



Webster

Students First. District Proud.

Webster Central School District

Budget Newsletter 2024

WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT?

The impact on taxpayers

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BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

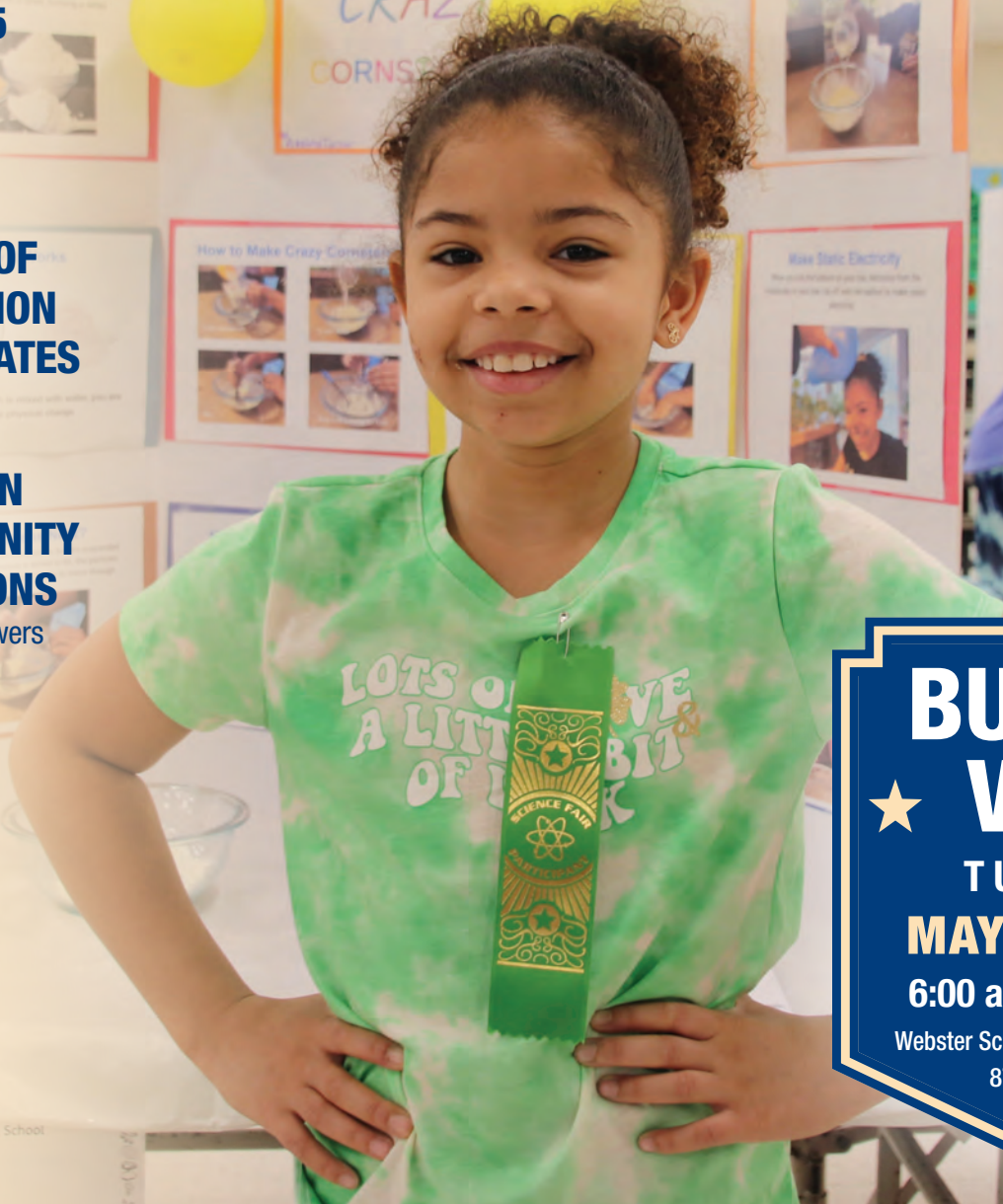
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COMMON COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

and the answers

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YOUR VOTE MATTERS!



