

The 2007-2008 budget

South Colonie residents vote 1,199-682 in favor of \$83.8 million district spending plan

South Colonie Central School District residents went to the polls on Tuesday, May 15, and voted in favor of a proposed \$83.8 million district budget for the 2007-08 school year. The vote was 1,199-682. The budget continues to support a strong educational program, small class sizes and a wide range of academic intervention services to help all students succeed.

NEW BUDGET AT A GLANCE

- **Total 2007-08 budget: \$83,864,400**
- **Budget-to-budget increase: 4.94%**
- **Projected property tax increase of 4.12%**
- **Maintains facilities and existing educational programs**
- **Continues wide range of academic intervention services**

The 2007-08 budget totals \$83,864,400 and represents a 4.94 percent spending increase over the current school year (see complete figures on page 3). Though equalization rates will not be known until July, the district projects about a 4.12 percent Colonie residential property tax increase next year based on the budget submitted to voters. This means that the average Colonie homeowner whose property is assessed at \$150,000 would pay an additional \$126.78 in school property taxes next year or about \$10.57 more per month

to finance education. This is a base increase and does not reflect any STAR savings a homeowner may be entitled to.

“Costs continue to rise each year but this administration and Board of Education have worked hard to provide the funding necessary to continue this district’s tradition of educational excellence,” said Superintendent Michael Marcelle. “We do so realizing the financial impact the budget has on our local taxpayers.”

Increased costs

Several factors are driving up the cost of education here and in most school districts across the state. Employee health insurance continues to escalate from one year to the next and legally-required district contributions to New York State retirement systems are increasing as well.

Employee benefits alone account for a \$1,054,126 or 6.1 percent increase in the 2007-08 budget. Making up the rest of the projected increase are instruction (+\$1,371,907), special education costs (+\$598,975), student transportation (+\$211,036), operations and maintenance

Major budget increases

Benefits	+ \$1,054,126	+6.1%
Instruction	+ \$1,371,907	+4.6%
Special Ed	+ \$598,975	+6.0%
Operation & Maintenance	+ \$407,148	+7.2%
Transportation ..	+ \$211,036	+5.2%
Library/Media Instruction	+ \$52,581	+2.6%

Additional Revenues

General State Aid & Construction Aid for Capital Project	+ \$911,847	+4.4%
Interest on Investments	+ \$255,000	+24%

New program costs

New state mandate for Pupil Services (Up front Special Ed costs for private and parochial school students with only some costs reimbursed)	+ \$312,000
Addition of Transitional Kindergarten at Shaker Road Elementary School	+ \$72,000
Addition of new first grade section at Roessleville Elementary School to meet rising enrollment	+ \$72,000

(+\$407,148), and library & media instruction (+\$52,581).

A new state mandate is also requiring the district to budget approximately \$312,000 in additional monies next school year to pay the cost of special education services for private and parochial school students – with only some of those costs reimbursed to the district.

Additional program costs include \$72,000 to expand Transitional Kindergarten to Shaker Road Elementary

... voters approve budget

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School and \$72,000 to add another first grade section at Roesseville Elementary School to meet enrollment demands.

A lengthy process

The South Colonie Board of Education had been working since January to put together a district budget that continues to support a strong educational program for all students while remaining fiscally responsible to local taxpayers. This included revisions to the first draft of the budget in March that reduced spending by \$1,672,440. Those reductions lowered the original proposed budget figure for next school year from \$85,554,840 to \$83,864,400, or by more than \$1.6 million. (see page 3).

Helping to offset spending increases in 2007-08:

- The New York State Legislature allotted the district about \$912,000 in additional state aid this year — a 4.4 percent increase over the current school year.

- With the moderate resurgence of the stock market, the district is budgeting about \$255,000 more in interest returns on investments next school year.

- An aggressive energy management program has saved the district more than \$1.5 million over the last five years, and is expected to generate more than \$4.5 million in total energy savings by 2011.

Estimated revenues

	2006-07	2007-08	Dollar Change
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ 1,340,000	\$ 1,350,000	+ 10,000
Continuing Education	91,500	85,000	- 6,500
Interest on Investments	800,000	1,055,000	+ 255,000
Miscellaneous	676,200	880,350	+ 204,150
Rental-BOCES	26,000	26,000	0
State Aid*	19,657,786	20,569,633	+ 911,847
Local Taxes	56,852,098	59,398,417	+ 2,546,319
Youth Detention Center	296,981	300,000	+ 3,019
Medicaid Reimbursement	175,000	200,000	+ 25,000
TOTAL	\$79,915,565	\$83,864,400	+ 3,948,835

* As required by Education Laws 1608 and 1716, the district estimates its 2007 - 2008 State Aid to be \$20,569,633 or 24.5 percent of total expenditures.

