

GOUVERNEUR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
 BOARD OF EDUCATION
 GOUVERNEUR NEW YORK 13642
 ANNUAL BUDGET HEARING AND VOTE

MAY 12, 2025
 MAY 20, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The ANNUAL BUDGET HEARING of the qualified voters of the Gouverneur Central School District was called to order by Chairperson Lisa Sheen on May 12, 2025 at 5:30 p.m., in the High School Auditorium, leading those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustees Present: Todd E. Bates, Dr. William Cartwright, David Fenlong, Lisa McGregor, Laura Spicer.

Trustees Absent: Brooke Bush, Nickolas Ormasen, Laurie Roberts.

Also Present: Jacquelyn L. Kelly, Superintendent of Schools; Dale R. Munn Jr., Business Manager; Cory Wood, Executive Director of Operations and Personnel; Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk.

Chairperson Sheen announced that polls will be open in the High School Auditorium from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on May 20, 2025 for in-person voting. She proceeded to read the ballot items, reminding everyone the ballots are two-sided. One side is for the Election of Board Members with the names of the four candidates who submitted petitions as well as spaces for up to three write-in votes. The other side has the General School Budget proposition.

II. DESIGNATION OF INSPECTORS AND OFFICERS OF ELECTION

The following Inspectors and Officers were appointed by the Board of Education at their meeting on March 17, 2025: Chief Inspector Diane Kelley, and Inspector of Election Judith Poticher. The Assistant Clerk of the Annual District Budget Vote and Election is Kim Shampine.

III. PRESENTATION OF THE 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

Superintendent Jacquelyn L. Kelly explained the three components comprising the 2025-2026 proposed budget of \$47,840,977. The *Administrative Component* includes expenses for the Board of Education, district clerk, Chief School Administrator, business administration, and other similar items. Those expenses stay pretty consistent from year to year, and for 2025-26 represents 12.05% of the total budget, or \$5,764,801, an increase of \$694,171 from the previous year. The *Program Component* is the largest expense at 69.85% of the total budget, or \$33,415,168, an increase of \$1,705,081 from the previous year. The Program Component includes salaries and benefits of teachers, guidance, health services, psychological and social work services, pupil personnel services, co-curricular activities, interscholastic athletics, district transportation services (excluding bus purchases), a new three year contract for transportation with First Student, recreation, youth programs, civic activities, employee benefits attributable to salaries included in this component, transfers to school lunch and special aid funds, and legal services relating to the program component. Finally, the *Capital Component* covers the operation and maintenance of buildings, school bus purchases, debt service, transfers to capital for a \$320,000 capital outlay project for the middle school playground improvement, and debt service funds, tax certiorari, judgments and claims, and employee benefits attributable to salaries included in this component. The total Capital Component comes to \$8,661,008, or 18.10% of the total budget, an increase of \$1,276,725 over the previous year. The tax levy for 2025-2026 is \$7,208,765, an increase of \$142,576, or a 2.02% increase. Mrs. Kelly provided examples of the financial impact on property owners with homes valued at \$60,000 and \$100,000. The net tax increase with Basic STAR is \$5.53 and \$14.01, respectively; and with Enhanced STAR the increase is \$0 and \$4.75, respectively.

The budget also supports the long-term district-wide goals. First, to bring consistency to curriculum decisions across grade levels and provide appropriate professional development to support those curriculum decisions, with a primary focus on developing the foundational skills necessary for students to effectively read and write. Second, to provide social emotional support and academic opportunities necessary for all students to be engaged in school and find success. Finally, to provide a continuum of Special Education services district-wide to support the needs of all our students.