BUDGET VOTE

TUESDAY

MAY 21, 2024

6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Webster Schroeder High School Gym

875 Ridge Road



Elementary School

Grade 4



2024-25 SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE AND BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION

Dear One Webster Community,

Webster Central School District's (WCSD) Board of Education and administration invites our community to review the proposed \$211,006,070 budget for the 2024-25 school year as detailed in our annual budget newsletter. On Tuesday, May 21, WCSD eligible voters are encouraged to exercise their right to vote on the proposed budget and elect two board of education candidates at Webster Schroeder High School's gym, 875 Ridge Road. Polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

WCSD is pleased to present a budget that maintains all academic and extracurricular programs for nearly 8,100 students. The proposed 2024-25 spending plan is tax cap compliant for the 13th consecutive year. Additionally, our district's budget planning process always includes invaluable feedback from you, our community members. Once again this year, WCSD released an online *ThoughtExchange* that was open throughout January 2024. We continue to be appreciative of your input, as it plays a critical role in the development of a spending plan that reflects your priorities for all students, staff, and families.

As a reminder, you do not need to be a registered voter to cast your ballot, but you do need to be a WCSD resident with proper identification. We look forward to seeing you at Webster Schroeder High School on Tuesday, May 21, for the annual budget vote and board of education election.

In addition to this newsletter, please be sure to visit our website for even more budget-related information at websterschools.org/budget. Thank you for taking the time to review this year's newsletter as we prepare for the 2024-25 school year.

Janice Richardson
President, WCSD Board of Education

Brian Neenan
Superintendent of Schools



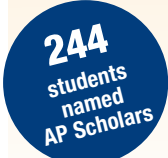
Why We're Proud to Be



- 154 students were selected to **perform in honor ensembles** in Monroe County, NYSSMA Zone 2, Area and Conference All-State.
- 183 students submitted a total of 373 pieces of work and were recognized with 162 awards as regional winners of the prestigious **2024 Scholastic Arts and Writing Competition**. Those awards included 44 Gold Keys, which are being juried for national awards announced in June.
- Along with participating in the Urban-Suburban program Interdistrict Transfer Program since 2016, WCSD also:
 - Sustains a **community partner-supported system** of building-based Equity & Inclusivity Teams. The teams coordinate with building and district level leaders to drive student leadership development, inclusive education, restorative practices, family engagement, and the regular recognition and celebration of diverse cultures and traditions.
 - Collaboratively promotes the **integration of student services**, supports, and interventions with rigorous instruction through the building of clear and responsive multi-tiered systems of supports that drive success for all learners.
- 98% of WCSD's varsity athletic teams earned **Scholar Athlete recognition** during the 2022-23 school year, which requires a team average GPA for 75% of the roster be greater than or equal to 90%.
- WCSD is in the eighth year of its **1:1 student device initiative** that provides all students with an assigned electronic device that can be brought back and forth to school. The initiative supports ongoing efforts to promote equitable access to increase learning opportunities, engagement, collaboration, and creativity.
 - This initiative also offers high school students the opportunity to work as customer service and technology repair representatives for their peers as part of the Webster Technical Internship program. Students may also receive certification from Dell as part of their training.
- The **WCSD technology program** offers 18 courses in career pathways, such as architecture, automotive, manufacturing, visual communications, and engineering. These courses meet the needs of all students: those planning to attend college and those wanting to enter the workforce/apprenticeship. The engineering pathway includes four courses from the nationally acclaimed Project Lead the Way program. In six of the technology courses students can earn college credit in partnership with Monroe Community College and the Rochester Institute of Technology.



WCSD has been honored 19 times by the NAMM Foundation as one of the Best Communities for Music Education in the United States.



- Webster students continue to excel in the **College Board's Advanced Placement** courses of study. In 2023, WCSD scored an average of 3.22 out of a possible 5 on AP exams.

WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT?

DISTRICT BUDGET

WHAT THE BUDGET MEANS TO YOU

Proposed Budget

\$211,006,070

 **3.21%** Budget Increase

13th straight year
proposed budget is
tax cap compliant

Estimated Tax Rate Per \$1,000 Assessment			
Town	2023-24 Tax Rates	Estimated 2024-25 Tax Rate	Percent Change
Webster	\$27.68	\$28.41	2.61%
Penfield	\$17.08	\$16.98	-0.60%
Ontario	\$19.40	\$19.72	1.66%
Walworth	\$19.88	\$20.26	1.92%

For more information on estimated 2024-25 tax rates, please visit websterschools.org/budget. Final tax rates will be set in August and are subject to change pending final assessments and equalization rates.

