



# THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Preserving Programs While Keeping Taxpayer Costs in Check

**M**indful of taxpayer concerns, and resolutely committed to maintaining educational excellence, the district has approached the 2014-2015 budget with an eye to continuing our successful balancing of these factors. The proposed budget of \$105,929,364 will remain at the tax levy cap while preserving instructional programs, sports, clubs and other essential elements of a Deer Park education.

The allowable tax levy for this year – 2.2 percent – is considerably lower than 2013-2014 because the district was unable to exclude any TRS or ERS expenses, which helped raise the cap last year. However, the budget-to-budget difference from last year is only 2.18 percent, and the district is using less reserves to balance the budget and plan for a sound future, both economically and educationally.

Following through on the Board of Education's belief in educating the whole child, our robust extracurricular and co-curricular programs help our students become better and more well-rounded citizens. While other districts have cut back on enhanced opportunities for learning, these programs at Deer Park have been enhanced by expansion in critical areas, from increased Advanced Placement classes to additional support for areas such as coaching, special education and technology, all while keeping the budget from exceeding the cap.

The sale of the Washington School property (see Proposition III on page 4 of this newsletter) will result in more than \$4 million in usable funds for the district, part of an ongoing strategic plan for building utilization that will help the community's children now and in the future.

Another factor assisting in the creation of a well-rounded but fiscally prudent budget is state aid, which increased to \$26,440,030. This additional \$1,491,677 in funding will better enable the district to ensure that critical programs will remain intact while keeping tax increases at bay.

A detailed report of the proposed 2014-2015 budget will be presented to the community at a public hearing in the district office on Tuesday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Please remember to vote on Tuesday, May 20 from 7 a.m.-9 p.m. at Deer Park High School.

Sincerely,

The Deer Park Board of Education

Eva J. Demyen, Superintendent of Schools

Marguerite Jimenez, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations



## Continuing CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

This year's budget continues the district's emphasis on capital improvements and enhancing facilities across the district. After last year's significant upgrades to the high school track, roof and parking lot, the result of the voters' approval of the capital funds proposition, the process has been carried further into the 2013-2014 school year with additional sidewalk improvements, regrouting of the district pool, and upgrades to the RF Middle School parking lots. Upgrades to elementary school playground paving and districtwide sidewalks and security systems, also part of last year's approved funding, will take place during the summer, with improvements to JQA's PA system, JFK's floors, and the Frost home and career rooms scheduled for the 2014-2015 school year.



# REMEMBER TO VOTE

Tuesday, May 20, 2014 • Deer Park High School • 7 a.m.-9 p.m.

## Ensuring Our Students Are Ready for College and Careers

The district's high school students are provided with multifaceted avenues to achieve future success. The unique Senior Internship Program assists students in completing an internship, community service or individual project in an area of interest to them. This beneficial experience allows seniors to sample a career before making a college choice.

Participating students are required to complete at least 70 unpaid hours throughout the course of the school year. Program mentors work closely with interns to familiarize them with company policies, teach the students about their field or area of expertise, assign appropriate work tasks, and provide training and guidance to better prepare the seniors for the working world. The mentors provide helpful feedback on intern job performance, both to the school and, during regular meetings, with the interns themselves.



## Excellence in Teaching Leads to Student Success

### ENGAGE NY

Our involvement with the state's EngageNY website is an ongoing source of beneficial professional development in the implementation of the Common Core. Deer Park's teachers initially used the site as a resource to learn about CCSS instructional practices and access ELA and math modules. Instructional videos and modules were analyzed to develop understanding of Core-aligned instruction, after which staff modified lessons to incorporate these strategies. Last year the district was visited by the New York State Education Department, whose positive observations of our implementation methods resulted in the district's participation in the state's Common Core video project. The resulting videos, available as a resource on EngageNY for teachers across the state, attest to the district's commitment to ensure the improvement of student achievement.

### GRANTS

Creative grant-writing has proved successful in funding the enhancement of students' educational experience. The district uses Title IIA and RTTT funds to support professional development and teacher training around the Common Core, and recently secured the Strengthening Teacher Leadership Effectiveness grant. These grants support curriculum-alignment projects, course attendance and job-embedded professional development.

### COMMON CORE IMPLEMENTATION

The district achieved its initial curricular goals in implementing the Common Core, following a careful process in which the modules were read, analyzed and unpacked; necessary revisions were made to prepare each module for classroom teachers; and classroom teachers were trained on module concepts and strategies.

