

# HARTFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOME OF THE TANAGERS

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO VOTE ON THE DISTRICT'S BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

*The residents of the Hartford Central School District will go to the polls on Tuesday, May 20th to vote on a proposed spending plan of \$10,779,133 for the 2014-2015 school year. Voting will take place from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the Ella Colvin Gymnasium. In addition to the proposed budget, community members will be electing a Board of Education member to a five-year term and voting on a proposition for the purchase of a 66-passenger bus.*

The process to develop a school district budget is a difficult task as it requires the district administration and the members of the Board of Education to take into consideration a number of different factors, including: the required state and federal mandates, the needs of our students (educational, social, and psychological), the tax burden of the community, and the difficult economic circumstances of New York State. According to Hartford Superintendent Andrew Cook, "As a district, we do our best to present a comprehensive budget that provides the optimal learning experience and environment for our students, while ensuring that



spending is practical and appropriate.

We aim to provide all of our students with an education that will allow them to be successful not only within the Hartford Central School District, but following graduation as well."

While the proposed budget has a projected increase in spending from the previous year, approximately \$230,000, the increase is much smaller than originally projected. To maintain all existing programs and services in their current capacity, the district would have had to submit a budget proposition of over \$11 million, which would have caused an increase in spending of

over \$550,000. Despite a small increase in state aid, this figure was not feasible for the district, and the members of the Board of Education and district administration sought ways in which to reduce spending. "We have spent a great deal of time really studying the district's expenditure lines to identify areas in which we could possibly reduce costs without disrupting, or further reducing, our students' educational experience" said Cook. As a result of this work, the district was able to reduce the overall projected spending and propose a budget of \$10,779,133. However, according to Superintendent Cook, "these types of reduction are not without valuable losses in other areas [non-academic] of the district. Typically, reductions are not long-term solutions and can lead to additional fiscal stress for the district. This is the case for Hartford." Unfortunately, some of the biggest factors in the budget process are the uncontrollable costs for the district: Teacher's Retirement System (TRS), Employee

### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Proposed Spending Plan: \$10,779,133
- Projected Tax Levy Increase of: 1.3%
- More Information is available by contacting the District Office at 518-632-5222.

### ALSO ON THE BALLOT

- Reelection of Board of Education Member, Mrs. Janine Thomas, to a five-year term (*July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2019*)
- Proposition I: Purchase of a 66-passenger bus not to exceed \$114,000

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## Update: Middle / High School

As the days get longer and the snow begins to melt, our students have been hard at work prepping for end of the year state assessments, Regents exams and upcoming finals. Throughout the year, our students, faculty and staff have had the opportunity to participate in a number of activities including: concerts, educational field trips, sporting events, the Spud Run, 6<sup>th</sup> grade Pig Roast, the Turkey Trot, school dances, Winter Olympics, hockey games, and the National Honor Society inductions just to name a few. Needless to say our students have been extremely busy. Not only have our students participated in countless fundraising and extra-curricular activities, but they have also been busy academically. It is my pleasure to report that during the 2013-2014 school year:

- ✓ Students are enrolled in 8 College and 1 Advanced Placement Course
- ✓ 26% of our Juniors and Seniors are taking at least one Distance Learning Class
- ✓ Currently Hartford hosts two distance learning classes and receives two
- ✓ Over 40% of our students have qualified for an academic honor for the quarterly marking periods
- ✓ 72% of our Middle School Students participated in our February Strive-for-Five academic incentive program
- ✓ Our Varsity Soccer program and Girls Varsity Basketball program were recognized as a “Scholar Athlete Teams” (overall team GPA of at least 90%)

As a faculty and staff member, there is nothing more rewarding than to see our students excel both inside and outside of the classroom. As educators, we strive to provide our students with every opportunity to become

active members in our communities. From looking at just some of the many accomplishments our students have had during the 2013-2014 school year, I would say we are well on our way to achieving this goal.

