

# Capital Education

Budget 2021

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## School budget vote, board election

Polls open 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

MAY

18

In-person voting at 15 locations.

Absentee voting options this year include a COVID-19 option. See page 4 for more information, including a list of voting locations.

## 2021-22 budget proposal strategically rebuilds

The City School District of Albany Board of Education has proposed a \$270.3 million budget for the 2021-22 school year that would continue to minimize the impact on taxpayers while also investing one-time federal COVID-19 relief funds to strategically rebuild from the pandemic.

The budget proposal would support all current staff and programs, including the 180 positions the district has reinstated throughout the organization this spring.

This budget, in combination with the federal aid, would allow the district to provide either full in-person instruction or a model similar to the current fourth quarter, with hybrid at middle and high schools, if that is still required in 2021-22 due to COVID-19 social distancing and space limitations.

The proposal is supported by a \$9.5 million increase in state foundation aid, the district's first increase in that funding in two years.

The proposal includes a 0.95% tax-levy increase, marking the eighth consecutive year that the proposed increase has been less than 2%. The annual average proposed increase over that period has been 1.01%.

"This has been an incredibly challenging year for everyone due to COVID-19," Board of Education President Anne Savage said.

"The extreme fluctuations in our financial position as a result of the COVID-19 economic crisis have deeply impacted our students, families, faculty and staff.

"We are grateful to our state and federal leaders for supporting public education. This additional financial support allowed the district to include the programs and supports we know our students need and deserve into our budget planning."

In addition to maintaining all current staff and programs for next year, the budget proposal provides resources for all instructional models permitted by COVID-19 social distancing requirements.

It also includes new investments intended to accelerate academic growth and provide more social-emotional supports for students following the challenges COVID-19 has presented (see the budget glance on page 2 for more information).

"We are planning on rebuilding and accelerating the learning of our students academically, socially and emotionally," said Superintendent Kaweeda G. Adams.

"We are adding resources to address the social-emotional component and the well-being of our children."

### Federal COVID-19 relief funds

Separate from the budget proposal, the district also will invest federal COVID-19 relief funds from two separate grants to support additional staffing and programs in 2021-22 (see related story at right).

These items will have **no impact on taxes**.

Investments planned for 2021-22 through these federal funds include expanding Albany International Center to serve K-12 students, expanding the Dual Language Program, adding music staff and restoring instrumental music opportunities for third-graders, and enhancing summer school and after-school programming.

Plans for federal COVID-19 relief funds also include one-time investments in HVAC/ventilation system enhancements, and in technology hardware to support the district's long-term Technology Plan (see the budget glance on page 2 for more information).

### 2021-22 school planning

The district's planning for instructional models during the 2021-22 school year will continue to be in alignment with all federal and state COVID-19 health and safety guidelines. That will include social distancing guidelines that may be required.

The budget proposal and related investments through the federal COVID-19 relief funding have been constructed with that goal in mind.

Depending on social distancing guidelines, and on the number of students who select an in-person model in 2021-22, the district would provide either five day in-person instruction for all students, or a model similar to the current fourth quarter with full in-person instruction for PK-6 students and

(continued on page 3)

## Federal funds aid recovery

Since January, the federal government has acted swiftly to provide unprecedented levels of pandemic relief funding to schools nationwide. The City School District of Albany will receive a total of \$46.3 million in federal funds to be used over the next 2-3 years to support recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

Separate from the district's 2021-22 budget proposal, and with **no additional impact on taxes**, the district is planning to use the following two federal grants to rebuild and accelerate student growth (see the budget glance on page 2 for more information):

- **Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA)** – \$13.5 million, available through September 2023
- **American Recovery Plan (ARP)** – \$32.8 million, available through September 2024

ARP investments require a community engagement process. The district is committed to working with the community in May and June to prioritize and seek input on the use of these funds.

Once these one-time federal funds expire, the district plans to sustain some instructional programs through anticipated new state aid, while reducing COVID-19-specific programming by staff attrition where possible.

