



Schalmont

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

BUDGET EDITION 2023

2023-2024 School Budget: Preserving Programs & Increasing Support for Students

FOR THE THIRD STRAIGHT YEAR, SCHALMONT'S BUDGET REQUIRES NO TAX LEVY INCREASE WHILE BUILDING ON OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENTS IN 2023-2024.

The budget adds teachers at Jefferson Elementary and the Middle School to help support increased enrollment with additional sections at certain grade levels. Special education teachers would also be added to support students K-12 (*see page 4*).

The budget invests in student technology with \$450,000 to support Schalmont's Chromebook Replacement Program. Pay for Substitute Teachers and Teacher Aides would also increase to help attract and keep needed substitutes (*see page 5*).

All academic programs—including art and music—are fully funded along with athletics and extracurricular activities. There are no cuts to staffing in the proposed budget.

“We're excited to continue the great programs we have for our students

and invest in areas to continuously improve their education,” said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon. “And we're fortunate to be able to do that without raising taxes on our community.”

The proposed \$55,853,038 budget increases spending by approximately 4.1% over the current year (*see page 6*).

Schalmont is able to propose a 0% tax levy increase again next year due to an increase in state aid, additional revenue streams from new PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreements within the district, and the use of district reserves.

Our community will also vote Tuesday, May 16 on a proposition to purchase five school buses as part of Schalmont's long-term bus replacement plan. There are also two community members running for



Jurnee Tuttle, Justina Spezza and Elena Lybrand are just a few of our students who had their artwork selected for exhibits this year! Schalmont's art program, and all academic offerings, are fully funded next year.

two three-year seats on the Board of Education (*see page 4*).

Please see the stories in this newsletter for additional information about the proposed budget.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ The \$55,853,038 budget carries a 0% tax levy increase for the 3rd straight year.
- ✓ Student programs, support and opportunities are fully-funded.
- ✓ Elementary and Special Education teachers are added due to growing enrollment.
- ✓ Student technology updated with \$450,000 for Chromebook Replacement Program.
- ✓ Pay for Substitute Teachers and Teacher Aides is increased.



Preserving Opportunities for Students

The 2023-2024 budget fully funds programs, opportunities and supports for our students. Here are some examples.



SABRE ATHLETICS PRIDE!

Schalmont's student athletes continue to make us proud on and off the court or field. Our Girls Bowling Team, for example, earned back-to-back Class B Section 2 Championships this year, finished second at the state championships, and were named a Scholar Athlete Team based on their GPA!

The 2023-2024 budget fully funds all athletic opportunities for our students including more than 20 sports across the varsity, junior varsity and modified levels.



SCHALMONT'S GROWING ART PROGRAM

Whether its 4th graders having their artwork selected for the yearbook or High School students having work selected for area exhibits, Schalmont loves to celebrate our amazing student artists.

Schalmont's art program has been growing in recent years, fueled by huge student interest. At the High School, newer electives such as Digital Photography and Design and Drawing & Painting II/III allow our students to explore and develop new artistic skills.



KEEPING SCHALMONT SCHOOLS SAFE

Schalmont is fortunate to have an eight-member security team and a Rotterdam Police Department School Resource Officer in our schools.

Most of our security team have law enforcement or military backgrounds. They, along with our School Resource Officer, are always visible in our hallways and around our campuses as they focus on school safety while building relationships with students.

Schalmont is also fortunate to have a great relationship with our local and state police agencies and we thank them for all they do to help keep our schools safe.



MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS

Our community enjoyed numerous concerts this year thanks to our amazing students who perform in Choruses, Bands and the Wind Ensemble.

Music is a part of a Schalmont student's education starting in kindergarten where teachers instill a love of music that follows them through to High School. Students grow and enjoy opportunities to perform with musicians from other schools and excel in judged performances.

Schalmont's music programs are again fully funded in the 2023-2024 school budget.



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS A PRIORITY

Schalmont students enjoyed some comfort from some furry friends this year as Therapy Dogs International visited our schools numerous times.

