

# TROY



TODAY'S  
STUDENTS.

TOMORROW'S  
LEADERS.

A PUBLICATION OF THE TROY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

BUDGET NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2013



*Troy High School Italian Club traveled to Italy during February break. Students are pictured at The Colosseum in Rome, the largest amphitheater in the world.*

## Message from the Superintendent's Office

This year the Troy School District adopted a new Mission Statement to "provide a strong educational and social foundation to graduate all students college and career ready." It is the foundation on which the Board of Education developed the proposed 2013-14 budget of \$97,428,554. It is fiscally responsible and maintains an educational program that will effectively meet the needs of all our students. The \$97,428,554 budget is more than \$300,000 below the tax cap.

The development of this budget was a difficult task. The cost of doing business is rising. Our State Aid is below what it was in 2008-2009. Our taxpayers are overburdened. Therefore, developing this budget was a challenge. The District has cut over 140 positions over the last few years.

As we reviewed programs and areas to cut costs, we continually discussed making cuts that have the least negative impact on student achievement. Additional personnel cuts could seriously affect the educational program but financial restraints made it necessary to reduce five additional positions in this year's budget. This was done through retirements/resignations and will not result in layoffs.

The Board of Education, Central Administration and the teachers, non-instructional staff and administrators worked collaboratively and creatively to do what is best for students and taxpayers. A retirement incentive was adopted with a reduction in costs for next year of over \$600,000. The District's special education transportation contract was renegotiated for a savings of \$180,000.

We also conducted an active lobbying campaign with State Legislators to explain the precarious financial position of our District. District representatives met with the Legislators face to face. Then the school community followed up by sending over 1,500 letters asking for additional support for our school. These efforts paid off. We received an increase of approximately \$650,000 over the Governor's original budget proposal. Charter schools continue to pose a problem and a financial strain for our district. We are developing an outreach plan that will explain to

all Troy parents with children in charter schools that their children are better served in the Troy School District.

Great things are happening in the Troy School District! Last year's graduating class collectively earned more than 1,500 college credits through the College in the High School program at Troy High School. We had State, Regional, and Sectional championship athletic teams and a Regional champion Odyssey of the Mind elementary team. We have new Common Core aligned Reading and Math programs in Grades K-8. The Middle School and School 14 showed increases in student achievement on the State assessments last year and we anticipate all the schools showing growth this year. We continue to improve our schools.

In September students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 will be attending the brand new, state of the art, Troy Middle School. In addition, we have secured a \$4.2 million School Improvement Grant for School 2 that will allow us to transform the school and offer, among other things, extended instructional time, improved parental and community engagement, and support services including mental health services, for our students and families.

We would like to recognize and thank the members of the Citizens Advisory Committee, who worked countless hours and attended our many workshops starting in December. Their input and insights were appreciated.

Thank you for your support of the District and we are confident that we have developed a budget that is both fiscally responsible and educationally sound. It will allow us to continue to improve our schools and to make our mission statement a reality. The future is bright for the Troy School District and we look forward to working with all stakeholders as we pursue excellence for all of our students.

Respectfully,

Dr. Brian Howard, *Interim Superintendent of Schools*  
Mr. John Carmello, *Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction*

## SAVE THE DATE

Town Hall Budget Meeting  
**Monday, May 13**  
6:00 p.m. — School 1  
2920 Fifth Avenue

Meet the BOE Candidates  
**Monday, May 13**  
7:00 p.m. — School 1  
2920 Fifth Avenue

**TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2013**

**10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

## SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE and BOE Election

### POLLING SITES:

**SCHOOL 2 –**  
470 Tenth Street

**SCHOOL 12 –**  
475 First Street

**SCHOOL 14 –**  
1700 Tibbits Avenue

**SCHOOL 16 –**  
40 Collins Avenue

**SCHOOL 18 –**  
417 Hoosick Street

**CARROLL HILL –**  
112 Delaware Avenue

*If you are not sure where to vote on May 21, please go to the District's website: [www.troy.k12.ny.us](http://www.troy.k12.ny.us) or contact BOE Office at 328-5070.*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

### How much is the proposed budget?

The proposed budget is \$97,428,554.

### How does this financially impact the tax payer?

The proposed budget will require an increase of 2.99% in the tax levy. The tax levy represents the total amount of property taxes the District needs to raise. As the City of Troy and the Town of Brunswick have different assessment practices and different equalization rates, the impact of the increase in the tax levy may vary. Tax bills continue to be calculated by using a property's assessed value (as determined by the City/Town assessor) and the tax rate—or the amount paid in taxes per \$1,000 of assessed value. Tax bills can also be affected by STAR or other exemptions for which individual taxpayers may qualify.

