

# SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF

Together, We are the Champions for Children in Poughkeepsie City School District

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## Poughkeepsie thanks administrative support professionals

The Poughkeepsie City School District has a great team of administrative support professionals who serve as critical connectors in the functioning of the school system. Our administrative support professionals possess a vast understanding of all things within the district and are resourceful in accomplishing their duties and keeping the organization moving. Without a doubt, they are key to the district's success.

It is because of these things and more that they are valued and should be celebrated today, Administrative Professionals Day.

Each year, on the Wednesday of the last full week of April, we thank these individuals as the unsung heroes they are. Please join us in showing gratitude for all the work they do behind the scenes to elevate the experience for students and families in the district.



## Proposed budget would boost services



**Adding extended learning and extracurricular opportunities were prioritized in the proposed budget.**

The proposed \$147,634,460 spending plan would increase the tax levy by just 1.247%, the lowest in Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Jay Rosser's six years in the district, despite increasing the overall budget by 6.45%. Roughly \$5.3 million in fund balance would be utilized; nearly \$36.9 million in restricted and unrestricted fund balance would remain unused. See the [budget proposal presentation here](#), the [full budget proposal here](#) and watch the full board meeting on [the district's YouTube page](#).

"Those things that we hold dear and valuable to the school district, which is our children, are going to be continuously supported through the upcoming year," Rosser said of the plan. "Our budget philosophy is that this is an investment plan, constructed to support the district's mission and vision."

A \$147.7 million budget for the 2025-26 academic year would allow the Poughkeepsie City School District to expand the extended learning time and extracurricular programs, support the growth of college and career training programs, and allow for the implementation of school buses at the elementary level.

The Board of Education on Tuesday approved a budget proposal that would remain under the tax cap while still increasing the amount spent on general instruction by more than \$2.8 million. This is despite expectations state foundational aid will grow by just 2% next year, the minimum allocation.

The annual district budget vote and board election will be held May 20 with in-person, early mail, absentee and military voting options.



The superintendent called the proposal “an investment plan aligned to the Poughkeepsie City School District’s efforts to sustain and enhance student progress as we prepare all students to embark on individual paths of success in the globally diverse community. This proposed budget reflects our focus on equity and opportunity for all students.”

Some of the areas the spending plan would make investments in include:

- Providing buses to all students grades pre-K through 5 who live at least a half-mile from their school ([read more here](#)).
- Instructional programming, including the addition of high school credit-bearing courses at the middle school, giving students a head start on graduating on time.
- Extracurricular program expansion at the secondary level, including the addition of a marching band and robotics club.
- Expanding extended learning time, or ELT, from three days to five at the elementary level.
- Financing early college and career training programs, such as dual-enrollment courses and [participation in the Dutchess BOCES CTI program](#), and the general pre-K through 12 college and career readiness programming happening in each district school.
- Multi-language learning supports, including the implementation of a system in which multi-language learners have access to a dedicated transition counselor throughout high school to help address the “high population” of such students who drop out prior to graduation, and the natural extension of the dual-language program into the third grade.
- Supports for students with exceptionalities.
- Arts and music education supplies and repair funding.
- Increased availability of field trips.
- Social and emotional learning, including adding an additional social worker for the middle school.
- Teacher and leader professional learning, in addition to resources allocated through the district’s Title II budget.
- Rightsizing compensation for staff, a process that has been ongoing for six years.

## Voting information

The Poughkeepsie City School District’s annual budget vote and school board election will be held May 20. Polls will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the following locations:

- **Wards 1 and 3:** Morse Elementary, 101 Mansion St.
- **Ward 5:** Warring Elementary School, 283 Mansion St.
- **Wards 2 and 4:** Clinton Elementary, 100 Montgomery St.
- **Wards 6 and 7:** Poughkeepsie Middle School, 55 College Ave.
- **Ward 8:** Krieger Elementary, 265 Hooker Ave. (Whittier Boulevard entrance)

Absentee, early mail and military voting are available. Visit [the district’s voting page](#) to learn more.



With voter approval, the district plans to add bus service for most elementary students in 2025-26.

The elementary ELT expansion would cost roughly \$1.86 million. It’s the largest addition to next year’s budget, followed by the \$1.8 million needed to begin the elementary school bus program, should voters opt to approve. Ninety percent of the transportation expenses would be offset by state aid beginning in 2026-27. The district is also planning to expand ELT at the middle school to five days, though that would be financed through grant funding rather than the budget itself.

As the district continues to prioritize instructional and support staff directly impacting the student experience, it announced on Tuesday four administrative positions, totaling more than \$400,000 in salaries, are being eliminated at the end of this academic year. This is part of a larger plan to



restructure the administrative organization of the district, which will be discussed at the Board of Education's May 7 meeting. See below for more details. The four positions eliminated include director of secondary education, executive director of community schools, supervisor of secondary education and assistant superintendent of elementary education.