The state has indicated that it plans to fully fund foundation aid for all New York schools by 2023-24. However, the state must appropriate funds in each year's adopted state budget moving forward.

Fully funding foundation aid would mean an additional \$26 million for the district by the 2023-24 school year.



# 2021-22 budget at a glance

**Total** – \$270.3 million

**Tax-levy increase** – 0.95%

- The eighth consecutive year the proposed increase has been less than 2%
- The average proposed increase over that time has been 1.01%

## What the budget supports

- Full-day prekindergarten in all 11 elementary schools and at 12 community locations
- Three magnet elementary schools
- The bilingual Dual Language Program
- STEM/STEAM-focused initiatives at all grade levels
- Social-emotional supports at all grade levels
- Band, chorus and orchestra starting in elementary school
- All current athletic teams serving students in grades 7-12
- Community Schools initiatives at seven schools: Arbor Hill, Giffen, North Albany, Schuyler, Sheridan Prep, TOAST and Tony Clement.
- Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and University in the High School courses at Albany High
- AVID college- and career-readiness programs at the high school and middle schools
- All current CTE pathways at Albany High's Abrook Career and Technical Center
- Albany Marching Falcons band and color guard (including winter guard and indoor percussion ensemble)
- Albany High's Theatre Ensemble program
- Grant-funded professional development aligned with our Vision, Mission and Goals (focus on equity)
- Culturally relevant teaching and learning practices
- Restorative practices

## What's new in the budget

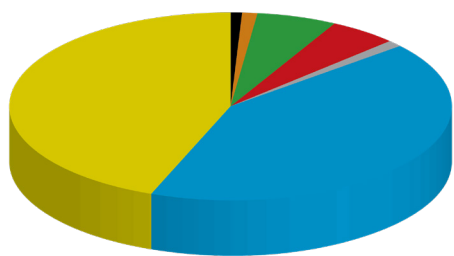
- Additional social-emotional supports
- Additional instructional intervention positions to support and accelerate learning
- Restoration of the building-based Albany International Center program at 50 North Lark St. (current Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence)
- Relocation of the Dual Language Program to 50 North Lark
- Restoration of Tony Clement Center for Education (grades 9-12) at 395 Elk St.
- Moving all elementary sixth grades to middle school (affects ASH, Eagle Point, Giffen, TOAST; permanent feeder pattern for 2022-23 and beyond to be developed)
- Moving O'Neal eighth grade to North Albany Middle School
- Restoration of ninth-grade boys' and girls' basketball, ninth-grade baseball and modified-9 boys' soccer

## Federal COVID-19 relief funds

Separate from the budget proposal, with no impact on taxes:

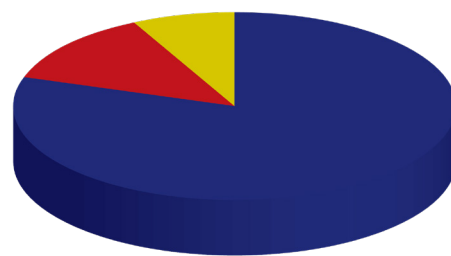
- Expanding Albany International Center (AIC) to K-12
- Expanding the Dual Language Program
- Enhancing summer school and after-school programming
- Increasing music staffing to two FTEs above 2019-20 levels
- Restoring instrumental music opportunities for third grade
- Supporting additional instrumental music lessons in grades 4-6
- Digital tools to support and accelerate student learning
- HVAC/ventilation system enhancements
- Technology hardware in support of the district's Technology Plan
- Establishing a virtual academy, if necessary due to COVID-19 pending State Education Department distance learning provisions

## Revenue & expenditures



**Estimated revenue**

- Federal aid 0.23%
- Other state aid 42.74%
- Fund balance 0.96%
- Use of reserves 0.22%
- Local revenue 6.3%
- Property tax 44.87%
- State building aid 4.69%



**Estimated expenditures**

- Capital (Facilities) 12.54%
- Administrative (Operational) 7.45%
- Program (Instructional) 80.01%