Proposition #1 - School Bus Purchases

Authorization to Purchase School Buses

Approval of Proposition #1 authorizes the expenditure of \$1,200,000 for the purchase of five (5) front-engine 66-passenger capacity buses and two (2) 30-passenger minibuses, that are wheelchair accessible. The overall proposition is \$400,000 less than last year. The lesser amount is based on the following changes. First, WCSD recommends purchasing five (5) fewer 66-passenger buses in 2024-25 in an effort to right size the fleet based on last year's transportation audit recommendation, also impacted by the reduced number of available drivers. Additionally, it was not possible to source a 30-passenger, wheelchair accessible minibus last year that would normally be purchased on a yearly basis. Current prices of minibuses have substantially increased and are now the same price as a full-size bus. First payments on these buses



will be made in the 2025-26 fiscal year. When new buses arrive in the summer, WCSD surpluses the correspondingly aged buses.

Buses are financed over a five-year period and are eligible for state aid based on a transportation formula of approximately 70%.

Transportation Limits

The 2024-25 budget proposal maintains funding for the district's current transportation limits of .25 miles for elementary (K-5) students and .70 miles for secondary (6-12) students. New York State standards are set at two miles for elementary students and three miles for secondary students.

 **Elect TWO individuals to the board of education.**
Learn more about the candidates on page 6.

Understanding the Terminology

A **TAX LEVY** represents the total amount of money the district will collect from local property owners to support the budget. It is calculated after taking into account all other revenues, including financial support from local, state, and federal governments. WCSD's proposed 2024-25 levy is \$123,609,680. This amount will be reduced in August by the amount of re-levies that the town and county will provide in early July.

The **TAX RATE** – or the amount to be charged per \$1,000 of assessed property value – is figured by dividing the tax levy into the total assessed value of a district. The tax rate is finalized in August after towns finalize their assessments and New York State sets equalization rates which equalize the tax burden among towns. Then, the board of education sets the final tax rates for each of the four municipalities that make up the district. The rate publicized now is an estimate and may change due to assessments and equalization rates.

TAX BILLS – the final amount that each homeowner pays can vary depending on individual assessments and each town's final tax rate. Taxpayers may see their bills go up by more than the estimated figure that is released now while others may see their tax bills go up by less. In that situation, the district is not collecting more taxes. Rather, it is a reallocation of the tax burden to take into account shifting property values.

EQUALIZATION RATES - An equalization rate is New York State's measure of a municipality's level of assessment. In order to distribute school district or county taxes among multiple municipalities, the level of assessment of each municipality must be equalized to full market value. Once the full market value of each municipality is determined, the school district or county can determine

how much in taxes should be collected from each municipality. Most of the state's more than 700 school districts distribute their taxes among segments of several municipalities, many of which have different levels of assessment. The number of municipal segments in a school district ranges from one to as many as 15. Webster CSD has four towns that all have varying degrees of equalization rates that change from year to year.

"TAX CAP" LAW IS NOT A 2 PERCENT LIMIT

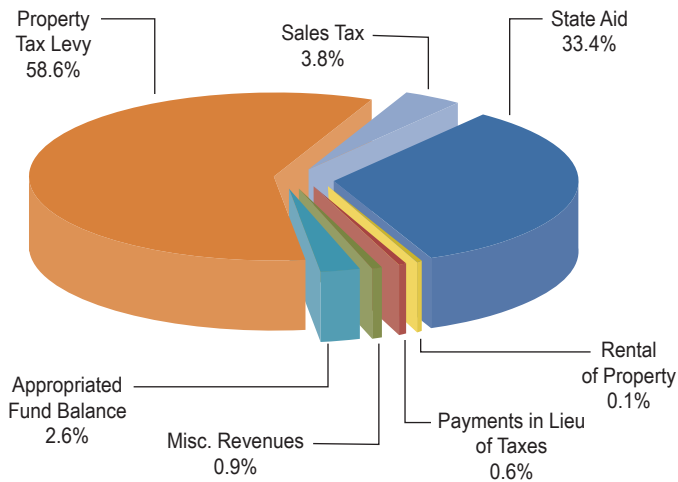
New York's property tax levy "cap," signed into law in June 2011 has often been referred to as a "2 percent cap" on taxes by some people. However, the new law does not restrict any school district's proposed tax levy increase to 2 percent—or any other amount. Instead, the legislation requires each district in the state to calculate its own tax levy limit to determine what level of voter support is necessary for budget approval.