Rosser said reductions, which many school districts across the state are likewise enacting, were spurred by significant financial constraints. This has been exacerbated by the Poughkeepsie district receiving just a 2% increase in state aid in the estimated aid figures released by the state in January. State lawmakers have not yet finalized New York's budget, which will include final school aid figures, though Rosser has been informed the district should not expect the 2% to grow.

"Our operating expenses have increased immensely, whereas our foundation aid – which is the money we receive to be able to operate the schools – has not increased at the same rate," Rosser said, noting the district has been fighting for more and engaging with state lawmakers. "Other school districts are receiving well more than 2%."

Despite the administrative reductions, he noted the district is maintaining staffing within the buildings and reducing the tax burden that will be felt by residents.

"We in the school district have always been mindful of the residents, those who are homeowners, and we want to make sure that when it comes to educating students that we're not burdening our community in such a way that it will then bring stress to their financial situation at home," Rosser said, "particularly given the financial conditions of our country."

In addition to the budget, residents will choose a candidate to fill a school board seat; Trustee Andrew Rieser's term expires June 30. There are also three additional propositions on the ballot – two that would authorize the district to implement school bus service for most elementary students and another that would allow the district to utilize a \$5 million capital improvement reserve fund. [Read more about each proposition here.](#)

The board will hold its budget hearing 6 p.m. May 7 at the Jane Bolin administration building, 18 S Perry St.

## PCSD announces restructuring process prioritizing staffing

The Poughkeepsie City School District is embarking on an exciting initiative to restructure its administrative organization over the next two years.

The idea, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Greg Mott said, is to "reimagine and repurpose" the district's structure and resources to best serve students' needs amid a challenging financial landscape. The district is taking these measures while preserving positions within each school building and is, in fact, adding staffing. District officials introduced the initiative during Tuesday's Board of Education meeting, at which the board approved eliminating four administrative positions, resulting in a \$400,000 savings in the proposed 2025-26 budget for the academic year. An in-depth presentation on the framework of the district's plans is scheduled for the board's May 7 meeting.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Jay Rosser explained the initiative was borne of the budget process in which, this year, the district is expecting its state aid to increase by just 2% and expenses continue to increase at a greater rate.

"Each year, we find ourselves reanalyzing our central office and our organization. We take the time each year to identify ways in which we can be more effective and more efficient with fewer individuals who have different titles," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Jay Rosser explained to the board. "Based on the challenges of our budget and all the things that are priorities – such as transportation, making sure that families have after-school programming for their youngsters five days a week versus three days a week ... we've been forced to really take a look at our central office."





The four positions eliminated by the board Tuesday included director of secondary education, executive director of community schools, supervisor of secondary education and assistant superintendent of elementary education. Mott, who occupies the latter of those positions, is poised to become the interim superintendent of schools July 1 after Rosser leaves his position.

The mission of the reorganization includes, but is not limited to:

- Enhancing services and programming.
- Providing greater support to building leaders and teachers.
- Strengthening and focusing the district’s approach toward encouraging student achievement.
- Streamline central office functions
- Reducing district supervision costs and reallocating funds to key initiatives.

The administrators who occupy the eliminated positions – which take effect June 30 – are able to reapply for positions within the district.

“There is a human factor in all of this,” board President Fatimah Carmen Martinez Santiago said. “These are four positions. ... They don’t necessarily have to leave the school district.”

“This is not about people, it’s about positions,” board member Kelleyann Royce-Giron emphasized.

Rosser at the meeting used the Community Schools Department as an example of how the reorganization will not impact student services. He noted the department currently has two administrators with roles leading the department, the executive director and the newly hired assistant superintendent of student support services and family and community engagement – in addition to the superintendent himself, who has inherent community connecting responsibilities – and all eight staff members charged with implementing programs in schools remain intact.

“The proposal to eliminate this particular title in our organization will not result in the Community Schools model being at a deficit. It will not result in students not receiving the wonderful and fabulous things they’ve been receiving over the last several years,” Rosser said.

Rosser said as the process of refilling positions commences, the district is ensuring there is a balance of support for students of all ages. “We’re having conversations internally about what that looks like,” he said. “We’ll be finalizing that before our May 7 meeting.”

## Upcoming events

- **April 24:** Elementary Reconfiguration informational meeting: 3 p.m. at Morse Elementary School, 101 Mansion St.
- **April 24:** Spring Parent Night at Poughkeepsie High School: 5-8 p.m., 70 Forbus St.: High school parents can learn more about the school and community organizations, while enjoying music, entertainment, food and drinks. Free babysitting is provided by National Honor Society members and parents will receive a raffle ticket for a number of prizes and a ticket for their student to purchase an item from the school store.
- **April 30:** Skilled Trades Fair: 5-7 p.m. at Dutchess BOCES, 5 Boces Rd., Poughkeepsie.
- **May 6:** NAMI Mid-Hudson “Ending the Silence” mental health awareness event: 5-6:30 p.m. at Poughkeepsie Middle School, 55 College Ave. [Register at this link.](#)
- **May 7:** Board of Education budget hearing and meeting: 6:30 p.m. at the Jane Bolin administration building, 18 S. Perry St.

