

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ Budget Summary
- ▶ Bus Purchase Proposition
- ▶ Voter Information

# VOTE

**May 19, 2026**  
**12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**  
**Walter B. Howard**  
**Elementary School Gymnasium**

## 2026–2027 BUDGET SUMMARY

**Proposed Budget:**  
\$16,054,977

**Tax Levy Increase:** 6%

## School Board Election

Voters will be asked to select two candidates for the Board of Education. Alex Polacinski and Sharon Powers are running for reelection. You can also vote for write-in candidates. They are non-paid terms.

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**Check out the budget section on our website:**  
<https://www.newlebanoncsd.org/>



## 2026-2027 SCHOOL BUDGET:

### Our District Urges the Community to Get Out and Vote

It continues to be an honor to serve as superintendent of the New Lebanon Central School District. This is a special community, and our students, teachers, and staff continue to make all of us proud throughout the year. This year, we have seen that spirit in action across all grade levels. Our young readers at Walter B. Howard had the wonderful opportunity to host award-winning author and illustrator Mika Song for a day of collaborative storytelling and drawing. At the High School level, our Travel Club recently returned from a meaningful journey through Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, and Austria, covering over 2,000 kilometers. Our students explored history firsthand, from ancient castles to the lasting lessons of the past. We are also looking forward to a project taking shape in the courtyard at Walter B. Howard, where students in Mrs. Griffith's and Mr. Albrecht's classes will soon be planting berry bushes, pumpkins, and a "chaos garden" designed to attract butterflies. It is going to be a wonderful living classroom for our students.

Last year's budget process was a difficult one for all of us. The community made its voice heard, and the Board of Education and district leadership took that seriously. We have spent this year working carefully to bring forward a budget that reflects what we heard.

Over the past two school years, the district has eliminated nine teaching positions, representing about 16% of our teaching staff. These reductions included elementary classroom teachers, physical education, business education, special education, reading support, and our school psychologist. These were hard decisions made to help manage costs while doing our best to protect the core needs of our students.

The proposed 2026-2027 budget is \$16,054,977, a 4.07% increase over the current year. This increase reflects general inflation, ongoing instructional costs, and uncertainty around final state aid. The Board has adopted a 6% tax levy increase to support this budget while maintaining enough fund balance in reserve to help with future years. Because this levy is above the state tax cap of 4.32%, the budget requires 60% voter approval to pass. This is important to keep in mind as you head to the polls on May 19.

The budget process this year followed the same careful steps as in past years. Beginning in January, the Board reviewed facilities, food service, instructional programs, transportation, and special education. In the months that followed, the focus shifted to state aid, the tax levy limit, and the district's long-range financial outlook. On April 21, the Board adopted the final budget.

The budget vote and Board of Education election will be on Tuesday, May 19, 2026. Polling hours are 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Walter B. Howard Elementary School Gymnasium.

If the proposed budget is defeated twice, the district must adopt a contingent budget. State law requires a contingent budget to carry a 0% tax levy increase, which would create an estimated \$983,651 budget gap. Closing that gap would mean eliminating equipment, supplies, extracurricular programs, athletics, and field trips. These are experiences our students count on, and we want to protect them.

On behalf of the Board of Education, our students, faculty, and staff, thank you for your continued support of the New Lebanon Central School District.

Sincerely,  
Christopher M. Harper  
*Interim Superintendent*

# 2026–27 Detailed Budget

## BUDGET SUMMARY

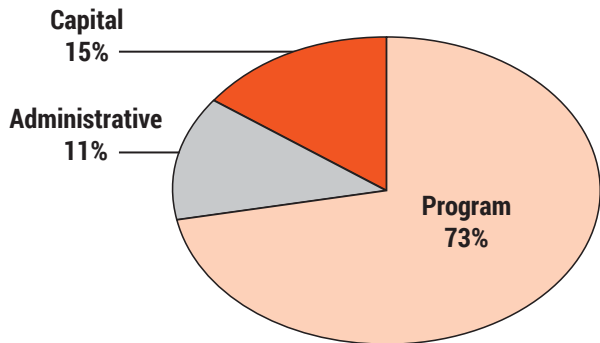
Category	2025-2026	Proposed Budget 2026-2027	Difference
Special Education	\$1,829,261.00	\$1,837,479.00	\$8,218.00
Employee Benefits	\$4,559,201.00	\$4,725,797.00	\$166,596.00
Instruction	\$4,765,752.00	\$4,632,296.00	-\$133,456.00
Transportation	\$841,574.00	\$942,462.00	\$100,888.00
Operations and Maintenance	\$990,077.00	\$1,209,861.00	\$219,784.00
General Support	\$943,069.00	\$1,165,364.00	\$222,295.00
Co-Curricular and Athletics	\$155,400.00	\$175,400.00	\$20,000.00
Debt Service	\$1,125,486.00	\$1,126,448.00	\$962.00
Information Technology	\$187,979.00	\$119,870.00	-\$68,109.00
Interfund Transfers	\$30,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$90,000.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$15,427,799.00</b>	<b>\$16,054,977.00</b>	<b>\$627,178.00</b>