The figure "2 percent" (or the rate of inflation, if less) is just one of eight variables that factor into each district's calculation of what is called a "tax levy limit".

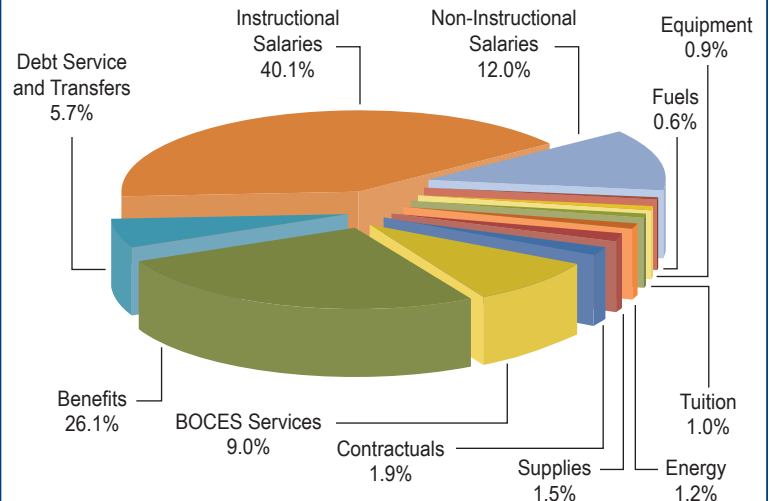
Districts then add to that amount portions of the tax levy that are not subject to the "cap". These include taxes levied to cover capital expenditures and a small portion of pension costs. What has been referred to as a cap is really a "tax levy limit plus exclusions".

For Webster, the tax levy limit plus exclusions for 2024-25 is \$123,609,680, a 3.30% increase compared to the current year tax levy. Based on the law, this represents the maximum allowable tax levy Webster can propose while requiring the support of a simple majority of voters (50 percent +1) for budget approval.

Where District Revenue Comes From



Webster CSD Expenses



Highlights of 2024-25 Proposed Spending Plan

- Tax cap compliant
- Maintains all current programs, including previously budgeted staff and programs:
 - Elementary class size reduction continued where possible
 - Funding for centralized cultural arts/enrichment programs
 - Increase in professional development funding
 - Positions for special education continuum K-12
 - English as a New Language (ENL) staffing increase as mandated
 - Response to Intervention (RTI) funding
 - Increased centralized funding for instructional departments
 - Additional funding for co-curricular and athletics programs
 - Running elective classes with smaller student numbers
 - Instructional specialists
 - Encore (computer literacy) program at elementary schools
- Adding four full-time special education teachers for 2024-25 school year
- Additional funding for students with disabilities placed in BOCES or other out-of-district programs
- Continuing to invest in network upgrades to keep up with demand

What Happens if the Webster Central School District Budget is Defeated?

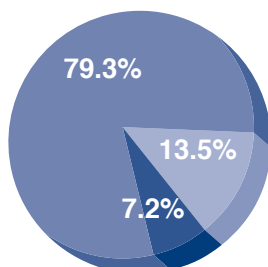
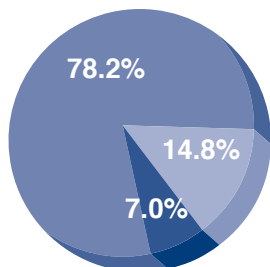
If the 2024-25 budget is not approved by a simple majority, the board of education must decide whether to offer the same or a revised budget for a second vote. If the budget is not approved after a second vote, the district must adopt a contingency budget. Under the new law that passed along with the tax cap in 2011, WCSD must adopt a contingency budget that reduces the tax levy to the same amount as the prior year. WCSD may reduce expenditures or fund additional revenues to make up the \$3,948,880 in lost tax revenue.

Breaking it Down – the Three-Part Budget

Total Budget: \$211,006,070

Current
2023-24
Three-Part
Budget

Proposed
2024-25
Three-Part
Budget



● ADMINISTRATIVE
● PROGRAM
● CAPITAL

7.2%
of budget

Administrative \$15,205,444

The Administrative component of the proposed 2024-25 budget provides for overall general support and management activities of WCSD, including BOCES' administrative costs, the district clerk and superintendent's office, board of education (members serve without pay), district central office and all associated costs.

