



# Cambridge News

CENTRAL SCHOOL

## 2026-2027 School Budget Vote & BOE Election

### A Foundation for the Future: Preserving Student Programs and Financial Sustainability

Cambridge CSD residents will vote on the \$28.1 million budget proposal on Tuesday, May 19 from 12-8 p.m. in the HS Gym. The budget proposal preserves the district's educational programming, as well as all sports, clubs and extracurricular activities for students. In addition to the budget, residents will also vote on propositions related to vehicle purchasing, the transportation capital reserve fund allocation and the Cambridge Public Library.

Voters will also elect two candidates to fill two open seats on the Board of Education. Each successful candidate will serve a three-year term through June 30, 2029 (see p. 4).

#### Budget requires supermajority approval

The school tax levy, or total amount of money collected from local property

owners, would increase by 12%. This increase exceeds the tax cap and requires a supermajority (60%) approval.

Tax rates for individual properties will be determined over the summer after equalization rates and assessments are available for the district's eight towns. Based on what we know from last year, our best estimate of the proposed tax increase can be found below.

ASSESSED VALUE	ESTIMATED MONTHLY INCREASE
\$250,000	\$31.18
\$300,000	\$37.41
\$350,000	\$43.65
\$400,000	\$49.88

Tuesday, May 19, 2026  
12-8 p.m. - High School Gym

#### BUDGET AT-A-GLANCE

Proposed Budget:  
**\$28,159,436**

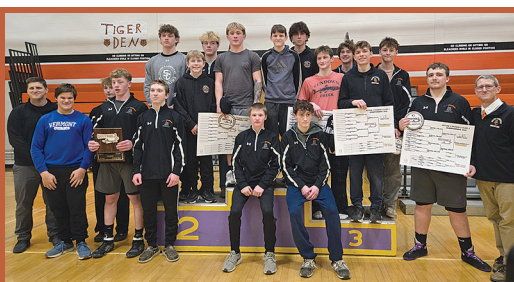
Budget Increase:  
**\$1,279,527**

Tax Levy Increase:  
**12%**

#### Also on the ballot:

- ➔ BOE Election
- ➔ Vehicle Purchase Proposition
- ➔ Transportation Capital Reserve Fund Allocation
- ➔ Public Library Proposition

For more budget information, visit <https://bit.ly/2627budget>.



**WINNER, WINNER!** Congratulations to the Salem-Cambridge boys and girls wrestling teams on capturing Section 2 championships this winter! The Salem-Cambridge girls wrestling team won the Section 2 Class 2 title for the second consecutive year. The Salem-Cambridge boys wrestling team won the Section 2 Division 2 Class 3 championship, their 4th straight Class D title. Additionally, Jonah Stevens qualified for the state competition in Albany!



Tour the new Auditorium construction on May 19 at 5, 6 or 7pm

Stay up to date on the latest news at CCS by joining the district's community group on ParentSquare!



**SIGN UP HERE TODAY:**  
<https://bit.ly/ccs-email-list>

# Budget FAQ

**Q What happens if the budget proposal fails?**

**A** The district has two options. There is a budget revote that could take place on June 16 or the Board could adopt a contingent budget.

**Q If a contingent budget is adopted, what services, programs and extracurriculars would be impacted?**

**A** Under a contingency budget, state law dictates spending may only be on necessary operating expenses.

If the district has to adopt a contingent budget, it would require a \$1,053,168 reduction resulting in 12 staff reductions across all bargaining units. Additionally, reductions may be needed in co-curricular programming, athletics offerings, administrative positions and professional support providers.

**The following items have to be eliminated according to NYSED:**

- No new equipment
- No new school buses
- No annual capital outlay project
- No salary increases for management confidential employees and employees not part of a bargaining unit
- Charging for community building use would become mandatory
- Limited field trips

**Q What reductions have been made in this budget proposal?**

**A** The district reduced a science teacher, two clerks and an assistant transportation supervisor. Additionally, cuts were made to the contractual, equipment, summer



Voters will have the opportunity to fill out an anonymous and optional exit survey at the May 19 vote regarding electric (EV) school buses and a school district merger.

For a comprehensive list of frequently asked questions related to the budget, please visit <https://bit.ly/ccs-2627budget>

programming and fund balance line items, totaling approximately \$250,000.

**Q How did you balance the budget?**

**A** Expenses must equal revenue. The district utilizes state aid, local school taxes and fund balance to balance the budget.

**Q Has there been any talk of consolidation?**

**A** At this time, neither the Cambridge or Salem communities have engaged in a merger discussion. If there was interest, each Board of Education would need to approve and provide funding for a feasibility study to be conducted.