## Estimated revenue, or where the money will come from

	2020-21	2021-22	\$ Change
Federal aid	\$ 1,820,000	\$ 620,000	-\$ 1,200,000
Fund balance	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 2,583,431	\$ 183,431
Local revenue	\$ 17,963,500	\$ 17,027,343	-\$ 936,157
State building aid	\$ 12,417,254	\$ 12,675,404	\$ 258,150
Other state aid	\$ 106,241,199	\$ 115,501,727	\$ 9,260,528
Use of reserves	\$ 607,402	\$ 600,000	-\$ 7,402
Property tax levy	\$ 120,118,833	\$ 121,259,962	\$ 1,141,129
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$ 261,568,188</b>	<b>\$ 270,267,867</b>	<b>\$ 8,699,679</b>

## Proposed expenditures, or where the money will be spent

	2020-21 adopted	2021-22 proposed	\$ Change
<b>Program (Instructional) budget</b>	<b>\$ 208,153,032</b>	<b>\$ 216,231,956</b>	<b>\$ 8,078,924</b>
Instruction	\$ 159,706,879	\$ 166,110,861	\$ 6,403,982
Charter school payments	\$ 37,329,399	\$ 39,021,560	\$ 1,692,161
Pupil transportation	\$ 10,093,909	\$ 10,299,067	\$ 205,158
Athletics	\$ 1,022,845	\$ 800,468	-\$ 222,377
<b>Capital (Facilities) budget</b>	<b>\$ 32,330,117</b>	<b>\$ 33,896,264</b>	<b>\$ 1,566,147</b>
Operations/maintenance	\$ 10,675,005	\$ 10,928,013	\$ 253,008
Utilities	\$ 3,026,017	\$ 3,026,017	\$ 0
Building rentals	\$ 41,840	\$ 41,840	\$ 0
Debt payments and borrowings	\$ 17,987,255	\$ 19,300,394	\$ 1,313,139
Tax refunds and judgments	\$ 600,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 0
<b>Administrative (Operational) budget</b>	<b>\$ 21,085,039</b>	<b>\$ 20,139,647</b>	<b>-\$ 945,392</b>
General support	\$ 18,905,274	\$ 18,083,730	-\$ 821,544
Property and liability insurance	\$ 704,930	\$ 739,515	\$ 34,585
Printing, mailing and data processing	\$ 1,244,689	\$ 1,119,904	-\$ 124,785
Legal and other services	\$ 230,146	\$ 196,498	-\$ 33,648
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 261,568,188</b>	<b>\$ 270,267,867</b>	<b>\$ 8,699,679</b>



# How your tax bill is set

## Q: How will the proposed budget affect my taxes?

**A:** The City School District of Albany is proposing to increase its tax levy by 0.95% for 2021-22. However, your overall tax bill may change by a different percentage:

- If the value of your property changed, or your exemptions changed;
- If your STAR reimbursement changed; or
- If the change in the total Assessed Value for your property's category (homestead or non-homestead) is different than the change in the "Adjusted Base Proportions" for each category that was set by the City of Albany in December.

## Q: What determines my final school tax bill and tax rate?

**A:** Your school tax bill is 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 – \$121.3 million in the 2021-22 proposed budget. There is a 0.95% increase proposed for 2021-22, which is less than the district's tax "cap" of 1.56%. This is the only factor the school district controls.

**2. The state School Tax Relief Program, or STAR:** Partial school tax exemptions for owner-occupied homes.

**3. Your property assessment and your exemptions:** The assessment is an estimate of the value of how much a property would sell for under normal conditions and is set by the City of Albany during the summer each year. Certain exemptions to property taxes are available, for example by law, not-for-profit entities are generally exempt from property taxes.

**4. The homestead vs. non-homestead "Adjusted Base Rates:** These rates were set by the City of Albany in December, and are used in combination with the total homestead and non-homestead Assessed Values to determine the final tax rates for each category.

Once all these factors are set, the final tax rate determines how much of the total tax levy each property owner pays.

