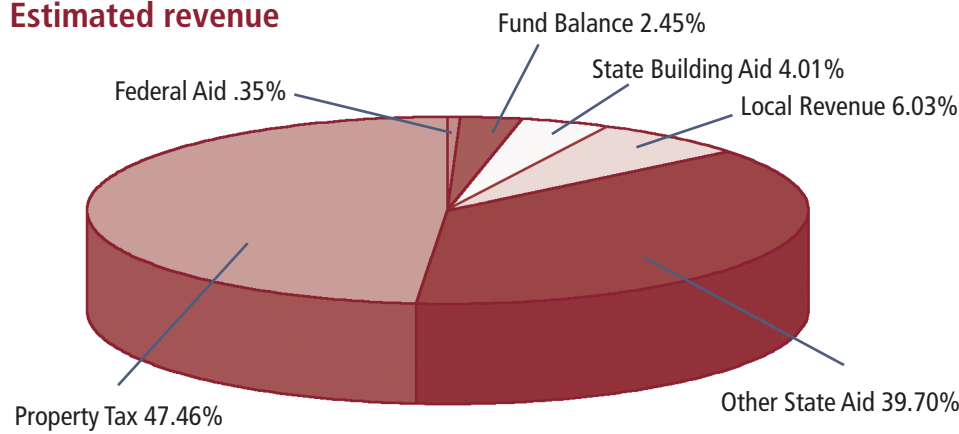
- If the value of your property changed;
- If your STAR reimbursement changed;
- If the proportion changes for school taxes paid by homeowners and businesses; or
- Due to changes in the Albany Public Library's tax levy.

Estimated school tax bill for a typical taxpayer whose home is valued at \$150,000*

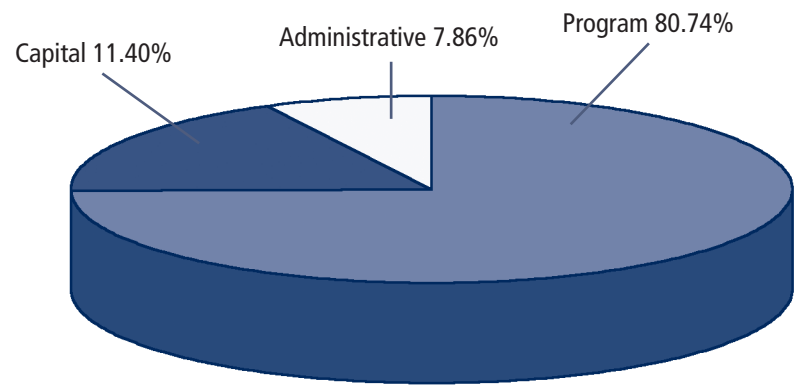
School tax	2016-17	2017-18	Estimated Change*
Without STAR exemption	\$3,122	\$3,122	\$0
With Basic STAR	\$2,464	\$2,485	\$21 increase
With Enhanced STAR for seniors	\$1,805	\$1,779	\$26 decrease

* The final tax rate is set in the summer after the city assessor and the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services finalize the allowable proportion of local taxes to be paid by homeowners and business owners.

Estimated revenue



Estimated expenditures



Budget presentations

City School District of Albany staff welcome the opportunity to meet with your organization or group to provide a presentation about this year's budget proposal. Here are the dates and locations of community presentations currently scheduled before the May 16 vote.

Tuesday, May 9

- Beverwyck Neighborhood Association, Orlo School of Hair Design and Cosmetology, 232 N. Allen St., 7 p.m.

Thursday, May 11

- Buckingham Lake Neighborhood Association, Albany Elks Lodge #49, 25 S. Allen St., 7 p.m.

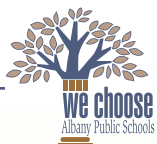
If you would like to schedule a presentation for your organization before the May 16 vote, please call the Communications Office at 475-6065.