III. PRESENTATION OF THE 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET (CONTINUED)

Mrs. Kelly acknowledged the many stakeholders who shared input to build the budget, and was proud to share the support for the following: Districtwide, items include professional development for Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), social emotional initiatives, summer camps, instructional support specialist, school psychology intern, girls' wrestling, indoor track assistant coach, and a new three-year contract with First Student for student transportation services. She proceeded to break down additional items for each building; included for Gouverneur Elementary is a calming room/in school suspension, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCIS), and a School Resource Officer (SRO). The Middle School has plans for alternative education programming, TCIS support, and a \$320,000 capital outlay project for playground improvement work. Items at the High School include a robust in-house summer school, plans for alternative education programming, and in-house Spanish instruction. She also mentioned that in preparation for the New York State mandated shift to the use of electric vehicles and the district's need to be prepared for that shift, the proposed budget includes the purchase of four new diesel- or gas-powered buses and one new gasoline-powered Suburban. The budget also includes two fully grant-funded electric powered vehicles. This will allow the district to determine the feasibility of using electric vehicles in a district of our size and terrain. Superintendent Kelly recapped that the proposed budget focuses on preserving the strong educational programming, safe and secure environments, and extracurricular activities that our community has supported over the years. This budget also provides for additional academic and social-emotional support for all students. This is a fiscally responsible and educationally sound spending plan that focuses on aligning our budgetary decisions with our mission statement to educate all individuals, in a safe environment, to be passionate learners and responsible citizens in a global society.

IV. CANDIDATES FOR OPEN BOARD SEATS

Current Board Members are David Fenlong, President; Todd Bates, Vice President; Brooke Bush, Dr. William Cartwright, Lisa McGregor, Nickolas Ormasen, Laurie Roberts, and Laura Spicer. Board members whose terms are expiring on June 30, 2025 are Dr. William Cartwright and Mrs. Lisa McGregor. There is also one vacant seat to be filled. Three vacancies will be voted upon; the top three vote-getters will be for three-year full terms commencing July 1, 2025, and expiring on June 30, 2028. Petitions have been filed by four individuals. A drawing was done on April 22 for ballot placement. The candidates are listed in the order they will appear on the ballot: Tina French, Lisa McGregor – Incumbent, William Cartwright – Incumbent, and Logan Buckmaster.

V. COMMENT PERIOD

In response to audience member Tina French, Superintendent Kelly clarified that the SRO for the Elementary School is an additional position so each school building would have one full-time SRO for a total of three.

With no further comments, Chairperson Sheen reminded those in attendance that all residents would receive a copy of the budget postcard in the mail, and the full budget is also available on our website.

VI. RECESS UNTIL POLLS OPEN ON MAY 20, 2025

There being no further business or discussion, Chairperson Lisa Sheen recessed the meeting at 5:45 p.m., until the polls open on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, in the Auditorium beginning at 12:00 p.m.

BUDGET VOTE AND ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

VII. OPENING OF THE POLLS

On Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. local time, Chairperson Lisa Sheen reconvened the annual meeting and declared the polls open for voting. The following Election Inspectors were present: Diane Kelley, Chief Inspector; Judith Poticher, Election Inspector; Tatia Z. Kennedy, Clerk; and Kim Shampine, Assistant Clerk.

VIII. CLOSING OF THE POLLS

After Chairperson Lisa Sheen had ascertained that all who were in the polling place at 8:00 p.m., local time, who wanted to vote had done so, she declared the polls closed.

IX. VOTING AND ELECTION RESULTS

After the votes were tallied, Chairperson Lisa Sheen announced the Voting Results as follows:

A. PROPOSITION ONE: GENERAL SCHOOL BUDGET.

Authorize the Board of Education of the Gouverneur Central School District to expend for General Fund Appropriations a sum of \$47,840,977.00 and to levy the necessary taxes thereof.

PASSED YES - 218 NO - 76

B. ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS:

The top 3 vote-getters are elected for three (3) vacancies with terms of three (3) years (7/1/25 – 6/30/28) to succeed Dr. William Cartwright, Lisa McGregor, and to fill a vacant seat:

#1 – Dr. William Cartwright

#2 – Tina French

#3 – Lisa McGregor

Number of votes received:

Tina French 224

Lisa McGregor 179

Dr. William Cartwright 235

Logan Buckmaster 162

Write-in: 3

D. VOTERS:

Number of Voters Registered 294

Number of Voters Voted 294

Number of Spoiled Ballots 5

Number of Blank or Void Votes 0

Attachments:

Sample Ballot

Oath of Inspectors

Certificate of Inspectors of Election with Absentee/EV Ballot Return and Write-in Candidate Tally

Statement of Canvass

Machine Tapes: open poll; ballots cast/close poll

X. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Chairperson Lisa Sheen declared the Annual Budget Vote and Election of the Residents of the Gouverneur Central School District to be adjourned at 8:32 p.m., local time.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file
Tatia Z. Kennedy, District Clerk