With the continued support and encouragement of all of our parents/guardians and the hard work and dedication from our teachers and staff, I am extremely honored to be a part of the Hartford Central School District and look forward to the future.

*Brian George*



The top-ten students from the class of 2013.

## Update: Floyd Harwood Elementary School

Happy Spring to all! It is hard to believe we are already in the last quarter of the school year. As students, faculty and staff continue to work hard to rise to the expectations of Common Core Standards, your continued support at home is vital for the success of your child/children. Reading with your child/children is one of the most important activities you can do at home to help support success in school. Currently, a large percentage of our students receive additional academic interventions in the areas of ELA and/or Math. Just 15 minutes per day of reading outside of school can have a positive impact in the classroom. Together, I am confident our students can meet the rigor of higher standards, better preparing them with college and career readiness skills.

With Spring, also comes some exciting end of the year activities. I hope you will be available to join us for some of the following upcoming events:

- ✓ Local Spelling Bee for grades 4-8 – **May 7<sup>th</sup>** at 1:15pm
- ✓ Grandparents' Breakfast – **May 16<sup>th</sup>** starting at 7:30am
- ✓ Kindergarten Round-Up – **May 27<sup>th</sup>** (*please contact Mrs. Getty if you have a child entering Kindergarten next year and have not yet received a registration packet*)
- ✓ Bike Rodeo for grades 2-5 – **May 29<sup>th</sup>** (*bikes and volunteers are needed*)
- ✓ Elementary Awards Ceremony – **June 13<sup>th</sup>** at 9:00am (*Academic Awards*) and 1:30pm (*Special Area Awards*)
- ✓ Tanager Voices Concert/Art Show – **June 19<sup>th</sup>** at 6:00pm
- ✓ Fifth Grade Moving-Up Ceremony – **June 23<sup>rd</sup>** at 9:00am
- ✓ Pre-K Graduation – **June 24<sup>th</sup>** at 1:00pm (*for both AM and PM classes*)
- ✓ Kindergarten Graduation – **June 25<sup>th</sup>** at 9:00
- ✓ K-5 11:30am Dismissal on **June 23<sup>rd</sup>-June 26<sup>th</sup>**

### Dates Yet To Be Determined:

- ✓ Field Day
- ✓ Classroom Field Trips

Remember, time is the best gift you can give your children. We appreciate your support throughout the school year. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the education of Hartford students. Our goal is to provide children with a solid foundation for future success!

***Bethellen Mannix***



Mrs. Mannix conducting an assembly on character education.

## Revenue Summary

	2013-2014 Budget	2014-2015 Budget	Dollar Change
State Aid	\$6,173,140	\$6,377,000	\$203,860
Fund Balance	\$667,554	\$580,000	-\$87,554
Miscellaneous	\$352,450	\$422,725	\$70,275
Sub-Total	\$7,193,144	\$7,379,725	\$186,581
Tax Levy	\$3,355,679	\$3,399,408	\$43,729
Total Revenue	\$10,548,823	\$10,779,133	\$230,310

School Districts receive revenue through three primary sources:

1. Property Taxes
2. State Aid
3. Miscellaneous Funds

⇒ State Aide is made up of “Foundation Aid” and “Expense Driven Aid”.

- ✓ Foundation Aid is an unrestricted aid category provided to all school districts in New York State.
- ✓ Expense Driven Aid is monies that the district will receive based on our prior year spending. Items that fall within the category of expense driven aid are: textbooks, software, hardware and technology, and library.

⇒ Miscellaneous Funds consist of monies the district will receive through grants, Medicaid reimbursement, etc.

### Budget Questions and Answers

Q: *What is different from the 2013-14 budget?*

A: While year to year spending has increased, the district has made cuts of approximately \$250,000 in expenditures to try and keep spending cost-effective.