In math, an increase has been noted in student fluency with number facts. Through interactive exercises and games, our learners have developed a better sense of numbers and improved ability in solving math problems. This focus on successful problem-solving and real-world applications of mathematical reasoning has led to deeper student understanding.

In literacy, students read more nonfiction during the school day and write a balance of fiction and nonfiction in their curriculum through the year. Increased focus on research reports and literary essays has been augmented with the embedding of reading and writing in science and social studies, from lab and research reports to student-created mini-lectures.

## POINTS OF FALCON PRIDE

### ACADEMICS

- One student named a 2014 National Merit Scholarship Program semifinalist
- 68 students named by College Board as Advanced Placement Scholars, including 17 AP Scholars with Distinction and nine AP Scholars with Honor
- Two high school math teams participated in 2014 Suffolk County Math Tournament
- JFK Intermediate students created bat conservation fundraising campaign and Skyped with scientists in Texas
- Two members of high school's Science Olympiad team medaled at regional competition
- 55 high school students inducted into National Honor Society
- Technology students won Long Island's annual championship pumpkin catapult contest
- Two middle school students won Town of Babylon Veterans Awareness Week student essay contest
- High school science team competed in Stony Brook University Protein Modeling Challenge

### ATHLETICS

- Four outstanding senior student-athletes signed National Letters of Intent for collegiate play
- Eight fall and seven winter squads named New York State Scholar/Athlete teams
- Varsity girls tennis team won League IV championship, with three players earning All-League status
- Varsity boys basketball team were League IV champions and advanced to playoff finals, with player named 1st Team All-Long Island as well as League and LI Player of the Year
- JV football and wrestling teams earned coveted league Sportsmanship Awards for fair play
- Falconettes kickline team placed first at LIKA Championships and Nationals Tournament
- Junior varsity volleyball team enjoyed undefeated 17-0 season
- Varsity boys track team competed at 32nd annual Yale Interscholastic Track Classic at Yale University

### ARTS

- District again named a Best Community for Music Education by NAMM Foundation
- One student-musician performed in All-State Ensemble and six performed in All-County Ensembles
- High school student's artwork selected for Long Island's Best Young Artists show
- Four students selected for Long Island String Festival and one named top-ranked high school viola player in Suffolk County
- Two high school photography students named "Best in Show" at Long Island Media Arts Show
- 14 JFK Intermediate fifth-grade students accepted to Eugene Reichenthal Recorder Festival
- High school chorus sang in New York Lottery video contest
- District hosted successful Theatre in Our Schools conference



# EXPENDITURES

## 2014-2015 PROPOSED BUDGET

	PRESENT 2013-2014 BUDGET	PROPOSED 2014-2015 BUDGET	PERCENT CHANGE
<b>GENERAL SUPPORT</b>			
BOE/ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	\$66,666	\$66,631	-0.05%
CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	298,062	305,327	2.44%
FINANCE	1,058,875	1,090,123	2.95%
STAFF	531,219	525,803	-1.02%
CENTRAL SERVICES	6,726,989	6,741,224	0.21%
SPECIAL ITEMS (BOCES, MTA Payroll Tax, Insurance)	901,481	944,870	4.81%
<b>TOTAL GENERAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$9,583,292</b>	<b>\$9,673,978</b>	<b>0.95%</b>
<b>INSTRUCTION</b>			
ADMINISTRATION & IMPROVEMENT	\$3,854,562	\$3,911,332	1.47%
TEACHING	32,024,304	32,320,842	0.68%
SPECIAL APPORTIONMENT PROGRAMS	12,971,765	13,096,046	0.96%
SPECIAL SCHOOLS	56,900	54,383	-4.42%
INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA	2,315,409	2,305,440	-0.43%
PUPIL SERVICES	6,346,921	6,461,120	1.80%
<b>TOTAL INSTRUCTION</b>	<b>\$57,569,861</b>	<b>\$58,149,163</b>	<b>1.01%</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
<b>TOTAL PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$4,329,241</b>	<b>\$4,329,276</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>			
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$28,420,084	\$30,062,794	5.78%
INTERFUND TRANSFERS	660,000	660,000	0.00%
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$29,080,084</b>	<b>\$30,722,794</b>	<b>5.65%</b>
<b>DEBT SERVICES</b>			
<b>TOTAL DEBT SERVICES</b>	<b>\$3,108,068</b>	<b>\$3,054,153</b>	<b>-1.73%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$103,670,546</b>	<b>\$105,929,364</b>	<b>2.18%</b>



