

SPENCER-VAN ETTEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
16 DARTTS CROSSROAD  
SPENCER, NY 14883

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Spencer, NY 14883  
Permit No. 1

## Postal Patron Local



# SPENCER - VAN ETTEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

May 2015

## 2015-16 Annual School Budget News

*Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.*

-G.K. Chesterton



Dear Spencer-Van Etten Community:

After five consecutive years of difficult budgets, this year's budget process was a welcome relief. State Aid to the Spencer-Van Etten School District increased \$557,821, a 4.11% increase and with this increase in aid, we were able to balance the school budget with NO increase in the tax levy! This year's budget includes curriculum and training materials for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) classes at every grade level. Occupations in STEM-related careers are some of the fastest growing and best paid of the 21st century and they often have the greatest potential for job growth. Over this past year, two teachers at the Elementary School piloted the new STEM Curriculum and next year there are plans to expand it to every grade level. At the high school level a course called *Engineer Your World* will be offered.

*Engineer Your World is an innovative, student-centered high school curriculum that engages learners in authentic engineering experiences and inspires them to embrace an engineer's habits of mind. Collaborative, student-directed projects build resilient problem-solving skills and empower students to think like engineers.*

<http://engineeryourworld.org/>

This course is supported through the University of Texas at Austin and in collaboration with the Cornell School of Engineering. It is partially funded through a National Science Foundation so we are able to offer this course with minimal cost to the district. We are excited about this opportunity for students to take this innovative class at the high school and S-VE is one of the first school districts in New York State to offer it.

Very truly yours,

Joe Morgan, Superintendent

### May 19

Budget Vote &  
Board Election

12:00 – 8:00 p.m.

High School Auditorium Lobby

**\*Bring ID**

A more detailed Budget Brochure  
is available in any school office.

Questions? Please call 589-7100

### Proposition I - Budget

Board Election

2 Seats for a term of 3 years

Candidates

Rick Rogers - Incumbent

Donna Mistler

### Proposition I - Budget

Shall the following resolution be adopted, to-wit **RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the Spencer-Van Etten Central School District be authorized to expend the sums listed in the budget presented May 19, 2015 in the amount of \$21,673,439?

**\*Adoption of the budget requires a tax levy increase of 0% which exceeds the statutory tax levy increase limit of -1.63% for this school fiscal year and therefore exceeds the state tax cap and must be approved by sixty percent of the qualified voters present and voting.**

### Election

Please vote to fill two (2), three year terms on the Spencer Van Etten Central School District Board of Education. **Write-ins may be offered and will be included in the election, although a combined total of no more than two persons may be voted for.** The following individuals filed a petition for a position on the Board of Education.

Rick Rogers \_\_\_\_\_

Donna Mistler \_\_\_\_\_

# Spencer-Van Etten Central School District Budget Notice

| Overall Budget Proposal   | Budget Adopted for the 2014-15 School Year | Budget Proposed for the 2015-16 School Year | Contingency Budget for the 2015-16 School Year * |
|---|--|---|--|
| Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions  | \$20,522,363                               | \$21,673,439                                | \$20,979,582                                     |
| Increase/Decrease for the 2014-15 School Year   |  | \$1,151,076                                 | \$457,219  |
| Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget   |  | 5.61 %                                      | 2.23%  |
| Change in the Consumer Price Index  |  | 1.62 %                                      |  |
| <b>A. Proposed Tax Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount</b>  | \$6,552,246                                | \$6,552,246                                 |  |
| <b>B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable</b>   |  |   |  |
| <b>C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **</b>  |  |   |  |
| <b>D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy</b>   |  |   |  |
| <b>E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)</b>   | \$6,552,246                                | \$6,552,246                                 | \$6,552,246                                      |
| <b>F. Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit</b>   | \$242,563                                  | \$35,518                                    |  |
| <b>G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions</b>   | \$6,309,683                                | \$6,409,658                                 |  |
| <b>H. Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, <u>Excluding</u> Permissible Exclusions and Levy for Library Debt, Plus Prior Year Tax Cap Reserve (E - B - F + D)</b> | \$6,309,683                                | \$6,516,728                                 |  |
| <b>I. Difference: (G - H); (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval - See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **</b>   | \$0  | -\$107,070                                  |  |
| <b>Administrative Component</b>   | \$2,105,140                                | \$2,129,025                                 | \$2,125,351                                      |
| <b>Program Component</b>  | \$13,825,134                               | \$14,401,619                                | \$14,381,290                                     |
| <b>Capital Component</b>  | \$4,592,089                                | \$5,142,795                                 | \$4,472,941                                      |

In the event the budget is defeated twice, the Board of Education would be required to identify the specific reductions to the proposed budget and to adopt a contingent budget, which is subject to an administrative cap. Certain items required by law to be excluded from the contingency budget include expenses related to equipment purchases, certain student supplies, capital appropriations and costs associated with community use of school facilities equal to \$693,857.