## School Tax Relief Program (STAR)

School tax	2020-21	2021-22	Estimated change*
Without STAR exemption	\$ 3,287	\$ 3,318	\$ 31
With Basic STAR	\$ 2,649	\$ 2,698	\$ 49
With Enhanced STAR for seniors	\$ 1,917	\$ 1,948	\$ 31

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

The final tax rate will be set in late summer after the City of Albany finalizes its tax assessments and those assessments are reviewed by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services.

## Budget proposal rebuilds (continued from page 1)

PK-12 self-contained special education students, and a hybrid model for other students in grades 7-12.

The budget would fully support both options in combination with federal aid.

We also know some parents and guardians may continue to be uncomfortable sending their students to school in-person due to COVID-19 concerns, so we anticipate continuing to provide a distance learning option for families.

The planned use of federal funding for 2021-22 includes a potential virtual academy, depending on COVID-19 protocols as well as anticipated State Education Department direction regarding distance learning.

We will keep you updated and provide opportunities for feedback as these plans develop in alignment with federal and state guidance.

# By the numbers

0.95

Percent tax-levy increase in the proposed 2021-22 budget

1

Class rank of Onovu Otigbe-Dangerfield, the first African-American valedictorian in Albany High history

2

Number of languages Dual Language Program students learn to read, write and speak (English and Spanish)

3

Grade at which students will have opportunities for instrumental music lessons in 2021-22

5

Albany High student-artists whose work was accepted for the 2021 Capital Region Media Arts Festival

8

Number of 3-pointers senior Aysia Pink sank in a Feb. 24 basketball game – a new school record

44

Number of languages spoken by district students

60

Number of sports teams available to students in grades 7-12

73

Albany High's 2020 graduation rate (highest in the 16 years of the state's current accountability system)

94

Number of National Honor Society inductees this year at Albany High

175

Students nominated for recognition in the Do the Right Thing program since it began in October

300

Score bowled by Albany High junior Delon Dean on Jan. 21 – a perfect game!

861

Albany High students who made Principal's List (90+) or Honor Roll (85+) in the second quarter

931

Full-day pre-K spots for 3- and 4-year-olds in 2021-22

2,021

People following the district on Twitter @albanschools (appropriately!)

10,005

People following the district on Facebook @albanschools

10,552

Chromebook computers distributed to students and staff since the COVID-19 pandemic began

19,809

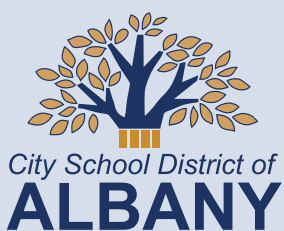
Number of Help Desk tickets answered by the school district's Technology staff since September

39,000

Square feet in Albany High's new music and art building

475-6065

Number to call to schedule a virtual budget presentation for your organization (don't forget the 518!)



**Capital Education** is published by the City School District of Albany. Please direct comments about the newsletter, story ideas and questions to either:

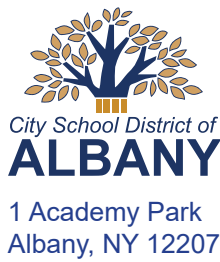
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## Board of Education

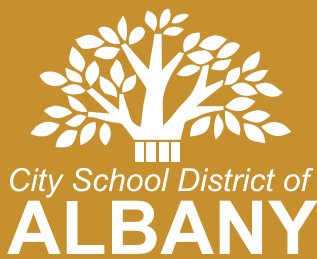
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 Vickie Smith, *Vice President*  
 Tabetha Wilson, *Secretary*  
 Sridar Chittur, Ph.D.  
 Hassan I. Elminyawi  
 Ellen Krejci  
 Damarise Mann

Kaweeda G. Adams  
*Superintendent*



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You can access all the information  
 in this newsletter and more at:  
**albanschools.org**



## Our guiding principles

### Our vision

The City School District of Albany will be a district of excellence with caring relationships and engaging learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for all students to reach their potential.

### Our mission

The mission of the City School District of Albany is to work in partnership with our diverse community to engage every learner in a robust educational program designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for success.