79.3%
of budget

Program \$167,264,813

The Program component of the proposed 2024-25 budget provides funding for the instruction of and educational support for all WCSD students, including transportation.

13.5%
of budget

Capital \$28,535,813

The Capital component of the proposed 2024-25 budget provides funding for all costs related to facilities' maintenance, debt services, and transfers to capital funds.

Webster Central School District 2024-25 Budget Notice

	Budget Adopted for 2023-24 School Year	Budget Proposed for 2024-25 School Year	Contingency Budget for 2024-25 School Year*
Total Budgeted Amount	\$204,438,730	\$211,006,070	\$208,907,943
Increase/Decrease for the 2024-25 School Year		\$6,567,340	\$4,469,214
Percentage Increase in Each Proposed Budget		3.21%	2.19%
Change in Consumer Price Index		4.12%	
A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$119,660,800	\$123,609,680	
B. Tax 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)	\$119,660,800	\$123,609,680	3.30%
F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$2,964,185	\$3,400,723	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$116,696,615	\$120,208,957	
H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, Excluding Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D)	\$116,696,615	\$120,208,957	
I. Difference: (G - H); (negative value requires 60.0% voter approval)**	\$ -	\$ -	
Administrative Component	\$14,369,106	\$15,205,444	\$14,655,444
Program Component	\$159,861,149	\$167,264,813	\$165,964,813
Capital Component	\$30,208,475	\$28,535,813	\$28,287,686

*The contingency budget is based upon the following assumptions: The required tax levy will default to the previous year's tax levy allowing for reductions in appropriations to allow for some expenses such as, legally prohibited expenses for the purchase of equipment, confidential employee salary increases, public use of facilities, allocations to the repair reserve fund are excluded. The actual changes in appropriations under a contingency budget would be determined by the board of education should this be necessary.

** List separate propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with propositions not eligible for exclusion may affect property tax levy limit and voter approval requirements)

BASIC STAR EXEMPTION IMPACT

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings*

	Budget Proposed for the 2024-25 School Year
Basic STAR Tax Savings	\$538.00

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2024-25 by the qualified voters of the Webster Central School District, Monroe County, New York will be held at Webster Schroeder High School in said district on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 9:00 P.M. prevailing time in the Webster Schroeder High School at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting machine.

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

Description	Amount
Proposition #1 - School Buses	\$1,200,000

To review Webster CSD's Property Tax Report Card, please visit the district's website, websterschools.org/budget.

Board of Education Candidates

Community residents will be asked to elect two (2) individuals for three (3) year terms beginning July 1, 2024. Board members serve without pay and are listed in the order they will appear on the ballot.

1. Jeffrey McCaffrey

1140 Frawley Drive, Webster, NY 14580
(585) 329-9725

SPOUSE: Kimberly McCaffrey

CHILDREN: Jonathan (Webster Schroeder Class of 2023), Erin (11th grade, Webster Schroeder)



EDUCATION:

- Bachelor of Science, Business Administration (Nazareth College)
- Master of Science, Management (Nazareth College)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- 30+ years in the business field, spending the last 25+ in management (specializing in project management) in various industries including medical, manufacturing, distribution, retail, and mass transportation.

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:

- President, Webster Youth Sports Council (2021-current)
- Director, North Coast Boys Basketball (2018-current)
- Coach and board member, Webster Travel Baseball (2014-2019)
- As a school board member, I will bring my business, parent, coaching, and community involvement background to provide a unique perspective on the board with the goal to further evolve the foundational place the Webster School District plays in our community and the lives of our students, community members, and educators.



2. Michele Lowes

549 Adams Rd, Webster, NY 14580
(585) 545-1522

CHILDREN: Isabel (Webster Thomas High School Class of 2020), Kai (Class of 2028)



EDUCATION:

- The Council of Quality and Leadership (CQL)
- Bachelor of Psychology, SUNY Brockport, 2012
- Associate in Human Services, Monroe Community College, 1995
- Webster Thomas graduate, 1993

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Local Director, Person Centered Services, 2018-present
- Associate Director, Service Coordination and Children's Health Home, Heritage Christian Services, 1995-2018

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:

- Webster resident over 20 years
- Isaiah House hospice volunteer
- Women's leadership mentor
- Volunteer activities: Day of Caring, Habitat for Humanity, Heart of Dance

School Tax Relief (STAR) Program

The School Tax Relief (STAR) program offers property tax relief to eligible New York State homeowners.