Estimated revenue, or where the money will come from

	2016-17	2017-18	\$ Change
Federal Aid	\$650,000	\$850,000	\$200,000
Fund Balance	5,700,000	5,850,000	150,000
Local Revenue	15,395,400	14,485,000	-910,400
State Building Aid	9,473,236	9,638,912	165,676
Other State Aid	88,186,177	95,354,494	7,168,317
Use of Reserves	650,000	0	-650,000
Property Tax Levy	113,999,102	113,999,102	0
Total Revenue	\$234,053,915	\$240,177,508	\$6,123,593

Proposed expenditures, or where the money will be spent

	2016-17 Budget	2017-18 Proposed	\$ Change
Program Budget	\$188,984,125	\$193,910,500	\$4,926,375
Instruction	145,486,935	149,786,272	4,299,337
Charter Schools Payments	34,651,447	34,222,090	-429,357
Pupil Transportation	7,914,112	8,853,649	939,537
Athletics	931,631	1,048,489	116,858
Lunch Program Assistance	0	0	0
Capital Budget	\$28,029,270	\$27,395,279	-\$633,991
Debt Payments and Borrowings	14,531,205	14,236,484	-294,721
Building Rentals	583,100	165,818	-417,282
Operations/Maintenance/Capital	9,541,965	9,807,977	266,012
Utilities	2,873,000	2,685,000	-188,000
Tax Refunds and Judgments	500,000	500,000	0
Administrative Budget	\$17,040,520	\$18,871,729	\$1,831,209
School Supervision	14,976,782	16,695,205	1,718,423
Property and Liability Insurance	607,300	607,300	0
Printing, Mailing and Data Processing	1,170,970	1,226,756	55,786
Legal and Other Services	285,468	342,468	57,000
Total Expenditures	\$234,053,915	\$240,177,508	\$6,123,593



CAPITAL education

Capital Education is published by the City School District of Albany.

Please direct comments about the newsletter,

story ideas and questions to

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City School District of Albany
1 Academy Park
Albany, New York 12207

What voters will see on the May 16 ballot

Albany residents will be asked to consider the following propositions on Tuesday, May 16. One is directly related to the City School District of Albany.

The first proposition asks voters to consider the proposed \$240.2 million school budget for 2017-18. Here's what will appear on the ballot:

Proposition #1

Shall the resolution adopted by the Board of Education on April 12, 2017 authorizing the City School District of Albany to expend the sum in the amount of \$240,177,508 during the 2017-2018 school year, and to levy a tax therefor be approved?

YES NO

Voters also will be asked to consider a \$6.98 million tax levy proposed by the Albany Public Library. This proposition is unrelated to the school district budget and will not affect school taxes. Here is what will appear on the ballot:

Proposition #2

Shall the sum of \$6,981,873 be raised by annual levy of a tax upon the taxable real property within the City School District of Albany for the purpose of funding the operating budget of the Albany Public Library?

YES NO

There also will be a vote for three seats on the Albany Public Library Board of Trustees, each for a five-year term. This vote also is unrelated to the school district.

For more information on the library budget or the trustee vote, please call Stephanie Simon at 427-4344.



Baseball is one of 57 sports teams available to middle- and high-school students in the City School District of Albany: 12 female athletic activities on 27 teams and 12 male athletic activities on 30 teams. On April 12, the Albany High School varsity baseball team hosted Niskayuna at the Plumeri Sports Complex. The weather was predictably April – rainy and windy.



The proposed 2017-18 school budget supports musical instrument instruction beginning in third grade and continuing through high school, allowing for band and orchestra ensembles in every school. The Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School students pictured here performed on Feb. 16 with their school's all-female jazz ensemble at the Black History Month celebration at Montessori Magnet School.

Redesigning alternative education

The City School District of Albany's proposed 2017-18 budget supports changes to programs that provide specialized help to students with academic, behavioral or other issues affecting their ability to succeed in school.

The budget plan also provides equitable staffing at the district's Alternative Learning Center, which will relocate to a new home next school year at 395 Elk St.

Alternative education in most cases consists of short-term programs customized to help middle- and high-school students deal with issues they face, ranging widely from failing a grade to missing school because of pregnancy to violating the district's Code of Conduct.

The goal of alternative education is to provide students with the support they need to stay on track to graduation and transition successfully back to their middle or high school.

