



VOTE Tuesday, May 20, 2025 | 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.
DOBBS FERRY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM



Dear Dobbs Ferry School District Residents,

The Board of Education is delighted to present the 2025-26 budget. This year's budget is the result of a very thoughtful and painstaking process to balance the District's academic standards, sports and club offerings and maintenance of our facilities while staying within the tax cap. Like all of you, the District is facing increases in costs across the board. We also settled a lawsuit concerning alleged events of more than 30 years ago. As a result, we've had to eliminate an administrative position and not fill certain teaching positions. We are confident that none of these changes will impact the excellent education your children receive. In fact, we will continue to support all of our curriculum initiatives and all the sports and club offerings your children enjoy. The Board understands the enormity of the trust you place in us to create the most effective and efficient budget possible, and we believe we have achieved that in this year's budget. Please review the contents of this newsletter and the budget information on our website. We encourage you to head to the polls on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 in the High School Gym, from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., to vote on the budget and to elect three Board of Education Trustees.

Thank you,

Brooke Bass

President, Dobbs Ferry Board of Education

Summary of Proposed Budget

Total Proposed Spending	\$59,842,452	Projected Tax Levy Increase	\$1,414,259
Projected Budget Increase	3.90%	Projected Tax Levy Increase	3.18%



Dobbs Ferry 2025-2026 Proposed Budget

Description	2024-2025 Adopted Budget	2025-2026 Proposed Budget	Change
-------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------	--------

ADMINISTRATIVE

Board of Education	\$29,180	\$29,350	\$170
District Clerk	12,700	12,700	0
District Meeting	15,900	15,900	0
Chief School Administrator	458,349	476,874	18,525
Business Administration	482,384	529,865	47,481
Auditing	59,450	60,200	750
Treasurer	116,228	119,679	3,451
Legal	75,000	82,000	7,000
Personnel	121,626	130,728	9,102
Public Information & Services	55,323	76,285	20,962
Central Printing & Mailing	16,000	16,000	0
Central Data Processing	290,706	383,976	93,270
Unallocated Insurance	253,153	296,913	43,760
Assessments on School Property	208,246	253,246	45,000
BOCES Administrative Costs	281,234	280,538	-696
Curriculum Development & Supervision	285,928	295,519	9,591
Supervision-Regular School	1,904,150	1,768,698	-135,452
Research, Planning & Evaluation	0	0	0
In-service Training Instruction	247,072	259,072	12,000
Employee Benefits	1,230,231	1,244,488	14,257
Administrative Total	\$6,142,860	\$6,332,031	\$189,171

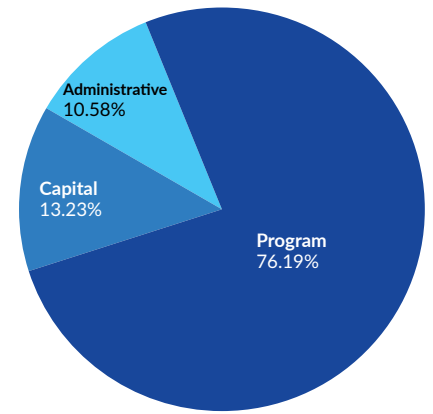
CAPITAL

Legal	\$0	\$650,000	\$650,000
Operation of Plant	2,939,427	3,061,189	121,762
Maintenance of Plant	955,677	764,241	-191,436
Judgments and Claims	0	0	0
Employee Benefits	419,468	479,072	59,604
Serial Bonds-School Construction	2,638,050	2,796,926	158,876
Transfer to Other Funds	155,000	165,000	10,000
Capital Total	\$7,107,622	\$7,916,428	\$808,806