### How does the new City assessment impact the School budget?

The City's assessment will not impact the District's budget. The City of Troy's reassessment does not raise more tax dollars for the district. A reassessment re-distributes property taxes more fairly and creates a more equitable assessment roll.

### How has state aid affected Troy's budget?

The state aid projections for 2013 estimate that the District will receive \$1,918,836 more in state aid than in the current year. This represents an increase of 4.12%.

### What are the major items that increase from the current year to the 2013-2014 year?

The major items that have increases are retirement costs, charter school tuition, contractual salary increases and equipment needs resulting from previous contingent budgets wherein technology equipment could not be upgraded.

### What are the proposed reductions in the budget?

The budget was developed through workshop meetings to determine where reductions could be made while preserving programs for students. We were able to close the budget gap with non-personnel reductions and minimal impact to programs. Reductions to the 2013-14 budget include eliminating one foreign language (we still offer Spanish, Italian and French) and the Rensselaer County Drug Free Program in the elementary schools (we still offer programs in Middle School and High School).

### Will there be any staff reductions?

There will be no layoffs within the District this year; however, there will be staff reductions District-wide through attrition and retirements.

### How will the District achieve savings in the budget?

The District achieved savings in several areas. These include offering a retirement incentive; renegotiating contracts and containing health insurance costs.

### What were the savings from the retirement incentive?

The District offered a retirement incentive to all bargaining units within the District which resulted in a savings of \$666,208.

### How do charter schools impact our school taxes?

Troy School District is required by law to pay tuition for our residents who attend a charter school. Currently we are being invoiced for 704 students attending charter schools at a tuition rate of \$15,986 per student. The expense of charter school tuition represents 15.37% of the District budget. In addition to the tuition, the District spends an estimated \$625,000 transporting the students to the charter schools.

### What happens if the budget is defeated?

If the proposed budget is defeated by the voters, a school district—as in the past—has the option of putting the same or a revised budget up for a re-vote, or adopting a contingent budget. If a proposed budget is defeated twice by the voters, a district must adopt a contingent budget.

### What does a contingent budget mean to the District and students of Troy?

A contingent budget would mean an additional \$992,305 in reductions to the budget presented. Certain existing contingent budget requirements remain in effect that prohibit spending in specific areas including community use of buildings, certain salary increases and new equipment purchases. In addition to the above, staffing reductions would have to be made which will have a negative impact on our programming and students.

**THE RESOLUTION:** BE IT RESOLVED, that the statement of expenditures of the Enlarged City School District of Troy, New York for the 2013-14 school year showing a proposed budget of \$97,428,554 is hereby adopted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the budget proposition to be out before voters on May 21, 2013 shall read as follows:  
RESOLVED, that the proposed budget of expenditures of the

Enlarged City School District of Troy, New York for the 2013-14 school year in the amount of \$97,428,554 and for the purposes shown in the statement of estimated expenditures adopted by the Board of Education be and the same hereby is approved and the amount thereof shall be raised by a levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the school district, after first deducting the monies available from state aid and other sources as provided by the law.

# Today's Students are Tomorrow's Leaders



**Lesson in Government:** Doyle Middle School students in the National Junior Honor Society and Student Council recently toured the historic New York State Capitol witnessing democracy first-hand. Students visited the Hall of Governors, attended a legislative session on the budget and were also introduced on the Assembly floor.



**Students advocate "For the Birds":** 5th Grade students at School 2 participated in Audubon New York's "For the Birds!", an elementary education program that teaches environmental awareness and appreciation of nature through the study of birds. Students learned about habitats of birds such as Chimney Swifts which migrate to South America during the winter months. These birds have limited spaces for nesting in our area so students organized a letter campaign to Mayor Rosamilia requesting the City provide availability for Chimney Swift "towers". Their efforts paid off and towers were installed in Prospect Park and Power Park. The birds will return to Troy in May and students have begun plans to make a garden for their new feathered friends.

**Legend of Uncle Sam comes to life:** 4th Grade students at School 18 participated in the "Uncle Sam Project" sponsored by the City of Troy in collaboration with Downtown Troy B.I.D., The Arts Center and Rensselaer County Historical Society (RCHS). As part of the exciting project to display artwork in the streets of the City, students researched Troy's hometown hero with the help of RCHS then painted a colorful interpretation of patriotism and school pride on the 5 foot fiberglass statue. Thirty unique statues will be installed throughout the City. School 18's Uncle Sam statue will be on display outside City Hall located at the Hedley Building.