Proposed expenditures

	2006-07	2007-08	Dollar Change
Board of Education	\$ 105,276	\$ 118,326	+ 13,050
Central Administration	205,048	213,836	+ 8,788
Finance	650,637	638,608	- 12,029
Legal/Personnel/Public Information	454,459	511,356	+ 56,897
Operation & Maintenance	5,253,647	5,660,795	+ 407,148
Information Technology	393,604	407,764	+ 14,160
Special Items	1,137,432	1,112,335	- 25,097
Instructional Improvement/Admin	2,439,658	2,497,791	+ 58,133
Regular Instruction	28,487,310	29,859,217	+ 1,371,907
Special Education	9,087,151	10,025,633	+ 598,975
Summer School	260,573	263,096	+ 1,566
Library/Technology Instruction	1,993,358	2,045,939	+ 52,581
Pupil Services	2,280,574	2,306,629	+ 26,055
Community Services	388,481	383,217	- 5,264
Interscholastic Athletics/Co-Curricular	763,461	836,547	+ 73,086
Transportation	3,849,583	4,060,619	+ 211,036
Employee Benefits	16,291,320	17,345,446	+ 1,054,126
Debt Service/Interfund Transfer	5,873,993	5,557,246	- 316,747
TOTAL	\$79,915,565	\$83,864,400	+ 3,948,835

The budget by Administration, Program and Capital Expenses

**ADMINISTRATION:
8.74 percent (\$7,329,443)**

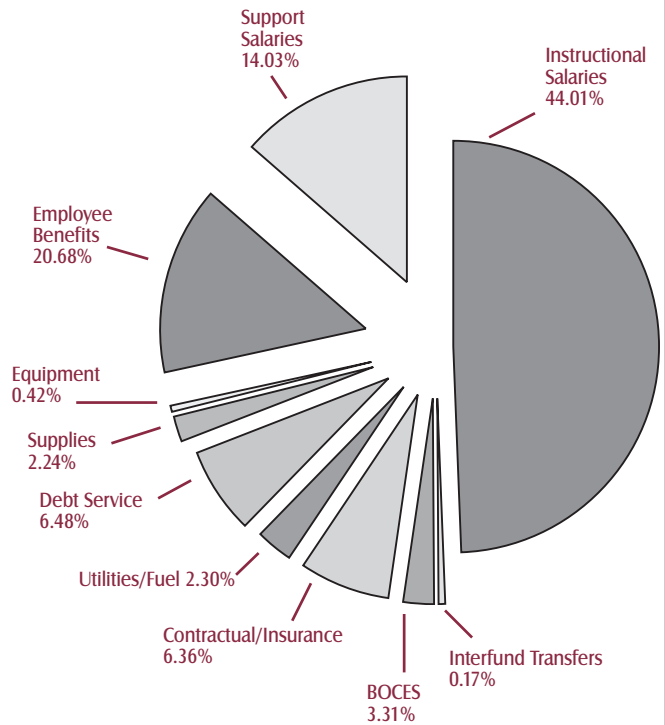
Administration includes: Board of Education, central administration, finance, legal services, personnel, records management, public information, central services, special items, curriculum development and supplies, regular school supplies, instruction supervision and employee benefits.

**PROGRAM:
76.95 percent (\$64,535,834)**

Program includes: instruction, transportation and garage, contract transportation, community service, employee benefits and transfers.

**CAPITAL:
14.31 percent (\$11,999,123)**

Capital includes: Operation of buildings, maintenance of buildings, judgments and claims, employee benefits and debt service.



2007-2008 Proposed Budget by Percentages

Budget savings

District/Board work to reduce costs in 2007-2008 school year

The South Colonie district administration and Board of Education worked for several months to reduce costs and expenditures for the 2007-08 school year.

The first draft of the proposed budget presented to the public in January totaled \$85,554,840 and called for a 7.06 percent spending increase over the current school year. Several adjustments were made over the last five months. The result: the budget approved by voters on May 15 was scaled back by \$1,672,440. It now totals \$83,864,400 and calls for a 4.94 percent spending increase. The chart on the right illustrates some of the budget savings that were realized from the original draft.

- \$272,000** The district has restructured the way it will borrow to pay back debt on the capital improvement project approved by voters last October — borrowing in stages instead of all at once — thus saving money.
- \$128,000** Elementary staff reductions to account for less pupil enrollments, while keeping class sizes favorable.
- \$75,000** Reductions in the number of school monitors.
- \$70,000** Fewer property tax certiorari cases has enabled the district to lower its reserve fund.
- \$20,000** The district has consolidated home instruction programs requiring fewer staff.
- \$18,000** Elimination of tuition for new Tech Valley High School.
- \$10,000** Reduction in field trip costs districtwide.
- \$10,000** Reduction in maintenance supply costs districtwide.
- \$7,300** Elimination of two assistant coaching positions and athletic managers at CCHS.