\*\* 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 |
|-------------|--------|
|             |        |
|             |        |
|             |        |
|             |        |

NOTE: Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of this completed form to: [emscmgts@nysed.gov](mailto:emscmgts@nysed.gov)

Under the Budget Proposed for the 2015-16 School Year

Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings<sup>1</sup>

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2015-2016 by the qualified voters of the Spencer-Van Etten Central School District, Chemung, Schuyler, Tioga & Tompkins Counties, New York, will be held at the Spencer-Van Etten High School in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 between the hours of 12:00pm and 8:00pm, prevailing time in the Auditorium Lobby in the high school, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot.

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



## Questions and Answers

**Question:** Who establishes the budget that residents vote on?

**Answer:** The Board of Education approved the 2015-16 Budget on April 9<sup>th</sup> to be voted on by the residents of the district May 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Question:** Does the district establish the tax on true value rate?

**Answer:** No. The true value rate is the tax levy divided by the total assessed value of the entire school district. The district only controls the tax levy piece of the formula. The assessed values are controlled by each town and equalization rates are established by the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance.

**Question:** What percentage of voter approval is required for this budget to pass?

**Answer:** Even though there is NO increase in the tax levy, the budget requires a super majority vote of 60% to approve.

**Question:** Why is a super majority vote of 60% required?

**Answer:** The proposed tax levy is above the maximum allowable levy limit and therefore requires 60% voter approval.

**Question:** If the school district exceeds the maximum allowable levy limit, will I still receive STAR?

**Answer:** Yes, as long as you are registered to receive STAR.

**Question:** What is the impact if the school budget is defeated?

**Answer:** A contingency budget will prohibit community use of all indoor and outdoor school facilities. There will be no equipment purchases and no non-emergency capital expenditures. The tax levy will remain the same with no increase over 2014-15.



## Qualification of Voters

*In order to vote in any School District Meeting, a person must meet the following qualifications:*

- ◆ Be a citizen of the United States
- ◆ Be 18 years of age
- ◆ Be a resident of the School District for a period of 30 days or more, prior to the meeting at which he/she offers to vote.
- ◆ And not otherwise prohibited from voting (i.e. mentally incompetent or a convicted felon)

**Residents offering to vote will be asked for identification upon registration.**

A more detailed Budget Brochure is available in any school office.

## Budget and Tax Levy

Budget and Tax Levy Changes from 2005-06 to 2015-16

|                       | Tax Levy    | % Tax Levy Increase | Fund Balance & Reserves Used |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 2005-06               | \$4,260,419 |                     | \$0                          |
| 2006-07               | \$4,640,448 | 8.92%               | \$0                          |
| 2007-08               | \$4,734,158 | 2.02%               | \$0                          |
| 2008-09               | \$5,059,023 | 6.86%               | \$0                          |
| 2009-10               | \$5,230,663 | 3.39%               | \$350,000                    |
| 2010-11               | \$5,591,169 | 6.89%               | \$625,000                    |
| 2011-12               | \$6,088,783 | 8.90%               | \$0                          |
| 2012-13               | \$6,192,292 | 1.69%               | \$737,960                    |
| 2013-14               | \$6,458,006 | 4.29%               | \$ 315,615                   |
| 2014-15               | \$6,552,246 | 1.46%               | \$0                          |
| 2015-16               | \$6,552,246 | 0.00%               | \$558,034                    |
| Average over 10 years | \$5,490,145 | 4.44%               | \$227,099                    |

The Proposition is on the school budget total of \$21,673,439, the proposed levy with a 0% increase is above the calculated maximum allowable levy and requires a super-majority (60%) vote to pass.

## Documents Available to the Public

The documents listed below can be obtained during the 14 days immediately preceding the budget vote and board election at the following locations: on the District's website at [www.svecsd.org](http://www.svecsd.org), at the District Office, at all three Spencer-Van Etten Schools and at each public library within the district during normal operating hours.

- **Proposed Budget in Three Components**
  - **Proposed Revenue**
    - **Property Tax Report Card**
    - **School Academic Report Card**
- **District's Fiscal Accountability Summary**
- **Administration Compensation Information**
- **Exemption Impact Reports by County**

## Three Part Budget

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT

The Administrative Component provides for overall general support and including business office operations, payroll, accounts payable, purchasing, tax collection, management activities, general administration, personnel, legal representation, public information, insurance, and auditing services.