**Science students explore the sea:** 9th and 10th grade earth science students studied microscopic samples of ocean core sediment thanks to National Board Certified teacher Laura Tedesco, who attended a hands-on workshop called "School of Rock Expedition for Educators". Mrs. Tedesco spent nine days aboard an international ocean drilling vessel in British Columbia with other teachers from across North America exploring seafloor samples from the Pacific Ocean. Troy's students were eager to learn about their teacher's experiences on the ship and incorporate them into their study of micropaleontology in the classroom. Students examined tiny fossil shells called foraminifera which were gathered by Mrs. Tedesco on the ship.

**Flying Horses Soar to New Heights:** Troy High School's athletic program had an exceptional year as the Flying Horses made school history in three Big 10 sports:

**Boys Soccer** – 2012 Section II Class A Regional Champions (first title ever for Troy!).

**Boys Basketball** – 2013 Section II Class AA Regional Champions (title last held in 2002).

**Girls Basketball** – 2013 Section 2 Class "A" Champions; 2013 NYS Class "A" Regional Champions; 2013 NYSPHSAA Class "A" State Champions; 2013 NYS Federation of Secondary School Athletic Association Finalist. (Troy has not held these titles since 1989).



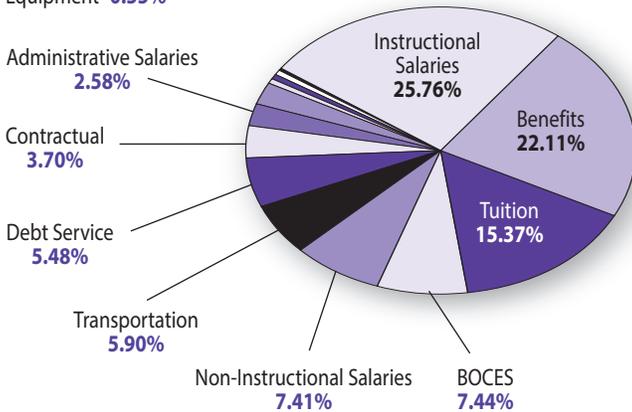
**Odyssey of the Mind Winners:** School 14's Intermediate Team won 1st place in the Region 4 Odyssey of the Mind Tournament. Students performed "ARTchitecture: The Musical" and were awarded a perfect score for their spontaneous problem. All Troy schools were represented in this year's OM Regional Tournament.

# Expenditures — How is the money spent?

BUDGET CATEGORY	2012-2013	2013-2014	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
Administrative Salaries	2,321,117	2,518,249	197,132	8.49%
Non-Instructional Salaries	7,018,171	7,216,348	198,177	2.82%
Instructional Salaries	24,787,494	25,099,533	312,038	1.26%
BOCES Services	7,048,693	7,252,746	204,053	2.89%
Tuition	12,371,054	14,972,142	2,601,088	21.03%
Aided Materials	604,739	504,739	(100,000)	-16.54%
Transportation	5,649,099	5,751,648	102,549	1.82%
Debt Service	5,473,951	5,341,362	(132,589)	-2.42%
Employee Benefits	21,010,354	21,543,756	533,402	2.54%
Equipment	316,934	540,437	223,503	70.52%
Interfund Transfers	218,000	218,000	—	0.00%
Supplies	582,557	615,068	32,511	5.58%
Utilities	2,181,869	2,253,500	71,631	3.28%
Contractual	3,569,229	3,601,028	31,799	0.89%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>93,153,261</b>	<b>97,428,554</b>	<b>4,275,294</b>	<b>4.59%</b>

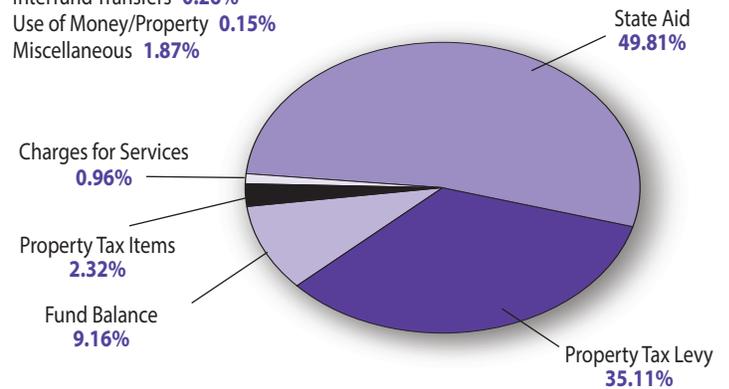
## Expenditures

Utilities 2.31%    Aided Materials 0.52%  
 Supplies 0.63%    Interfund Transfers 0.22%  
 Equipment 0.55%