## ESTIMATED REVENUES

ACCOUNT NAME	2013-2014 BUDGET	2014-2015 PROPOSED
PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES	\$4,194,709	\$4,256,525
LOCAL REVENUES	\$3,599,780	\$3,629,600
STATE AID TOTAL	\$24,948,353	\$26,440,030
USE OF RESERVES	\$968,137	\$705,000
FUND BALANCE	\$4,500,000	\$4,000,000
TAX LEVY	\$65,459,567	\$66,898,209
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$103,670,546</b>	<b>\$105,929,364</b>

## 2014-2015 ESTIMATED TAX LEVY/RATE

Expenditures .....	\$105,929,364
Revenues .....	\$34,326,155
Use of Fund Balance .....	\$4,000,000
Use of Reserves .....	\$705,000
Tax Levy .....	\$66,898,209
<b>Tax Levy % Increase .....</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
Projected 2014-2015 Tax Rate .....	\$196.90
Present 2013-2014 Tax Rate .....	\$190.59
Tax Rate Increase .....	\$6.31
Estimated Tax Rate % Increase .....	3.31%



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## ON YOUR BALLOT

### PROPOSITION II ELECTION OF THREE BOARD OF EDUCATION TRUSTEES

- Alfred Centamore (Incumbent)     Donna Gulli Grunseich (Incumbent)     Anthony Camodeo  
 Jerry Jean-Pierre     Kristine Rosales

### PROPOSITION III SALE OF WASHINGTON SCHOOL

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to sell the Washington School for a sale price of no less than \$5,000,000?

- \$6.5 Million Proposed Sale
- Property Revitalization and Beautification
- Increased Revenues to Offset Future Tax Levies
- Addition of New Community Building & Playground

## FAQs

**Q: What are a school district budget's main components?**

A: There are two accounting segments that comprise the district budget—expenditures and revenues. Expenditures are calculated for instruction, central services, transportation and other categories listed in the “Expenditures” chart. The district derives revenue to fund expenditures from the tax levy, state aid, payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) from Suffolk County for businesses operating in Deer Park, interest on account balances, BOCES reimbursements and related services as seen on the “Estimated Revenues” chart. The budget must be structured to balance expenditures with anticipated revenues.

**Q: What is the difference between the tax levy and the tax rate?**

A: The tax levy is the amount of money the Board of Education requests from the Town of Babylon in order to balance the budget after state aid and other revenues are taken into consideration. The tax rate is not set by the Board of Education. The town assessor calculates the assessed valuation of the properties in the Town of Babylon from which the tax rate is calculated. It is important to note that the tax levy limit applies only to the school district's tax levy, not the tax rate or an individual tax bill.

**Q: What happens if the budget is defeated?**

A: Should voters defeat the proposed budget on May 20, the budget may be presented for one more vote prior to July. If the Board opts not to have a second vote, it can immediately adopt a contingency budget, which would force the district to operate with a zero percent tax levy increase under the state's tax cap law. If a second proposed budget is defeated, the district must, by law, adopt at zero percent.

**Q: What is the impact of the new tax freeze announced by New York State?**

A: For school district budgets that stay at or below the state's tax levy cap, like Deer Park's proposed budget, homeowners who are eligible for the income-based STAR exemption will receive offsetting rebate checks from the government for the amount that their school taxes rose.

## VOTER INFORMATION

### Voter Eligibility and Registration:

Deer Park residents are urged to vote in all school district elections. To cast your ballot in the May 20 budget vote and Board trustee election you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- 18 years of age or older (we encourage eligible students to exercise their right to vote)
- A resident of the Deer Park School District for 30 days prior to vote
- Registered to vote with the Suffolk County Board of Elections, or registered with the school district

**Registration is required if you have not voted within four years in a general election or school election.** Registration will be held on:

- Thursday, May 8, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at John Quincy Adams Primary School
- Monday, May 12, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and 4-8 p.m. at Deer Park High School
- Thursday, May 15, 4-8 p.m. at May Moore Primary School

For more information, or to obtain an application for an absentee ballot, contact the district clerk at 631-274-4013 or visit the district's website, [www.deerparkschools.org](http://www.deerparkschools.org), to download a form.

## BUDGET HEARING

The community is encouraged to attend the public budget hearing on Tuesday, May 6, at 7:30 p.m. at the district office boardroom located at 1881 Deer Park Ave.



John Gouskos, President • Keith Rooney, Vice President  
Al Centamore • Donna Marie Elliott • Donna Gulli Grunseich  
Robert Marino  
Lisa Brennan, District Clerk  
Eva J. Demyen, Superintendent of Schools