The district's alternative-education programs serve students in grades 7-12. In addition to the move to its new location for 2017-18, the ALC also will undergo program changes to better meet students' academic and social-emotional needs.

Plans call for creating three new middle-school programs:

therapeutic, academic and behavioral. Each will be staffed to meet the specific needs of students.

Also, four new programs will serve high-school students:

- Accelerated recovery (a modified version of the current CHOICE program) for students who repeat ninth grade;
- A short-term program for Code of Conduct violators;
- A short-term program for students transitioning from court and other non-district programs; and
- A longer-term program for students who need smaller learning environments.

Existing staff will accommodate some of the changes. The budget plan would support the following new staff to bolster the redesign and provide student-- at the ALC with equitable course options:

- An APEX/Online Success teacher;
- An art teacher;
- A family and consumer sciences teacher;
- A music teacher;
- A technology teacher; and
- A school social worker.

A plan to support our city's newcomers

The City School District of Albany's proposed 2017-18 budget includes funding for a new program to serve the city's rapidly growing population of refugee and immigrant families.

Starting in September, the Newcomer Program will serve about 175 students in grades 6-12 whose English is limited enough to merit extra help and attention in all subjects. The program will be based at North Albany Academy and serve students throughout the district.

The rapid increase in the number of Albany's refugee and immigrant students – quadrupling in the past five years to more than 1,200 – spurred creation of the program. So did stringent state regulations on how to serve English-language learners. The new program will help the district meet these new state directives.

In a district in which students speak 57 languages, a Newcomer Program is the most cost-effective way to provide

English-language learners with the programs and supports they need while also complying with new state regulations.

The Newcomer Program would cost less per year than providing the state-mandated services for the same number of students across the district's 17 district schools.

It's expected that students will spend an average of two years in the program, gaining the language skills and academic foundation they would need to transition successfully to their assigned schools.

The 2017-18 budget supports seven new positions in the Newcomer Program: a principal, secretary and five teachers. Another 10 teachers will transfer to the program from elsewhere in the district.

The district hopes to expand the program to add students in grades 3-5 for the 2018-19 school year.

Our schools by the numbers

- **Zero** – The amount of the tax-levy increase in proposed budget – none for the second year in a row!
- **0.90** – Percent of the average school tax-levy increase over the last seven years if the 2017-18 proposal is approved – less than 1 percent!
- **1:31.13** – Minutes it took the Albany High boys' 4 x 200-meter relay team to finish at the New Balance National Indoor Championships in March – a school record and the second-fastest time in Section II history!
- **5** – Number of snow days used in the 2016-17 school year
- **7** – Little Free Libraries at district elementary schools (*Thank you, Grassroot Givers!*)
- **13** – Percent growth in district enrollment since 2011-12 (*Nearly 1,100 students!*)
- **15** – Date in July for the district's 2017 Summer Celebration in Krank Park
- **21** – Advanced Placement classes available at Albany High
- **23** – District teachers certified through the highly prestigious National Board of Teaching Standards
- **45** – Students that competed on eight Albany High varsity winter teams that received scholar-athlete recognition from the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.
- **57** – Languages spoken by district students
- **64** – Whipped-cream pies smooshed into the face of TOAST Principal Teresa Brown as a reward to students who raised the most money and read the most books at a school-wide read-a-thon.
- **71** – People inducted into the district's Hall of Fame since 2009 (*Eight more to join this September!*)
- **78** – Albany High juniors inducted into National Honor Society on May 2
- **121** – Pints of blood donated at Albany High at a Jan. 12 drive – a school record!
- **923** – People following the district on Twitter (*Join them at twitter.com/albanyschools*)
- **1,073** – Prekindergarten spots for 3- and 4-year olds in 2017-18
- **1,142** – Yards run by Albany High running back Ky'ere Tillery during the 2016 football season
- **3,227** – People who like the City School District of Albany Facebook page (*Join them at facebook.com/albanyschools*)
- **4,656** – People signed up for School News Notifier, or SNN (*Join them at albanyschools.org/SNN*)
- **6,654** – Lunches served in district cafeterias each day on average
- **26,617** – Servings of fruits and vegetables prepared in district cafeterias each day on average
- **2.1 million** – Square feet of building space in the district
- **475-6015** – The number to call if you you're not sure where to vote on May 16

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Communications Office, 1 Academy Park, Albany, N.Y. 12207 | (518) 475-6065 | Fax: (518) 475-6069 | www.albanyschools.org

Polling locations

Remember to vote
Tuesday, May 16
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Find your location below, or visit the searchable online directory in the 2017-18 Budget News section at www.albanyschools.org. If you have additional questions, please call 475-6015.