Cost for administration and supervision of each of the three schools is also included here.

| FUNCTION/ACCOUNT            | 2015-16             |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Board of Education          | \$ 16,054           |
| Superintendent's Office     | \$ 182,195          |
| Business, Personnel & Legal | \$ 601,003          |
| BOCES Administration Charge | \$ 216,991          |
| BOCES - Capital Expenses    | \$ 88,183           |
| Special Items               | \$ 109,816          |
| Supervision of Schools      | \$ 476,301          |
| Employee Benefits           | \$ 438,482          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>\$ 2,129,025</b> |

### PROGRAM COMPONENT

The Program Component provides funding for instruction and educational support services for students. Funds for transportation are also included in this component.

| FUNCTION/ACCOUNT              | 2015-16              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Legal Services                | \$ 12,000            |
| Instruction                   | \$ 9,211,165         |
| District Transportation       | \$ 675,850           |
| Bus Garage                    | \$ 16,000            |
| Employee Benefits             | \$ 4,273,570         |
| Transfer to Special Aid Fund  | \$ 70,000            |
| Transfer to School Lunch Fund | \$ 143,034           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>\$ 14,401,619</b> |

### CAPITAL COMPONENT

The Capital Component pays for maintaining building and grounds, including electricity, heat, repairs, phone services and the principal and interest payments on serial bonds.

Included in this component is refund of taxes for claims against property assessments.

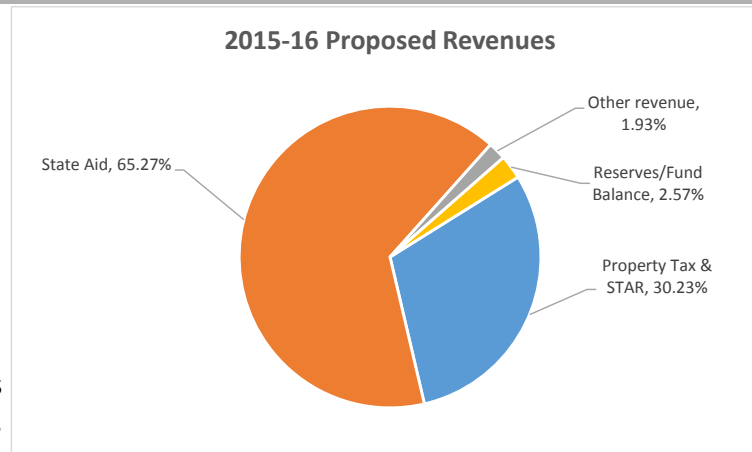
| FUNCTION/ACCOUNT              | 2015-16             |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Operation of Plant            | \$ 947,128          |
| Maintenance of Plant          | \$ 356,324          |
| Refund of Real Property Taxes | \$ 2,000            |
| Employee Benefits             | \$ 364,706          |
| Debt Service                  | \$ 2,972,637        |
| Transfer to Capital Fund      | \$ 500,000          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>\$ 5,142,795</b> |

**TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET \$ 21,673,439**

## Revenue

### 2015-16 Proposed Revenues

|                       |                      |                |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Property Tax & STAR   | \$ 6,552,246         | 30.23%         |
| State Aid             | \$ 14,145,659        | 65.27%         |
| Other revenue         | \$ 417,500           | 1.93%          |
| Reserves/Fund Balance | \$ 558,034           | 2.57%          |
|                       | <b>\$ 21,673,439</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |



### Property Tax

The Spencer-Van Etten Central School District serves all or part of towns in four counties: Baldwin, Chemung, Erin, Van Etten, Cayuta, Barton, Spencer, Tioga, Danby and Newfield.

The school district receives a portion of its funding through taxes levied on real property within these municipalities. The district calculates the tax levy and the corresponding tax rate based on assessments provided by each municipality.

New York State law states that all property within a municipality be assessed at a uniform percentage of market value.

### State Education Aid

The New York State Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16 includes a 4.11% increase in state aid to the Spencer-Van Etten District. Prior to the 2014-15 school year, the district's state aid was below 2007-08 levels. This is largely due to the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), enacted by the state in 2009 in response to the economic downturn. It eliminates a portion of the state aid allotted to districts. The district's GEA for 2015-16 is \$92,539.

### Other Revenue Sources

The district will use fund balance and reserves to fund the 2015-16 budget, this will include \$500,000 toward the upcoming capital project, and \$44,034 toward the school lunch fund and \$15,000 from the unemployment reserve. Additional revenues include \$22,000 from the debt service reserve and \$95,000 from a PILOT agreement. This revenue category also includes interest income, admissions proceeds from sporting events, rental of space from YWCA, EOP and GST BOCES.