If you are eligible and enrolled in the STAR program, you'll receive your benefit each year in one of two ways:

1. STAR credit check. If you are registered for the STAR credit, the tax department will send you a STAR check in the mail each year. You can use the check to pay your school taxes. You can receive the STAR credit if you own your home and it's your primary residence and the combined income of the owners and the owners' spouses is \$500,000 or less.
2. STAR exemption: a reduction on your school tax bill. If you've been receiving the STAR exemption since 2015, you can continue to receive it for the same primary residence. As long as you remain eligible, you'll see a reduction on your school tax bill for the amount of your STAR exemption. Note: The STAR exemption is no longer available to new homeowners. Additional information can be found at the following link: tax.ny.gov/star/.

Common Community Questions

How big is the Webster Central School District?

The Webster Central School District is the second largest suburban school district in Monroe County and among the 25 largest in New York State outside New York City.

Student enrollment (PreK-12) for 2023-24 as reported to the State's Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) is 8,088.

WCSD employs 914 professional staff and 763 support staff. There are 11 schools in the district.



How does WCSD compare to other Monroe County districts in terms of True Tax Rate?

WCSD ranks second lowest among Monroe County School Districts for True Value Tax Rate. The average for Monroe County was \$20.44, with Webster being at \$16.06. That is \$4.38 less per thousand than the rest of the county.*

*Data from Monroe County School Boards Association, "Facts & Figures", January 2024

How do WCSD's per pupil costs compare to other school districts in New York State?

Webster's per pupil expenditures are below county and state averages.**

School	Webster	County Average	Statewide Average
Per Pupil Expenditure	\$19,513	\$20,731	\$25,870

**These are the most recent per pupil expenditures as provided by New York State School Report Card for Fiscal Responsibility based on 2021-22 expenditure ratios.



What is the 2024-25 Capital Outlay Project? Why is the district transferring \$100,000 to the capital fund?

WCSD would normally spend these funds from the maintenance budget. This transfer allows the district to maintain small facilities' projects and become eligible for New York State building aid. The State will now reimburse WCSD at 75% of the original \$100,000 cost, turning \$100,000 worth of repairs into a greatly reduced \$25,000 cost to the district. For 2024-25, the district will focus on ADA compliance at Webster Schroeder High School's main entrance.

What can district residents do to help with the budget process?

One Webster community members are invited to complete an online budget ThoughtExchange every January. *ThoughtExchange* is a collaborative, online discussion platform that is used to gain insights and feedback from our community as we make decisions that impact all of us. Your feedback helped in the development of a budget that reflects the Webster CSD community's thoughts and input for our students. We appreciate everyone's input.

The *ThoughtExchange* asked, "What are the most important things to consider as we begin to plan for our upcoming budget?" The exchange opened January 3 and closed January 31. The summary report contains our community's feedback regarding this question and can be reviewed at websterschools.org/budget.

BUDGET VOTE

TUESDAY
MAY 21, 2024

6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Webster Schroeder High School Gym
875 Ridge Road



Absentee Ballots

Qualified voters of the district who will be unable to attend the polls on the day of the vote, for reasons outlined on the absentee ballot application, may wish to use an absentee ballot. Voters must apply for the ballot in advance. Absentee ballot applications are available at websterschools.org or from District Clerk Heather Murphy, 119 South Avenue, Webster, (585) 216-0001.

Early Voter

Qualified voters of the district may wish to use an early voter ballot. Voters must apply for the ballot in advance. Early voter ballot applications are available at websterschools.org or from District Clerk Heather Murphy, 119 South Avenue, Webster, (585) 216-0001.

All absentee and early voter ballot applications must be RECEIVED by the district clerk at least seven business days prior to the vote if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter or the day before the vote if the ballot is to be picked up personally by the voter.

Voter Eligibility

- Be a resident of the Webster Central School District 30 days prior to the vote*
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be at least 18 years of age

* Proof of residency is required

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WEBSTER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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VOTE** ★ ★
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Webster Schroeder High School Gym
875 Ridge Road
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For more information regarding the proposed 2024-25 budget and board of education candidates, please visit websterschools.org/budget (or scan the QR code).