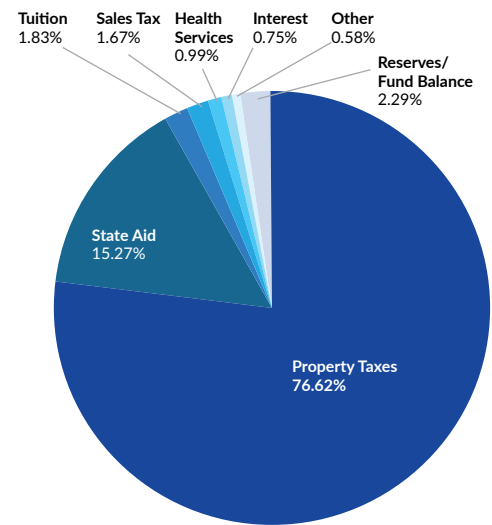
PROGRAM

Legal	\$55,000	\$30,000	-\$25,000
Teaching-Regular School	16,524,926	16,676,251	151,325
Programming for Students w/Disabilities	9,641,777	10,076,246	434,469
Occupational Education (Grades 9-12)	201,676	201,676	0
School Library & Audio Visual	275,500	291,671	16,171
Educational Television	5,788	5,788	0
Computer Assisted Instruction	1,467,828	1,381,419	-86,409
Guidance	958,389	1,006,505	48,116
Health Services	542,306	533,270	-9,036
Psychological & Social Worker Services	792,050	763,545	-28,505
Co-Curricular Activities	304,335	371,826	67,491
Interscholastic Athletics	677,274	754,664	77,390
District Transportation Services	30,278	146,464	116,186
Contract Transportation	1,859,200	1,934,550	75,350
Employee Benefits	11,007,599	11,420,118	412,519
Transfer to Other Funds	0	0	0
Program Total	\$44,343,926	\$45,593,993	\$1,250,067
Grand Total	\$57,594,408	\$59,842,452	\$2,248,044

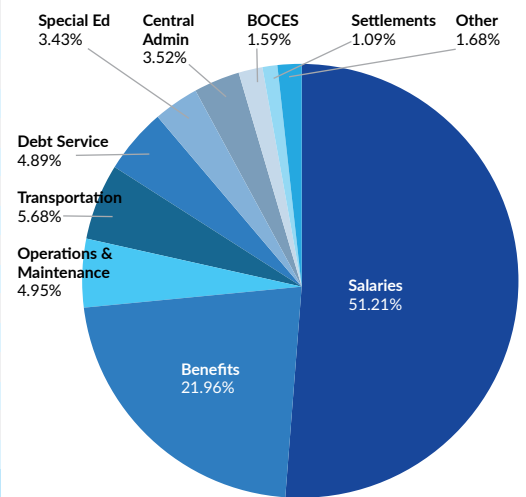
Budget by Administrative, Program and Capital Expenses



Where the Money Comes From



Where the Money Goes



Remember to Vote, Tuesday, May 20, 2025

DOBBS FERRY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM | 7 a.m. – 9 p.m.

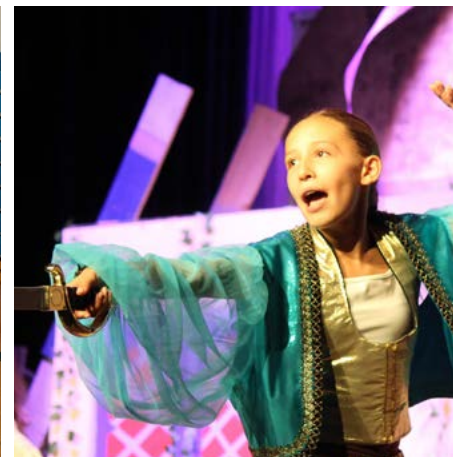
Dobbs Ferry School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2024-2025 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2025-2026 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2025-2026 School Year *
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$57,594,408	\$59,842,452	\$58,233,797
Increase/Decrease for the 2025-2026 School Year		\$2,248,044	\$639,389
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.90%	1.11%
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.95%	
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$44,437,288	\$45,851,547	
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)	\$44,437,288	\$45,851,547	\$44,437,288
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$1,329,641	\$1,423,453	
G. School Tax Levy Limit, Excluding Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$43,107,647	\$44,625,746	
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Excluding Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E - B - F + D)	\$43,107,647	\$44,428,094	
I. Difference: G - H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval)	0	\$197,652	
Administrative Component	\$6,142,860	\$6,332,031	\$6,135,036
Program Component	\$44,343,926	\$45,593,993	\$44,460,663
Capital Component	\$7,107,622	\$7,916,428	\$7,638,098
<p>* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2025-26 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.</p> <p>A contingent budget would require the elimination of all equipment purchases, some student supplies, reduction in staff district-wide including extra and co-curricular and athletics.</p>			

	Under the Budget Proposed for the 2025-2026 School Year
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹	\$1,583

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2025-26 by the qualified voters of the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District, Westchester County, New York, will be held at Dobbs Ferry High School in said district on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 between the hours of 7am and 9pm, prevailing time in the Dobbs Ferry High School gymnasium, at which time the polls will be opened to vote.