Q: *Does the district really need another bus?*

A: Yes. Annually, each one of our busses accumulate, on average, 12,000 miles. As a district, we try to replace a bus once it reaches ten (10) years of service. It is important to note that when purchasing a bus, the district is reimbursed for 90% of the total cost by NYSED. If we do not purchase a bus each year, we leave ourselves open for expensive repairs on older buses and will create a gap in our revenue stream in which the district will actually lose money. Most importantly, regular replacement of our fleet ensures student safety.

Q: *How does the increase in the tax levy affect my taxes?*

A: The true tax rates for individuals cannot be established until after NYS completes the equalization rates. The equalization rates are completed in August.

Q: *What efforts have been made to save money?*

A: The district is always attempting to discover ways to reduce spending. Over the past few years, Hartford has started sharing various services through BOCES and other neighboring districts (*i.e. Data Integrity Service*). In addition, the district is exploring the possibility of installing solar panels, which will help with the cost of electricity.

Q: *Is the district hiring new employees?*

A: Only when absolutely necessary. Whenever an individual leaves the district (*i.e. retirement*) the administration completes a thorough review to see if the position needs to be filled or if the district can maintain the program through other means. Over the past few years, the district has had three teachers retire who positions were not re-hired. However, their instructional responsibilities were added to another position.

## 2014-2015 Expenditure Summary

- ⇒ Administrative expenditures are all the costs associated with district supervision.
- ⇒ The Administrative expenses are approximately 8% of the overall budget.

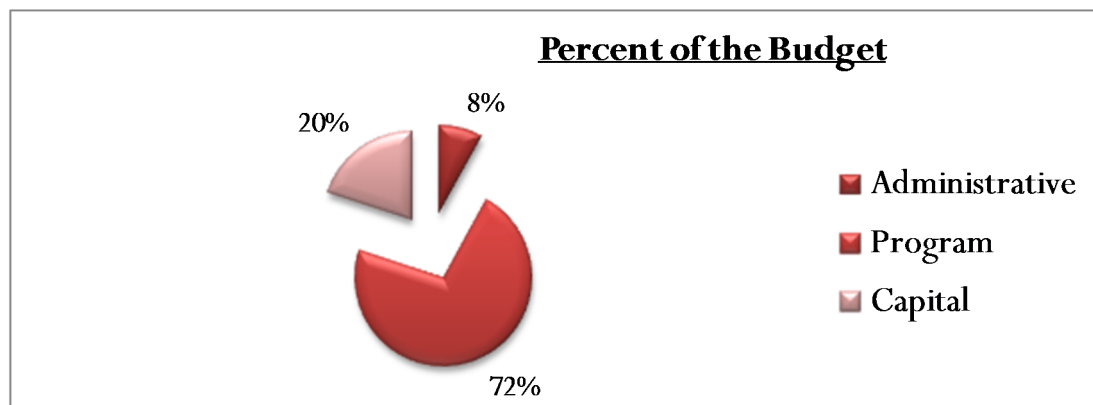
ADMINISTRATIVE	2013-14	2014-15	Change
Board of Education	\$1,475	\$1,475	
Central Administration	\$147,546	\$146,252	-\$1,294
Business Administration	\$109,197	\$117,115	\$7,918
Finance	\$14,446	\$16,620	\$2,174
Legal Fees	\$15,000	\$17,000	\$2,000
Public Information	\$2,500	\$2,500	
Central Services	\$38,700	\$40,249	\$1,549
Unallocated Insurance	\$39,525	\$41,897	\$2,372
BOCES Administration	\$64,293	\$64,668	\$375
Supervision: Regular day	\$243,415	\$251,696	\$8,281
Employee Benefits	\$168,888	\$162,269	-\$6,619
<b>Total Administrative</b>	<b>\$844,985</b>	<b>\$861,741</b>	<b>\$16,756</b>

- ⇒ Program expenditures are all the costs directly related to student instruction, including instructional salaries and health benefits.
- ⇒ The Program expenses are approximately 72% of the overall budget.