## REVENUE SUMMARY

Category	2025-2026	Proposed Budget 2026-2027	Difference
Non Tax Revenue	\$309,000	\$329,000	\$20,000
State Aid	\$3,897,515	\$4,009,660	\$112,145
Tax Levy	\$10,732,666	\$11,376,626	\$643,960
Fund Balance	\$400,993	\$339,691	-\$61,302
ERS Reserve	\$37,625	\$0	-\$37,625
Debt Service Fund	\$50,000	\$0	-\$50,000
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$15,427,799</b>	<b>\$16,054,977</b>	<b>\$627,178</b>

## 3 PART BUDGET

Component	Amount	Percentage
Program	\$11,796,222	73%
Administrative	\$1,831,946	11%
Capital	\$2,426,809	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,054,977</b>	<b>100%</b>



## NEW LEBANON CSD BUDGET NOTICE

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2025-26 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-2027 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2026-27 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 15,427,799	\$16,054,977	\$15,411,017
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$627,178	-\$16,782
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		4.07%	-0.01
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.00%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$10,732,666	\$11,376,626	
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$0	\$0	
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$0	\$0	
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$0	\$0	
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$10,732,666	\$11,376,626	\$10,732,666
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$504,434	\$685,747	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$9,843,250	\$10,510,523	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$10,228,232	\$10,690,879	
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval – See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	-\$384,982	-\$180,356	
Administrative Component	\$1,997,954	\$1,831,946	\$1,510,966
Program Component	\$11,322,782	\$11,796,222	\$11,573,242
Capital Component	\$2,107,063	\$2,426,809	\$2,326,809
<p>* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2026-27 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.</p> <p>The contingency budget administrative percentage will not exceed the prior year's percentage, the budget will require a reduction in all equipment, supplies, and professional development. The Tax levy decrease will be offset by extracurricular, sports and program reductions.</p> <p>** 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)</p>			

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings <sup>1</sup>	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year
Town of Canaan	\$373
Town of Chatham	\$369
Town of Nassau	\$306
Town of New Lebanon	\$373
Town of Stephentown	\$313

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2026-27 by the qualified voters of the New Lebanon Central school district, Columbia County, New York, will be held at Walter B Howard school(s) in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 between the hours of 12:00 pm and 8:00pm, prevailing time in the Elementary school, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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

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Michael Brutsch, *President*  
William Buckenroth  
Racheal Chubb  
John Kalisz, *Vice President*  
Robert Long  
Alex Polacinski  
Sharon Powers

*The Board of Education meets once a month at 7:00 p.m. Please visit our website for specific dates.*

[www.newlebanoncsd.org/district/boe](http://www.newlebanoncsd.org/district/boe)

**SUPERINTENDENT**

Christopher Harper

*Produced by Questar III Communications Service*

**POSTAL PATRON**

**BUDGET VOTE & BOARD ELECTION**

**May 19, 2026**

**12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

Walter B. Howard Elementary  
School Gymnasium

**Estimated Tax Payer Impact with Proposed 6% Increase  
(2026-2027)**

Full Value	<u>SENIOR/STAR</u> \$86,100 Equalized Value Exemption Income Restrictions*		<u>WITH STAR</u> \$30,000 Equalized Value Exemption Primary Residence		<u>NO STAR</u> Non-Primary Residence	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
\$220,000	\$ 81	\$ 6.75	\$ 115	\$ 9.58	\$ 133	\$ 11.08
270,000	111	9.25	145	12.08	164	13.67
320,000	142	11.83	176	14.67	194	16.17
370,000	172	14.33	206	17.17	224	18.67
420,000	202	16.83	236	19.67	255	21.25

**Bus Purchase Proposition**

On May 19, 2026, New Lebanon residents will vote on a proposition to bond new school buses. Bonding allows the district to finance the buses over several years, receiving state aid reimbursement to minimize the impact on local taxpayers.

**Voting Information**

**Voter Eligibility:** You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age or older and a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.