



-  **\$18.6 million budget for the 2017-18 school year**
-  **Selection of TWO Board of Education candidates**
-  **\$118,911 to purchase one bus from the Bus Purchase Reserve Fund**
-  **Approval to appropriate \$70,000 for the St. Johnsville Library to be paid by all OESJ taxpayers**

Community voting will be held from 12 noon to 8 p.m. on May 16. See back page for voting locations and related budget information.

All OESJ families asked to support the Margaret Reaney Memorial Library

Tucked away at 19 Kingsbury Avenue in St. Johnsville is a real community jewel – the Margaret Reaney Memorial Library and Museum.

Built in 1909, the library is used by families throughout the OESJ school district – and yet only six of the eight towns in the school district actually pay for it.

OESJ pays \$70,000 per year to the library. The proposal on the May 16 ballot asks that the \$70,000 be assessed to *all* taxpayers in OESJ, not just those in the six towns.

See All OESJ families asked to pay..., page 2

\$18.6 million school budget will NOT increase taxes for the fourth straight year

The OESJ community will consider an \$18.6 million budget for the 2017-18 school year during voting at the two schools on Tuesday, May 16.

The proposal, which calls for spending \$169,005 *less* than the current school budget, would *again* not increase school taxes in September. In fact, it is the fourth straight year (since 2014) that the tax rate has remained the same. And the 2013 tax rate *declined* by 1 percent.

“We are constantly striving to ensure we offer an array of classes that immerse students in relevant content and expose them to emerging and diverse career paths. Offering a robust program while being fiscally responsible to the community is always our primary duty,” said Superintendent Dave Halloran.

“Our goal is to help all students stretch their potential while with us so that ultimately they graduate from OESJ with the confidence, knowledge, character and skills needed to flourish,” he added.

BUDGET INITIATIVES

Halloran said the budget proposal continues to stress digital literacy skills, Science, Technology and Math (STEM) education and enrichment opportunities.

Currently, students in grades 6-12 are each assigned a Chrome-book laptop com-

puter for their use. “We would eventually like to see that expanded to the younger grades,” Halloran said.

The budget will also add golf as a sports option for students. Bowling, track and cross country were added this year. “We are trying to give students as many options as we can,” he said.

The district plans to introduce Naviance next year, a grades 6-12 guidance program designed to better align student interests with future career opportunities, and key-boarding for students in grades 3 and 4.

In another initiative, older students will serve as peer mentors for younger students, helping to steer them in the right direction toward graduation.

See 2017-18 budget keeps taxes steady for fourth year in a row, page 2



From left, **Karyn Castellano** and **Kaylee Heroth**, grade 3 students in **Travis Heiser's** class, got their first glimpse of robotics with cubelets in **Christine Parry's** technology class. Cubelets are small building blocks connected by magnets and powered by a battery. Some of the cubelets are “thinking cubes” while others perform other functions. Students connect the cubelets to do different things, like light up, move on wheels and spin.

2017-18 budget keeps taxes steady for fourth year in a row

continued from page 1

NEED TO STREAMLINE

Halloran said the proposal “continues to do what we need to do to streamline as an organization and control our costs while still meeting our students’ needs.”

The Oppenheim-Ephratah and St. Johnsville school districts merged in 2013. As state aid related to the merger declines each year, Halloran said the school district must carefully control its spending.

“I would rather take a scalpel to our spending over a number of years than have to take a cleaver to it in one year,” he said.

The budget does include reductions: a half-time Spanish teacher and elementary library media specialist. He said the remaining Spanish teacher will be able to handle the grades 8-12 courses next year and the high school library media specialist will be shared with the elementary school.



All OESJ families asked to pay for Margaret Reaney library

continued from page 1

Figures show that the library is used by all of the families in the eight towns, including Oppenheim residents, for example.

The former St. Johnsville school district paid for the library before the 2013 merger with Oppenheim-Ephratah. This proposal would erase lines between the former districts.

The estimated bill would be as follows for the typical home with a \$50,000 assessment:

- Ephratah – \$14.05 per year**
- Johnstown – \$14.98 per year*
- Oppenheim – \$20.35 per year*
- Manheim – \$16.52 per year**
- Danube – \$13.54 per year**
- Minden – \$11.24 per year**
- Palatine – \$21.71 per year**
- St. Johnsville – \$37.13 per year**

* These two communities do not currently pay for the library.

** Taxpayers in these communities would see library costs decline next year.

An overview of the 2017-18 OESJ budget



Where the money comes from...

	Budgeted 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18	\$ Change '16-17 to '17-18	% of BUDGET
REVENUES				
State Aid	\$13,985,281	\$13,605,653	-\$379,628	73.0%
Property Taxes	\$4,781,849	\$4,781,849	\$0	25.6%
Other	\$57,800	\$208,155	\$150,355	1.1%
Fund Balance	\$0	\$60,268	\$60,268	0.3%
Total Revenue	\$18,824,930	\$18,655,925	-\$169,005	100%



...and where it is spent

	Budgeted 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18	\$ Change '16-17 to '17-18	% of BUDGET
EXPENDITURES				
Instruction	\$8,846,898	\$8,945,215	\$98,317	48.0%
Employee Benefits	\$4,558,045	\$4,737,082	\$179,037	25.4%
General Support*	\$2,582,289	\$2,709,144	\$126,855	14.5%
Pupil Transportation	\$1,158,383	\$1,213,534	\$55,151	6.5%
Debt Service	\$1,679,315	\$1,050,950	-\$628,365	5.6%
Transfer to Capital	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Total Expenditures	\$18,824,930	\$18,655,925	-\$169,005	100%

*District-wide operations such as business, property insurance, operations and maintenance



THREE-PART BUDGET

	Budgeted 2016-17	Proposed 2016-17	\$ Change '16-17 to '17-18	% of BUDGET
Administrative	\$2,202,678	\$2,487,883	\$285,205	13.3%
Program	\$12,899,505	\$13,077,883	\$178,378	70.1%
Capital	\$3,722,747	\$3,090,159	-\$632,588	16.6%
TOTAL	\$18,824,930	\$18,655,925	-\$169,005	100%

Tax questions about the proposed 2017-18 OESJ school budget

Question: How would the proposed budget affect my taxes?