### Our goals

Increase student achievement; Enhance the delivery of quality instruction; Build our leadership capacity and increase accountability; Empower families; Partner with our diverse community

## Voting locations



The City School District of Albany will return to in-person voting this year, with 15 locations city-wide. Polls will be open from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Absentee voting also is an option, including an additional absentee option due to COVID-19.

There also is one new voting location. The Italian-American Community Center pavilion at 257 Washington Ave. Extension is replacing Teresian House in the 12<sup>th</sup> Ward, Districts 1-3.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) City Parks and Recreation Building 7 Hoffman Ave.	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 5-9) Albany School of Humanities (ASH) 108 Whitehall Road
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Giffen Memorial Elementary School 274 South Pearl St.	<b>9<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) New Scotland Elementary School 369 New Scotland Ave.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Sheridan Preparatory Academy 400 Sheridan Ave.	<b>10<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) North Albany Middle School 570 North Pearl St.	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Albany High School's Abrookin Career and Technical Center 99 Kent St.
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Arbor Hill/West Hill Library 148 Henry Johnson Blvd.	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 1-3) <b>NEW LOCATION:</b> Italian-American Community Center 257 Washington Ave. Extension
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 4-9) Montessori Magnet School 45 Tremont St.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 1-5) Delaware Community School 43 Bertha St.	<b>13<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Pine Hills Elementary School 41 North Allen St.
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 6-8) William S. Hackett Middle School 45 Delaware Ave.	<b>14<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Maria College, McAuley Building 308 South Manning Blvd.
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (Districts 1-4) Maria College, McAuley Building 308 South Manning Blvd.	<b>15<sup>th</sup> Ward</b> (all districts) Eagle Point Elementary School 1044 Western Ave.

## Absentee voting includes COVID-19 option

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.

New this year, the state has added an important additional absentee voting option: Concern about potential exposure to COVID-19 is a permitted reason to request an absentee ballot. Voters interested in casting an absentee ballot can select that option by checking "temporary illness or physical disability" on the absentee ballot application.

You can call (518) 475-6015 and ask to have an application mailed to you, or you can download one at [albanschools.org/vote](http://albanschools.org/vote)

If you want an absentee ballot mailed to your home, your completed application must be received by the district clerk at least seven days before the vote – by Tuesday, May 11 at 4 p.m.

If you want to pick up your absentee ballot in-person at the district headquarters in Academy Park, you must have your completed application to the board clerk by 4 p.m. the day before the budget vote – Monday, May 17.

**All absentee ballots must be returned to the district clerk by 5 p.m. on the day of the vote – Tuesday, May 18.**

## Board election – two candidates seek reelection

Two members of the City School District of Albany Board of Education are seeking reelection in this year's board election, which will be held in conjunction with the budget vote May 18.

Vice President Vickie Smith and board member Sridar Chittur, Ph.D., both are seeking reelection. At press time, no other candidates had submitted the required paperwork and petitions to run. Visit [albanschools.org/boe](http://albanschools.org/boe) for more information.

## What happens if the budget is not approved?

If voters do not approve the budget May 18, state law gives the Board of Education three options:

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

If the board opted for a second vote and it also failed, state law would require the district to adopt a contingency budget.

For 2021-22, a contingency budget would be \$269,126,738 and would hold the tax levy to its current level as required by state law.

In addition, a contingency budget requires cuts to specific areas: the district would need to eliminate about \$1,141,129 from the proposed budget to meet those requirements.

The state closely regulates any district operating under a contingency budget.

It prohibits spending on student supplies, equipment and certain raises, to name a few items. Community groups also are required to pay to use school buildings when a district is operating under a contingency budget.

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

## Library vote information

In addition to the school-related items on this year's ballot, residents also will be asked to vote for two seats on the Albany Public Library Board of Trustees.

Each seat carries a five-year term.

There will be no vote on the library's annual budget this year, since there is no tax-levy increase proposed.

For more information about the library trustee vote, call Stephanie Simon at (518) 708-3912.