¹ The basic School Tax Relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.



For more information on the budget including the Budget Summary Handbook, please see <https://www.dfsd.org/domain/715>

Pillars of Our Schools

Scholarship, Stewardship and Partnership are the three pillars that uphold the education and development of students in the Dobbs Ferry School District. Our students have made incredible strides this year, winning accolades and setting new standards as they take full advantage of the opportunities afforded them by the community. As we look back on all of the performances, high marks and records broken so far this year, join us in reflecting on the three pillars that work together to help our students become independent, curious, and open-minded learners who think critically, work collaboratively, act ethically and are knowledgeable about the world around them.

Scholarship

Dobbs Ferry Schools have seen countless academic success stories this year. From the moment our Springhurst Elementary students stepped through the school doors in September, they've been growing in their reading and writing skills with the Bookworms curriculum. Our middle and elementary school students have begun seeing tangible changes in mathematical thinking, and improved test scores as we entered the third year of Illustrative Math. At the high school level, more students than ever presented college-level science research projects at WESEF, and the judges took notice, with Dobbs Ferry students winning 15 awards and recognitions.



Dobbs Ferry science research students took home an array of awards at the Westchester Science & Engineering Fair this year. They have spent countless hours honing their research in this multi-year high school program. The skills gained through this program are as invaluable as they are vast. The program demands that students select and pursue a scientific topic, communicate with professional researchers, and answer questions about their research from actual scientists.

Illustrative Math

Springhurst Elementary and Dobbs Ferry Middle School are now in the third and final year of implementing the Illustrative Math curriculum for our Kindergarten through 8th-grade students. The curriculum shifts the focus of early math education toward a problem-based curriculum where students work through lessons by thinking independently, collaborating in pairs or small groups, and then engaging in teacher-facilitated discussions.

Students are approaching the process of learning math in the same way that mathematicians do, and they are already reaping the program's rewards!

Bookworms

New to Springhurst Elementary this year is the cutting-edge, research-based reading and writing program, Bookworms. The program aims to enhance reading and writing skills through a new framework for lesson structure, involving collaborative, shared reading blocks, word studies, and more, with the objective of linguistic mastery from pronunciation to comprehension. Bookworms is set to give students a leg up in reading and writing with careful attention to foundational skills, language comprehension, and composition.

Colleges

As this chapter of their lives and education closes, many members of the Class of 2025 are moving on to higher education. Here are just a few of the schools that will be receiving Dobbs Ferry High School graduates next semester:

USC, UCLA, Tulane, Princeton, Cornell, UPenn, University of Virginia, Carnegie Mellon, Wesleyan, University of Chicago, University of Miami, SUNY Binghamton, Cooper Union, and many more.

Scholarship

From football to the school newspaper, from lighting and sound and the orchestra pit in our school musicals, co-curricular programs enhance student growth and education with a myriad of clubs, sports teams and music and theatre ensembles to choose from. There's something for every student to engage with in Dobbs Ferry's schools.



Expanding Sports

Dobbs Ferry has seen some incredibly talented student-athletes stride onto its fields in recent years. Our students are setting records and taking aim at championships, and that positive, competitive energy has never been more prevalent in our schools.

"We have 368 students registered for a spring sport in grades 7-12," said Athletic Director Andrew Klaich. "It is great to see so many students active and involved in the athletics program."

With hundreds of student-athletes participating in varsity, junior varsity, and modified spring sports, athletics at Dobbs Ferry has never been more active. As always, our student-athletes are students first and foremost, as evidenced by the fact that all of our 2024-25 fall and winter sports teams were named NYSPHSAA Scholar-Athlete teams, with at least 75% of the members of each team maintaining GPAs of 90% or higher.

Performing Arts

This year, the Dobbs Ferry community has been treated to several moving performances. Our young cast and crew members brought laughter, tears and catchy tunes all year long and, for the first time, at all three of our schools. With the expansion of performing arts in our schools, students at Springhurst Elementary had the opportunity to get involved in theatre in the first-ever Springhurst Elementary musical, *Seussical Jr.*

Bringing Grade Levels Together Through Music

Dobbs Ferry student-musicians have continued to bring down the house with each performance

this year. Whether they were at Springhurst Elementary, learning their very first scales, or facing down a crowd with high expectations at All-State performances, the Dobbs Ferry community was there to support them every step of the way.