Response: In 2017-18, for the fourth year in a row, the tax rate will not increase. In fact, based on a typical \$50,000 assessment, school tax bills have declined since the 2013 merger. In September, that typical homeowner would pay \$774.50 in school taxes; in September 2015, that bill was \$799; and in September 2013, the school tax bill was \$832. These figures use a true value tax rate combining all seven towns in the school district.

Question: Does the school board's proposed budget plan reflect the state's property tax cap?



Response: Yes. The state's eight-step property tax levy cap formula for Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville yielded a 2017-18 school year property maximum tax levy cap increase of 0.34 percent. The budget proposal calls for a 0 percent tax increase – below the state maximum.

Required NYS School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2016-17 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2017-18 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2017-18 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$18,824,930	\$18,655,925	\$18,383,105
Increase/Decrease for the 2017-18 School Year		-\$169,005	\$-441,825
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		-9%	-2.35%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		1.26%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$4,781,849	\$4,781,849	
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)	\$4,781,849	\$4,781,849	\$4,781,849
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$108,107	\$51,151	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$4,721,876	\$4,747,193	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$4,673,742	\$4,730,698	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$48,134	\$16,495	
Administrative Component	\$2,202,678	\$2,487,883	\$2,487,883
Program Component	\$12,899,505	\$13,077,883	\$13,077,883
Capital Component	\$3,722,747	\$3,090,159	\$2,817,339

* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2017-18 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law. *If the budget were defeated and a contingency budget were adopted, the Board of Education would cut \$272,820 in equipment (for example, the bus purchases, computers and maintenance equipment).*

** 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)

Description	Amount
Proposition #1 Use of Capital Bus Reserve (purchase 65 pass bus)	\$118,911
Proposition #2 Library Tax (entire district)	\$70,000

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2017-18 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings (*The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.*) **\$482.67**

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2017-18 by the qualified voters of the OESJ school district, Fulton, Montgomery and Herkimer County, New York, will be held at OESJ Jr/Sr High School and the OESJ Elementary school(s) in said district on **Tuesday, May 16, 2017 between the hours of 12:00 pm and 8:00 pm**, prevailing time at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.



PRSRT STD
ECRWSS
U.S. Postage
PAID
EDDM RETAIL

BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Neil Clark, Acting *President*
- Jeremy Brundage
- Stephanie Dye
- Dean Handy
- Linda Hart
- Susanne Sammons

*******ECRWSEDDM*******

**Local
Postal Customer**

Produced by the Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville Central School District in cooperation with the Capital Region BOCES Communications Service

OPPENHEIM-EPHRATAH-ST. JOHNSVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

More 2017-18 budget news you should know

Board of Education seat

Voters will elect two Board of Education members to three-year terms.

Former President Mary Weaver resigned, so her seat is up for election as is the current seat held by member Stephanie Dye.

These candidates submitted petitions by the April 17 deadline to seek two board seats:

- **Sarah Barnes**
174 Stone Arabia Rd.
Fort Plain, N.Y. 13339
- **Stephanie Dye**
220 Klock Rd.
St. Johnsville, N.Y. 13452
- **Randall Snell**
34 William St.
St. Johnsville, N.Y. 13452

Voter eligibility

To be eligible to vote, a resident must have lived in the school district for at least 30 days prior to the May 16 election, be at least 18 years of age and a citizen of the United States.

Voting location

Community voting will be held from 12 noon to 8 p.m. at the:

- **OESJ Junior/Senior High School**
auditorium (44 Center Street, St. Johnsville)
- **OESJ Elementary School gymnasium** (6486 State Highway 29, St. Johnsville)

If you live in the former St. Johnsville school district, you vote at the Jr./Sr. High School.

If you live in the former Oppenheim-Ephratah school district, you vote at the elementary school.

If you are unsure where to vote, contact District Clerk Elizabeth Brown at elizabeth.brown@oesj.org or by calling (518) 568-2011 ext. 3149.

Voter registration

If you are registered through the county that you live in to vote in national, county and town elections, you do not have to do anything. You are already registered to vote in the school district election.

If you are not registered to vote with the county, you may register just for the school district election or to request an absentee ballot application by contacting District Clerk Elizabeth Brown at elizabeth.brown@oesj.org or by calling (518) 568-2011 ext. 3149.

Absentee ballot information

Residents who will not be in the area on May 16 or otherwise unable to vote in person may apply for an absentee ballot at the District Office, 44 Center Street, St. Johnsville.

If the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter, the application must be submitted at least seven days prior to the vote - by May 9.

If the absentee ballot is to be picked up by the voter in person, applications will be accepted until May 15.

Completed absentee ballots are due back to the school by 5 p.m. on May 16.

Bus purchase

The community on May 16 will also be asked to approve the \$118,911 purchase of one 65-passenger bus. The cost will come from the Bus Purchase Reserve Fund and will have no impact on the school tax rates.

Check out the OESJ website at www.oesj.org