The therapy dog visits are just one way Schalmont schools are focused on helping students with their mental health and wellness. Schalmont has increased social worker support in recent years, with two social workers in each school who work with students and support the work our faculty and staff do each day.

Schalmont has a long history with therapy dogs, including at Jefferson Elementary where Ms. Pink's dog Callie is always a popular visitor!



PROVIDING A STRONG ACADEMIC FOUNDATION

Providing students from kindergarten to their senior year a strong academic foundation is at the core of Schalmont schools.

The 2023-2024 budget fully funds all academic programs. It invests in additional teachers for some elementary level grades to lower class sizes, the result of growing enrollment.

Our older students even help younger grades understand the importance of learning such as when our High School English Honor Society spent the day at Jefferson this year, reading to younger students and listening to older students read.



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Helping students embrace concepts such as generosity and kindness continues to be a focus at Jefferson Elementary with the school's social and emotional learning initiatives.

Each month, assemblies help students share what the month's character trait means to them and how they can show things like self-control to others. Students are also celebrated for being positive.

Teachers reinforce the lessons throughout the year, along with school social workers who visit classrooms to offer students additional support.



EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Drama Club, Sabre Nation, Marching Band, Science Olympiad, Student Council, Introspection Literary Magazine, Engineering Club, and Ski & Snowboard Club. These are just some of the more than two dozen extracurricular activities available for Schalmont students.

The 2023-2024 school budget funds all current clubs and activities, such as Drama Club, which is pictured above performing the spring musical. The budget also supports new student clubs such as the Spanish Club, which a group of High School students started last year.



More Teachers for Growing Enrollment

With enrollment growing in some of Schalmont's younger grades, the 2023-2024 budget funds additional elementary teaching positions to help reduce class sizes in certain grades.

The number of new teachers will depend on final enrollment numbers for the fall but given current projections, Schalmont expects to add at least one teacher at Jefferson Elementary and one at the Middle School.

"We're fortunate to have growing enrollment but with that comes the need to add sections when class sizes become a concern," said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon.

The budget also funds at least one special education teaching position to help provide more support for



our students K-12. Schalmont will know more definitively the total number of teachers closer to the fall but the additional support will help the district's efforts to reduce out-placement of our students.

"We are trying to place more of our students in our schools when possible so we can help ensure all of our students have as many pathways as possible to obtain a Regent's diploma," said Dr. Reardon.

Voters to Decide on BOE Candidates



This year there are two individuals running for two seats on the Board of Education. Each seat is a three-year term.

Candidates will appear on the ballot in this order, based on a random drawing: Kate Kruk and Kevin Thompson.

For biographies and photos of each candidate, please see www.schalmont.org or just scan the QR code. Schalmont does not include candidate bio information in the

newsletter to help ensure it makes it to homes in time for the budget vote.

State law allows candidates to submit Board petitions until April 17. That timeline makes it difficult to include submitted bios and photos from candidates as producing, printing and mailing newsletters can take several weeks.

Recent Budgets by the Numbers

Schalmont's budget has had a **0% tax levy increase** for three straight years.

Schalmont has never presented a school budget that exceeded the Property Tax Cap in the **12 years** since the cap went into effect.

Over the past 12 years, the largest tax levy increase was **2.79% in 2015**.

In 10 of the past 12 years, Schalmont's tax levy increase was **2% or lower**.



Budget Supports Student Technology

As part of Schalmont's efforts to provide each student with an up-to-date device to use for school, the 2023-2024 budget includes \$450,000 for its Chromebook Replacement Program.

Like many school districts, Schalmont supports a one-to-one technology program where each student receives a Chromebook for internet research, completing assignments, and a variety of other learning opportunities.

One-to-one technology programs help ensure all students have equal

access to technology versus bring your own device programs where not all families may be able to provide devices. It also ensures continuity for learning when students have the same device.