## Revenues

Interfund Trans Debt 0.32%  
 Sale of Real Property 0.05%  
 Federal Aid 0.31%  
 Interfund Transfers 0.26%  
 Use of Money/Property 0.15%  
 Miscellaneous 1.87%



# Revenues — Where does the money come from?

REVENUE CATEGORY	2012-2013	2013-2014	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
Real Property Tax Items	2,122,500	2,259,925	137,425	6.47%
Charges for Services	878,350	939,100	60,750	6.92%
Use of Money & Property	147,000	147,000	—	0.00%
Sale of Property & Comp for Loss	45,600	45,600	—	0.00%
Miscellaneous	905,000	1,820,978	915,978	101.21%
State Aid	46,613,954	48,532,790	1,918,836	4.12%
Federal Aid	300,000	300,000	—	0.00%
Interfund Transfers	—	250,000	250,000	100.00%
Fund Balance	8,925,000	8,925,000	—	0.00%
Real Property Tax Levy	33,215,857	34,208,161	992,305	2.99%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>93,153,261</b>	<b>97,428,554</b>	<b>4,275,294</b>	<b>4.59%</b>

# New Beginnings for Troy

**John Carmello will take the helm** of the Troy City School District as Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2013. Mr. Carmello has been the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction since 2011 and past principal of Troy High School for six years. As new Superintendent, he will lead the District at an exciting time as Troy implements a new mission and raises expectations for student achievement. Mr. Carmello stated he “looks forward to working with the entire school community to make Troy the best district in New York State.”

The Doyle Middle School will take a new name of **Troy Middle School (“TMS”)** on July 1, 2013 marking a new era for the Troy City School District. We will open the doors this September to a state-of-the-art building with 21st Century learning and a newly configured instruction model for Grades 6, 7 and 8 on the Burdett Avenue campus.



## CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE

**The Capital Project will benefit students for generations** with an innovative learning environment, improved building safety and greater sense of community pride.

Inside the renovated building originally built in 1976 there are three well-defined small learning communities for each Grade 6 through 8. Each learning community includes classrooms with wireless data access and interactive learning technologies supported by its own administrative and guidance offices.

**The reconstruction includes** new skylights and windows which bring controlled, natural daylight into every classroom and the interior of the building. Light fixtures and heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment have been replaced with energy efficient equipment with both localized control and remote monitoring. The roof and all exterior doors and windows have also been replaced with energy efficient systems.

Handicapped access has been improved with two new elevators for ADA access for all students, staff and guests. Student and public access into TMS have been improved by providing more handicapped parking, accessible pathways and entries to the building and a bridge between TMS and THS. Additionally, site safety will be improved by separating bus and car traffic.

**The Veteran's Memorial Auditorium** was rebuilt to increase functionality and improve student safety, handicapped access, and audience comfort with new seating. Exterior stairs and ramps have been built connecting the District auditorium entrance to new handicapped parking. Behind the Middle School and High School, the athletic fields have been rebuilt to maximize use for physical education and Troy's renowned athletic programs. The Flying Horses will play area teams on artificial turf with new lighting which will allow for extended hours for evening games. The upgraded athletic fields include baseball and softball fields, new dugouts, track and field events, and tennis courts.

**The New Music Wing** will be shared by Middle School and High School students for general music and performing arts classes. The expansive wing houses an acoustically-designed band room, chorus room, ensemble room, three practice rooms, two general music rooms, and instrument repair room as well as music lab. Troy's performing arts program is devoted to providing students with opportunities for diverse performances in school and in the community such as the collaboration with RPI for Earth Day Concert, The World Drum Project and Albany Symphony Orchestra's Heritage Series.



*Students practice for the Spring concert in the acoustically-designed band room.*

## Property Tax Information:

- The District's Tax Levy will increase 2.99% for the 2013-14 school year.
- The estimated basic STAR tax savings for homeowners is \$575.00.
- The tax rates will be established upon receiving the equalization rates from the New York State Office of Real Property Services and the final assessments from the City of Troy and Town of Brunswick.