PROGRAM	2013-14	2014-15	Change
In-service Training	\$16,920	\$20,263	\$3,343
Instruction: Regular Ed.	\$3,570,445	\$3,618,494	\$48,049
Instructional Media	\$254,961	\$349,887	\$94,926
Pupil Personnel	\$250,935	\$308,996	\$58,061
Interscholastic and Co-curricular	\$163,914	\$158,942	-\$4,972
Transportation Services	\$575,898	\$575,688	-\$210
Employee Benefits	\$2,751,908	\$2,750,181	-\$1,727
<b>Total Program</b>	<b>\$7,584,981</b>	<b>\$7,782,451</b>	<b>\$197,470</b>

- ⇒ Capital expenditures are all the costs associated with the maintenance of the district facilities.
- ⇒ The Capital expenses are approximately 20% of overall

CAPITAL	2013-14	2014-15	Change
Central Services	\$540,179	\$528,208	-\$11,971
Employee Benefits	\$118,008	\$135,648	\$17,640
Debt Service	\$1,460,670	\$1,471,085	\$10,415
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>\$2,118,857</b>	<b>\$2,134,941</b>	<b>\$16,084</b>



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Retirement System (ERS), Health Insurance, and the continuation of New York State’s Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA). Specifically for Hartford, the GEA is withholding \$521,936 of allocated monies for the 2014-2015 school year. If allocated properly to the district, the monies currently being withheld would cover all the spending reductions and any possible increases in the tax levy. “The current format of the GEA and freeze on Foundation Aid is handcuffing districts and severely limiting opportunities for our students. It is impossible to be “College and Career” ready when we have to continually reduce and restructure programs and services for our students due to the fiscal limitations that New York State is forcing. The GEA simply needs to be eliminated in order for districts to financially survive” according to Cook. “This has been a very challenging budget process and I am very proud of the work that has been done to create the proposed spending plan. We have done our best to continue the high level of academics within the school district, while reducing ancillary expenses to keep the levy low”, said Cook.



**Tax levies vs. Tax Rates vs. Tax Bills**

If Hartford’s proposed budget is approved by voters, next year’s tax levy would increase by 1.3 percent, or \$43,729. The **tax levy** represents the total dollar amount that the school district is seeking to collect from local property owners for the budget. It is calculated after taking into account all other revenues coming to the district, including the largest, state aid.

The **tax rate** is the amount to be charged for every \$1,000 of assessed property value. It is calculated by dividing the tax levy into the total assessed value of the school district, which is determined by the town assessor.

The **tax bill**, or the final amount each property owner pays, can vary depending on a number of variables;

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<b><u>Property Tax Report Card</u></b> <b><u>2014-2015</u></b>	Budgeted: 13-14	Proposed: 14-15	Percent Change
Total Spending	\$10,548,823	\$10,779,133	2.18%
Proposed Tax Levy	\$3,355,679	\$3,399,408	1.3%
Permissible Exclusions	\$307,833	\$219,655	
Proposed Tax Levy; Not Including Exclusions	\$3,047,846	\$3,179,753	
Tax Levy Limit	\$3,145,414	\$3,179,753	
Difference			
Enrollment	477	480	.63%
Consumer Price Index			1.5%
Adjusted Restricted Fund Balance	0	0	
Assigned Appropriated Fund Balance	\$667,554	\$580,000	
Adjusted Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$725,070	\$500,000	
Adjusted Unrestricted Fund Balance as a Percent of the total Budget	5.37%	4.39%	

	<b>Budget Adopted for 2013-14</b>	<b>Budget Proposed for 2014-15</b>	<b>Contingency Budget for 2014-15 *</b>
Total Budgeted Amount (Not included Separate Propositions)	\$10,584,823	\$10,779,133	\$10,735,404
Increase/Decrease for the 2013-14 School Year		\$230,310	\$186,581
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		2.2%	1.8%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.46%	
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (Including Levy to Support Library Debt)	\$3,355,679	\$3,399,408	\$3,355,679