### Tax Impact

The projected real property tax levy required to support the proposed expenditure plan is \$6,552,246 which is a 0% increase over the current levy. This figure also includes reimbursement from the state for the STAR program, an estimated \$975,000. Because the tax cap calculation is a -1.63%, the budget requires a 60% super majority to pass. The contingency budget is also a 0% increase in the levy, so if the budget fails to receive a 60% majority and the district goes to a contingency budget, the tax levy increase remains at 0%. One requirement with a contingency budget is no public use of any and all district facilities, indoor and outdoor, unless the cost is fully paid prior to activity.

### Equalization Rates

Each municipality has its own way of assessing property. Actual tax increases or decreases are based on assessments and equalization rates set by the state of New York. These rates are supposed to "equalize" assessments from town to town. In other words, the equalization rate is supposed to ensure that a house in Spencer is taxed the same as a house in Erin.

Rates are finalized by the state in July or August, months after the budget vote. By law, the district must have a budget in place by the end of June, so actual tax implications are impossible to determine accurately in a budget that is voted on in May. That is why we use the term "average tax increase."

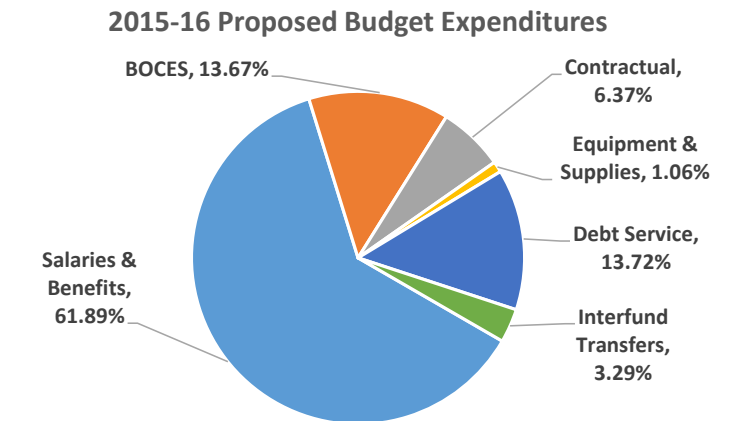
When a municipality undergoes a revaluation, there may be a large effect on taxes. The district has no part in determining assessments or revaluations.

## Expenditures

### Expenditures by Category

The preceding pages listed the proposed budget breakdown by component—administrative, program, and capital—as required by New York State Education Law. Here is how the proposed budget breaks down by category:

| Category            | Total        | Percentage |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| Salaries/Benefits   | \$13,414,719 | 61.89%     |
| BOCES Services      | \$2,963,461  | 13.67%     |
| Contractual         | \$1,380,357  | 6.37%      |
| Supplies/Equipment  | \$229,231    | 1.06%      |
| Debt Service        | \$2,972,637  | 13.72%     |
| Interfund Transfers | \$713,034    | 3.29%      |
| Total               | \$21,637,439 | 100%       |



### Salaries/Benefits

In the 2015-16 school year, the district will have approximately 200 employees, including teachers, librarians, teacher assistants, principals, secretaries, school psychologist, guidance counselors, maintenance, custodial staff and cafeteria staff, bus drivers and other support staff.

Benefits include district costs for the following: health insurance, social security, disability, workers compensation, mandated contributions to the state retirement systems and unemployment insurance for the approximately 200 employees.

### BOCES Services

BOCES services refer to contracted services with the GST BOCES. These cooperative services range from administrative services such as the Central Business Office, to student services such as vocational and special education programs. Purchasing services through BOCES allows the district to receive a portion of the cost the following year through state BOCES aid. The BOCES was set up in 1948 to allow districts to share services.

### Contractual

Contractual costs refer to those services the district cannot perform in-house and must contract out.

This includes extensive plumbing and heating repairs, elevator and electrical repairs and inspection and other specialty services.

### Supplies/Equipment

This includes all materials and supplies needed for schools and offices, with the exception of textbooks. Also includes computers and computer hardware and peripherals such as scanners and printers. The district has a technology plan to guide the research, budgeting and purchase of technology equipment plus, a large portion of computer purchases receive either direct 1:1 State Aid or BOCES Aid.

### Debt Service

This is the amount set aside annually to pay interest and the portion of the principal due on debt.

### Interfund Transfers

This is for capital construction and the local share of the state-aided summer school program for special education students that is accounted for in the Special Aid Fund.