## Voter Eligibility:

To vote, you must be at least 18 years old, a U.S. citizen and a resident of the Troy City School District for at least 30 days prior to the vote date.

## Absentee Ballot Information:

To vote by absentee ballot, you must fill out an application. Please contact the Board of Education Office at 328-5070. If you want a ballot mailed to you, your application must be received by May 15. If you plan to pick up your ballot, your application must be received by May 20. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk by 5 p.m. on May 21, the day of the vote.

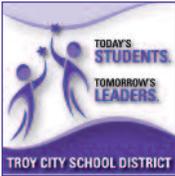
## School Tax Relief Program:

STAR is New York State's School Tax Relief Program that includes a school property tax rebate program and a partial property tax exemption from school taxes. All New Yorkers who own and live in their one-, two-, or three-family home, condominium, cooperative apartment, manufactured home, or farm dwelling are eligible for STAR on their primary residence.

For information about the STAR rebate program, please visit the website of the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance or call 1-877-6-STAR-NY (1-877-678-2769).

## Understanding the New Tax Cap Laws:

The law does not prohibit tax levy increases greater than 2% despite how it has been described. The law requires district's to calculate its own tax levy limit based on the law which includes exemptions for voter-approved local capital expenditures, increases in pension rates that exceed 2 points; and court order judgments. The Troy City School District's maximum allowable tax levy increase is 4.01%. The District is proposing a 2.99% levy increase which is below the maximum allowable by law.



Troy City School District  
2920 Fifth Avenue  
Troy, New York 12180

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John Carmello, *Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction*  
Mary O'Neill, *Assistant Superintendent for Business*  
Kristen Miaski, *Director of Human Resources*

District Office: (518) 328-5052

Visit our website: [www.troy.k12.ny.us](http://www.troy.k12.ny.us)

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**OUR MISSION:**

*Troy Schools will provide a strong educational and social foundation to graduate all students, college and career ready.*

**TROY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT: SCHOOL BUDGET NOTICE**

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for 2012-2013 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2013-2014 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2013-2014 School Year
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 93,153,261	\$ 97,428,554	\$ 96,436,250
Increase/decrease for the 2013-2014 school year		\$ 4,275,294	\$ 3,282,989
Percentage increase(decrease) in each proposed budget		4.59%	3.52%
Change in consumer price index		2.10%	
Debt, if applicable	33,215,857	34,208,161	33,215,857
Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 381,236	908,648	
Exclusions or Levy to Support Library Debt	32,834,621	33,299,514	
B. School Tax levy Limit, NOT Including Levy for Permissible Exclusions Below Regarding Separate Propositions)	\$ 33,066,117	33,639,359	
School Tax Levy Limit	\$ (231,496)	\$ (339,845)	
School Tax Levy Limit	33,215,857	\$ 34,208,161	\$ 33,215,857
Administrative component	\$ 9,104,729	\$ 9,386,002	\$ 9,209,202
Program component	\$ 70,434,224	\$ 74,496,321	\$ 73,888,116
Capital component	\$ 13,614,308	\$ 13,546,231	\$ 13,338,931

If the proposed budget is defeated by the voters, a school district has the option of putting the same or a revised budget up for a re-vote, or adopting a contingent budget. If a proposed budget is defeated twice by the voters, a district must adopt a contingent budget. A contingent budget will mean an additional reduction of \$992,305 from the proposed budget. Reductions will include staffing, equipment and salary items. All of which will negatively impact our programming and students.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact	Budget Proposed for 2013-2014 School Year
Estimated Basic Star Exemption Savings:	
<b>Basic STAR Tax Savings</b>	<b>\$ 575.00</b>

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2013-2014 by the qualified voters of the Enlarged City School District of Troy, Rensselaer County, New York will be held at all elementary schools in said school district on **Tuesday May 21, 2013** between the hours of 10:00 am and 9:00 pm prevailing time in PS2, PS14, PS16, PS18 and DMS (located at PS12), at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

The proposed budget, property tax report card, school academic report cards, fiscal accountability summary; salary disclosure notice and exemption reporting for taxing jurisdictions is available on the budget page of the district website ([www.troy.k12.ny.us](http://www.troy.k12.ny.us)) and at all school buildings.

It is legally required that we send the above **School Budget Notice** to all District residents. Please read this newsletter for detailed information regarding the 2013-14 school budget.