## Voters to decide on vehicle purchase proposition

As part of the May 19 budget vote, voters will consider a proposition regarding school bus and van purchases.

This year, the district is proposing to purchase four 70-passenger diesel buses (three new, one used) and one gasoline van. The proposition reflects a total cost of \$635,684, utilizing \$117,000 of the transportation capital reserve fund to offset the cost. On average, 80% of the cost would be reimbursed through transportation aid.

## Board of Education hears long-range financial analysis from independent consultant

On Thursday, March 12, the Board of Education met to review a detailed long-range financial analysis by Dr. Rick Timbs, President and CEO of R.G. Timbs, Inc. Dr. Timbs' analysis provided a data-driven fiscal outlook and recommendations for the district's financial sustainability.

Dr. Timbs' analysis highlighted several critical challenges facing the district. He noted that the district's expenditures are expected to outpace revenues. Key factors driving this trend include:

- **Foundation Aid Stagnation:** The district is currently slated for only a 1% increase (~\$95,000) in Foundation Aid for the 2026-27 year.
- **Rising Operational Costs:** District operational expenses are currently and projected to grow faster than revenue gains. Dr. Timbs warned that failure to act immediately will overwhelm the district's finances and compromise its long-term stability.
- **Inflationary Pressures:** Standard measures like the Consumer Price Index (CPI) often fail to capture the specific

rapidly escalating costs of school supplies, textbooks and other materials required to meet the needs of our students.

Dr. Timbs characterized the current tax levy as "unbelievably nasty low" from a financial perspective, suggesting that the current levy

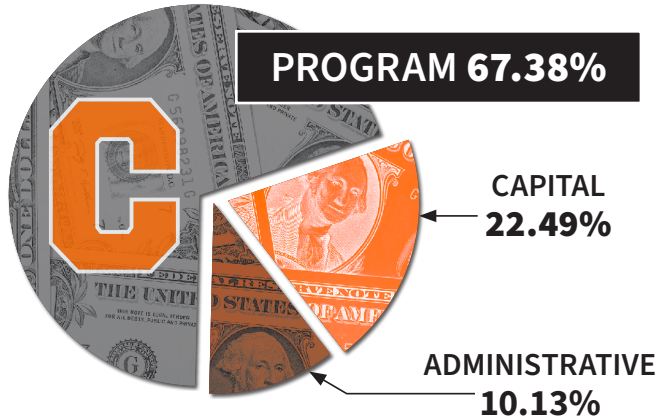
projections are insufficient to keep pace with modern educational mandates and rising costs. He recommended a multi-year "aggressive correction" to stabilize the district's cash flow and maintain reserves.

The analysis recommended immediate financial triage to rightsize operations and to reevaluate all staffing needs through attrition.

The report also advised the district to prepare for a "State Fiscal Funding Cliff" and to be transparent with the community about the possible need for a supermajority vote (60%) for multiple years if significant cost reductions are not achieved.

Failure to act on an aggressive course correction now will jeopardize the district's long-term financial viability.

## 2026-27 Proposed Budget



### SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET NOTICE

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL	Budget Adopted for the 2025-26 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2026-27 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount	\$26,879,909	\$28,159,436	\$27,106,269
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$1,279,527	\$1,053,167
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Each Proposed Budget		4.76%	3.92%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.63%	
Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount		\$11,357,763	\$10,140,860
Total Permissible Exclusions		\$579,380	
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (excluding levy to support Library, Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions)		\$10,778,383	
Administrative Component	\$2,903,685	\$2,853,573	\$2,619,190
Program Component	\$18,245,112	\$18,972,263	\$18,300,918
Capital Component	\$5,731,112	\$6,333,600	\$6,186,161
* Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2026-27 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated. State law establishes a limit on the increase of a tax levy over the prior year.			
** 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	
	Purchase of four diesel buses	\$518,684	
	Library	\$90,000	
	Increase Transportation Capital Reserve Fund allocation	\$250,000	
<b>Budget Adopted for the 2026-27 School Year</b>			
Basic STAR Tax Savings <sup>1</sup>	\$351		

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2026-27 by the qualified voters of the Cambridge Central School District, Washington County, New York, will be held at Cambridge Central School in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 between the hours of 12:00pm and 8:00pm, prevailing time in the Cambridge Central School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

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

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY			
PROGRAM	2025-26	2026-27	Change
Instruction	\$5,354,143	\$5,514,833	\$160,690
Special Education	\$3,191,893	\$3,420,668	\$228,775
Transportation Garage	\$1,480,689	\$1,664,336	\$183,647
Student Support Services	\$1,750,393	\$1,750,873	\$480
Benefits	\$6,467,994	\$6,621,553	\$153,559
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM</b>	<b>\$18,245,112</b>	<b>\$18,972,263</b>	<b>\$727,151</b>