1st Ward, Districts 1 – 10 City Parks and Recreation Building 7 Hoffman Ave.	8th Ward, Districts 5 – 9 Albany School of Humanities 108 Whitehall Road
2nd Ward, Districts 1 – 10 Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl St.	9th Ward, Districts 1 – 9 New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Ave.
3rd Ward, Districts 1 – 10 Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Ave.	10th Ward, Districts 1 – 9 Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
4th Ward, Districts 1 – 6 North Albany Academy 570 North Pearl St.	11th Ward, Districts 1 – 10 Albany High School 700 Washington Ave.
5th Ward, Districts 1 – 7 Arbor Hill/West Hill Library 148 Henry Johnson Blvd.	12th Ward, Districts 1 – 3 Teresian House 200 Washington Ave. Extension
6th Ward, Districts 1 – 8 William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	12th Ward, Districts 4 – 8 Montessori Magnet School 45 Tremont St.
7th Ward, Districts 1 – 5 Delaware Community School 43 Bertha St.	13th Ward, Districts 1 – 7 Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St. (Includes Alumni Quad of the University at Albany)
7th Ward, Districts 6 – 8 William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	14th Ward, Districts 1 – 9 Mater Christi School 35 Hurst Ave.
8th Ward, Districts 1 – 4 Mater Christi School 35 Hurst Ave.	15th Ward, Districts 1 – 7 Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Ave.

Voting requirements

To vote on the City School District of Albany's proposed 2017-18 budget, you must be:

- Registered to vote with the Albany County Board of Elections by Tuesday, May 2;
- At least 18 years old; and
- A citizen of the United States for at least 30 days before the vote.

For more information, please contact Paula Tibbitts, clerk of the Board of Education, at 475-6015.

Absentee ballots

The City School District of Albany automatically sends absentee ballots to people the Albany County Board of Elections designates as having a permanent disability.

Others who want to vote with an absentee ballot because of illness, hospitalization, vacation, studies, business or incarceration must apply for the absentee ballot.

You can call 475-6015 to have an application mailed to you, or you can download one from the 2017-18 Budget News section at www.albanyschools.org. You also can pick up an application from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday at the board clerk's office in Academy Park on Elk Street.

If you want the absentee ballot mailed to your home, you must mail the completed application to the district clerk seven days before the vote – by Tuesday, May 9. If you want to pick up your ballot at the district office, you must have your completed application to the board clerk by 4 p.m. the day before the budget vote – Monday, May 15, at which time you will complete your vote.

All absentee ballots must be returned to the district clerk by 5 p.m. the day of the school budget vote – **Tuesday, May 16.**

What happens if the budget is not approved?

State law gives the Board of Education three alternatives if voters do not approve the proposed budget on Tuesday, May 16:

- Put the same budget up for another vote;
- Present a revised budget for voter consideration; or
- Adopt a contingency budget.

If the board presents a revised budget and it is turned down, a contingency budget must be adopted.

For 2017-18, a contingency budget would be \$238,101,543 and would hold the tax levy to its current level as required by state law (the current proposed budget also includes no tax-levy increase). In addition, a contingency budget requires cuts to specific areas; the district would need to eliminate about \$2,075,965 from the proposed 2017-18 budget to meet those contingency requirements.

The state closely regulates any district operating under a contingency budget, prohibiting spending on student supplies, equipment and certain raises, to name a few items. Also, community groups have to pay to use school buildings during a contingency budget.

This would mean that, in addition to the prohibited spending noted above, the district would have to consider cuts to its staffing and programs to meet the new contingency requirements.