Total Permissible Exclusions	\$307,833	\$219,655	
Proposed School Year Tax Levy (Not Including Levy for Permissible Exclusions or Levy to Support Library Debt)	\$3,047,846	\$3,179,753	
School Tax Levy Limit (Not Including Permissible Exclusions)	\$3,145,415	\$3,179,753	
Difference (Positive Value Requires 60% Voter Approval)	-\$97,569	0	

Administrative Component	\$844,985	\$861,741	\$857,466
Program Component	\$7,584,981	\$7,782,451	\$7,742,997
Capital Component	\$2,118,857	\$2,134,941	\$2,134,941

\*Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2014-15 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings based on a home within the Hartford Central School District with a full value of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000)

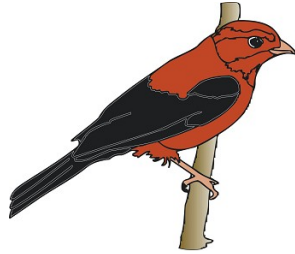
	Budget Proposed for the 2014-15 School Year
Basic STAR Tax Savings	\$509

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including: individual assessments, the town’s final tax rate, and the state determined equalization rate (equalization rates are determined by New York State and are designed to distribute the tax burden among the various townships in the district).

Simply put, some taxpayers may see their bills go up more than 1.3 percent, while others may see their bills go up by less. In those situations, the district is not collecting any more taxes. Rather, the tax burden is being redistributed to take into account shifting property values.

HARTFORD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PO Box 79  
4704 State Route 149  
Hartford, New York 12838  
518-632-5222



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
HARTFORD, NY 12838  
PERMIT #1

Superintendent  
Andrew Cook

Middle/High School Principal  
Brian George

Elementary Principal  
Bethellen Mannix

Board of Education  
Brian Getty, President  
Janine Thomas, Vice President  
Philip Jessen  
Adam Fish  
Ron Smith

ABSENTEE VOTING  
District residents who are unable to vote in person or will be out of town, may apply for an absentee ballot through the Office of the District Clerk within the District Office. Please call 632-5222 with any questions or for more information.  
VOTING QUALIFICATIONS  
A person shall be entitled to vote at the Annual School District Meeting and the Annual School Election who is: a citizen of the United States; eighteen years of age; and a resident within the District for a period of thirty days next preceding the meeting at which he/she offers to vote.  
You do not need to be registered to vote.

**Voting Information**

<u>Budget Hearing</u>	<u>Annual Vote</u>
Monday, May 12th	Tuesday, May 20th
7:00p.m.	11a.m. - 9:00p.m.

HFA "SCOOPS FOR SCHOLARS"  
*Come meet visit with your child's teachers and enjoy an ice cream sundae!*  
Tuesday, May 20th  
5:00p.m.—7:00p.m.

**Meet Mrs. Thomas - BOE Re-Election**  
The bucolic town on Hartford has been my teaching home for 44 years. I maintain my art studio on Hall Road. Coach Thomas and I have made our permanent home there for the past 29 years. Having been the art teacher for 32 years, I saw many changes to the district. Through all those changes, the unique quality of the Hartford Central School has remained unchanged. The mission has been constant. We seek to give each child the best quality education possible. Through my 10 year term on the school board, I sought to maintain rigorous academic programs, enriching art and music courses and a library staffed with a qualified professional. I encourage every child to become part of "HCS Rules" by participating in sports and extracurricular activities. Our technology programs have kept pace with a changing world. I am proud of our distance learning center and our advanced placement college courses. Our teaching staff is second to none. Dedicated professionals work diligently everyday through difficult financial times. I am equally proud of our chip burning plant, the only one in NY state, an environmentally appropriate solution to saving energy and money. Our school board is dedicated to supporting our mission statement, and our fine administration, through a trying economic period. I am proud to be a member. I am the first member of the board of education to serve on the BOCES board, developing a strong relationship with vocational education and shared services. I seek your vote to enable me to continue being an integral part of the Hartford Central School governing process.