The funding in the budget supports replacing Chromebooks



in 5th and 9th grades. Students entering the Middle and High School next year will receive a new device that should last them for their years in that school building.

Bus Purchases Part of Long-Term Plan

As part of Schalmont's long-term bus replacement plan, a proposition on the May 16 ballot would allow the district to purchase three new 66-passenger school buses and two new 35-passenger mini school buses.

The total cost would not exceed \$665,000. Schalmont pays about one-third of the cost because New York State reimburses the district for approximately 65% on bus purchases.

Schalmont purchases school buses each year as part of a long-term plan to keep the district's fleet in safe, working order. New buses replace old buses based on the vehicle's mileage, age, repair history and condition.

To avoid interest payments, buses would be purchased with money from



the district's fund balance. This also maximizes our state aid, lowering the local cost to taxpayers.

Increasing Substitute Pay

Some of Schalmont's most important employees are our substitutes, who fill in every day in a variety of jobs to help ensure our schools run smoothly.

To help keep our substitutes and attract new ones in a competitive job market, the 2023-2024 budget includes funding to increase pay for substitute teachers and teacher aides.

"We're fortunate to have some amazing substitutes. But we need to make sure their pay is at a level where they can continue here and we can attract new substitutes to fill all the needs we have," said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon.

If you are interested in being a substitute at Schalmont, please visit our website or scan this QR code to fill out a quick online form.





EXPENDITURES – *Where does the money go?*

Category	2022-2023 Budget	Proposed 2023-2024 Budget	Change from 2022-2023	% of Budget
Instruction	\$26,207,707	\$27,930,309	\$1,722,602	50.0%
Benefits	\$16,464,550	\$16,938,843	\$474,293	30.3%
General Operations & Central Administration	\$4,702,585	\$4,635,550	-\$67,035	8.3%
Transportation	\$3,813,698	\$3,876,600	\$62,902	6.9%
Debt Service	\$2,249,450	\$2,431,736	\$182,286	4.4%
Interfund Transfer	\$60,000	\$40,000	-\$20,000	0.1%
Totals	\$53,497,990	\$55,853,038	\$2,355,048	100.0%

REVENUES – *Where does the money come from?*

Category	2022-2023 Budget	Proposed 2023-2024 Budget	Change from 2022-2023	% of Revenues
Property Tax Levy for Budget	\$29,973,572	\$29,973,572	\$0	53.7%
State and Federal Aid	\$16,458,359	\$16,988,599	\$530,240	30.4%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes	\$3,743,403	\$3,858,516	\$115,113	6.9%
Fund Balance Appropriations	\$2,668,356	\$2,977,351	\$308,995	5.3%
Debt Service Payment	\$0	\$1,455,000	\$1,455,000	2.6%
Interest Earnings/Building Use/Refunds	\$654,300	\$600,000	-\$54,300	1.1%
Total Revenue	\$53,497,990	\$55,853,038	\$2,355,048	100.0%