CAPITAL	2025-26	2026-27	Change
Plant Operation	\$1,374,114	\$1,421,617	\$47,503
Plant Maintenance	\$207,986	\$228,242	\$20,256
Special Items	\$231,505	\$233,755	\$2,250
Bus Purchases	\$352,682	\$397,991	\$45,309
Benefits	\$530,785	\$543,387	\$12,602
Debt Service	\$3,034,040	\$3,508,608	\$474,568
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL</b>	<b>\$5,731,112</b>	<b>\$6,333,600</b>	<b>\$602,488</b>


ADMINISTRATIVE	2025-26	2026-27	Change
Board of Education	\$99,578	\$101,970	\$2,392
Central Administration	\$609,635	\$577,475	-\$32,160
Legal	\$75,000	\$78,000	\$3,000
Personnel	\$2,800	\$2,940	\$140
Public Information	\$114,900	\$117,102	\$2,202
Central Services	\$189,300	\$196,595	\$7,295
Special Items	\$239,187	\$259,300	\$20,113
Curriculum Development	\$122,200	\$129,400	\$7,200
Supervision – Regular School	\$733,571	\$654,231	-\$79,340
Supervision – Non Instructional	\$133,650	\$138,835	\$5,185
Benefits	\$583,864	\$597,725	\$13,861
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>\$2,903,685</b>	<b>\$2,853,573</b>	<b>-\$50,112</b>

REVENUE SUMMARY			
	2025-26	2026-27	Change
Real Property Taxes	\$10,140,860	\$11,357,763	\$1,216,903
State Aid	\$14,627,482	\$15,434,143	\$806,661
Federal Aid	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$911,567	\$609,624	-\$301,943
Fund Balance	\$1,100,000	\$657,906	-\$442,094
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$26,879,909</b>	<b>\$28,159,436</b>	<b>\$1,279,527</b>

<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$26,879,909</b>	<b>\$28,159,436</b>	<b>\$1,279,527</b>
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On March 2, elementary students and their families attended a breakfast to kick off Read Across America month. Read Across America is an important initiative that shows kids that everyone has an important story and experience that can be shared through books.



### ENHANCED STAR

If you are 65 or older, call your town assessor to ask if you qualify for and are receiving the Enhanced STAR tax rebate.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

David Shay Price, *President*  
Joseph Hamilton, *Vice President*  
Ted Flint  
Jillian Herrington  
Dillon Honyoust

### ADMINISTRATION

James Ducharme, *Superintendent of Schools*  
Michele Hogan, *School Business Administrator*  
Caroline Goss, *Secondary Principal*  
Kathleen Skellie, *Elementary Principal*  
Ralph Harrington, *Secondary Associate Principal*

### EDITOR

Chris Crucetti  
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**\*ECRWSS\***  
**POSTAL CUSTOMER**

## Budget VOTE

Tuesday, May 19, 2026  
12-8 p.m.  
High School Gym

### Qualifications to vote

- ✓ Citizen of the United States, at least 18 years of age.
- ✓ Resident of the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.
- ✓ No person shall have the right to register for or vote at any school meeting or election who has been convicted of a felony per Section 5-106 of the election law.



All individuals must provide proof of residency at the vote.

### CONNECT WITH CCS

- facebook.com/CambridgeCentralSchool
- @CambridgeCSD
- @cambridgecsd
- www.cambridgecsd.org

## What will appear on the ballot:

### PROPOSITION #1

- \$28,159,436 budget proposal for 2026-27

### PROPOSITION #2

- Public library

### PROPOSITION #3

- \$518,684 vehicle purchase proposition

### PROPOSITION #4

- Increase Transportation Capital Reserve Fund allocation

### BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

The Board of Education is made up of five members who serve three-year terms. This year, two seats will be filled at the vote on May 19. The three-year terms will begin July 1, 2026. Candidates are listed below in the order that they will appear on the ballot.

- Rachel Burr
- Joseph Hamilton
- Ted Flint

## Absentee Ballots/Early Voting

Applications for absentee ballots are obtainable between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, from the district clerk's office at 58 South Park Street. Completed applications must be received by the district clerk at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the

election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. Absentee ballots must be received by the district clerk no later than 5 p.m., prevailing time, on Tuesday, May 19.

The New York Early Mail Voter Act allows registered voters to request a mail-in ballot. You can request an early voter ballot in person up to the day of the election.