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

Interfund Transfer: **0.1%**

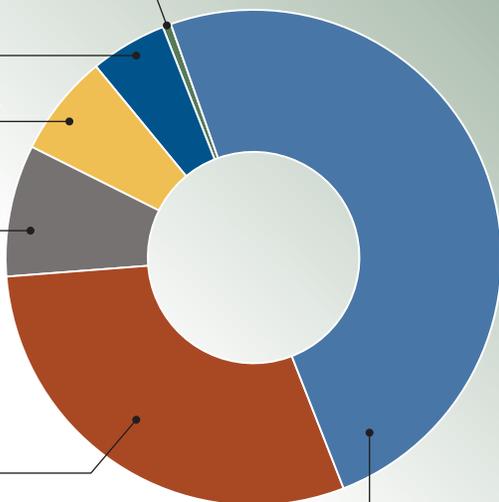
Debt Service: **4.4%**

Transportation: **6.9%**

General Operations & Central Administration: **8.3%**

Benefits: **30.3%**

Instruction: **50%**



REVENUE SUMMARY

Interest, Building Use, Refunds: **1.1%**

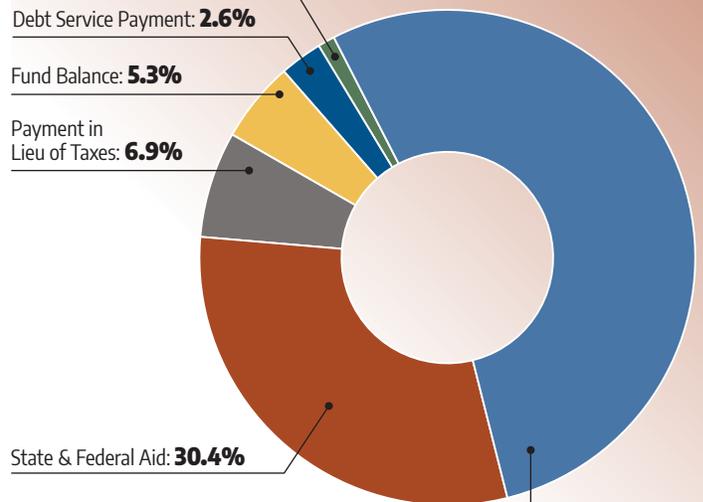
Debt Service Payment: **2.6%**

Fund Balance: **5.3%**

Payment in Lieu of Taxes: **6.9%**

State & Federal Aid: **30.4%**

Property Tax Levy: **53.7%**





School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2022-23 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2023-24 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$53,497,990	\$55,853,038	\$55,724,198
Increase/Decrease for the 2023-24 School Year		\$2,355,048	\$2,226,208
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		4.22%	4.0%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		8.0%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$29,973,572	\$29,973,572	
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)	\$29,973,572	\$29,973,572	\$29,973,572
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$414,693	\$1,129,121	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$30,821,151	\$31,102,693	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$29,558,879	\$28,844,451	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$1,262,272	\$2,258,242	
Administrative Component	\$3,274,189	\$3,094,790	\$3,009,750
Program Component	\$44,271,402	\$46,455,112	\$46,455,112
Capital Component	\$5,952,399	\$6,303,136	\$6,259,336

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2023-24 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.

All instructional programming will remain. We will reduce supply and contractual costs in the administrative and capital components of the budget for contingency purposes.

** 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
Bus Purchase	\$665,000

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2023-24 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$554
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The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2023-24 by the qualified voters of the Schalmont Central School District, Schenectady County, New York, will be held at Schalmont High School in said district on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. prevailing time in the Schalmont High School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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



Board of Education

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*Produced in cooperation with the
Capital Region BOCES Communications Service.*



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Pre-K Community Survey

As part of our Pre-K feasibility study, Schalmont asks families with children who will be 4-years-old in the next two or three years to please fill out our Pre-K Community Survey.

"Over the past six months, our Pre-K Advisory Committee has done a great job discussing all the challenges and opportunities of starting a Pre-K program in Schalmont. To help us better understand the needs of our community, the committee created a short survey for families," said Superintendent Dr. Thomas Reardon.

Schalmont's advisory committee, which includes parents, guardians and community members, will use the survey results as they continue to study the feasibility of starting a Pre-K program in the next couple of years.



VOTER INFORMATION

What am I voting on?

A \$55,853,038 budget for the 2023-2024 school year that does not raise the tax levy, a proposition to purchase five school buses, and candidates for the Board of Education.

When and where is the vote?

Tuesday, May 16 from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Schalmont High School gymnasium lobby.

Who is eligible to vote?

Anyone who is a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older and a resident of the Schalmont Central School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

How can I vote by absentee ballot?

Please call the District Office at 518-355-9200 to request an application for an absentee ballot. Any eligible voter can vote by absentee if they prefer.

What if I have questions?

For further information, please visit www.schalmont.org. Residents are also encouraged to call the District Office at 518-355-9200 with any questions they may have.