With a record number of students joining our music programs in Dobbs Ferry High School, more students than ever performed for the Dobbs Ferry community, including at our concerts and theatrical performances. More than 20 very talented students joined various All-State, Area All-State, and All-County ensembles.

After-School Clubs

The after-school student club offerings at Dobbs Ferry Middle School and High School are on the rise, with 36 clubs available at DFHS and 30 clubs at DFMS. Student-run organizations, including the Hands In volunteer club, the Rat Pack Light and Sound Crew, and the new Eagles Perch digital newspaper, are doing great things every day after school, from supporting the community with volunteer work to keeping the lights on at our musicals.

"Clubs students come to school, and they provide opportunities for students to collaborate with peers they may not usually interact with, building meaningful friendships across grade levels," said DFMS Office Assistant Raquela Zimbaldi, who oversees clubs at the middle school. Additionally, clubs help students develop stronger relationships with teachers by allowing them to connect outside the classroom in a different context, and they offer students the chance to learn and practice new skills they might not encounter in a traditional classroom setting."

Stewardship

As we continue to improve the teaching and learning that happens in every classroom everyday, we are ever-mindful of the need to ensure that our schools are safe, secure, welcoming, and healthy environments that enhance the education processes. This requires ongoing, proactive work in planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining our facilities and grounds. We are grateful for our the support that the community provides to our facilities team to keep this work moving forward.

Phase 2 Capital Project

Using money that remained from the 2019 Capital Project, the district has continued to make improvements within the scope of the project. The Phase 2 project goals aim to remodel and replace several weathered and aged components of our school buildings to guarantee the continued safety and functionality of our classrooms and facilities. Phase 2 included the replacement of ceilings in Springhurst Elementary classrooms, the renovation of the cafeteria partition, as well as the renovation of several classrooms at the middle and high school and upgrades to the building fire alarm system.

Energy Performance Contract

During the 2019 Capital Project, several energy-related systems were found to be in need of improvement. The Energy Performance Contract will address many of these systems and will serve to increase the efficiency of energy usage at our facilities. The EPC is funded by a mix of NYS building aid and energy company-guaranteed savings that the upgrades will yield over time.

Capital Outlay

In order to align with New York State standards, the district completed a project to improve security systems in all three of our schools. Improvements included the installation of a modernized access system and an upgraded door system, which maintains the original style of the building while enhancing security. The project resulted in an overall improvement in security at our buildings and an increase in building aid revenue from New York State.

Day-to-Day

Dobbs Ferry School District prides itself on safe, clean, efficient and welcoming grounds and buildings where our students can learn and grow. This is made possible thanks to the hard work and dedication of the facilities department staff members. Everything from our fields and play spaces to our hallways and classrooms are maintained by the facilities staff, including prolonging the life of every desk and chair in our buildings through preventative maintenance and keeping spaces clean.



Partnership

Whether they're out filling our stands, providing monetary support for programs, or ferrying students to and from school, friends' houses and events, the Dobbs Ferry community has always played an important role in the development of our youth. Every student who passes through the halls of our schools enjoys the benefits of community-supported programs and events, and their success hinges on the collaboration between our schools and community.



Parent Teacher Student Association

Every year, the volunteer-run Dobbs Ferry PTSA provides opportunities for our students and staff to come together with the wider Dobbs Ferry community. Whether it's fun fundraising events like the Harlem Wizards game or educational opportunities like the annual Springhurst Readathon, the DFPTSA supports our schools in tangible, impactful ways that always serve to enhance student learning.

Dobbs Ferry Schools Foundation

The Dobbs Ferry Schools Foundation supports students at every level of their educational journey both within our community and beyond. Through strategic grants, the Foundation enables the district to offer innovative programs, provide valuable staff development opportunities, and award academic scholarships. From funding the first ever musical at Springhurst Elementary and the yoga program for Kindergartners to helping Dobbs Ferry High School graduates afford higher education, the Foundation has been instrumental in fostering student growth and achievement for more than 30 years.



SPRING Community Partners

SPRING Community Partners supports students with limited resources by offering them access to a broad range of community, school and extracurricular activities and advocacy for inclusion for all children.

Trailguides

Trailguides is a community parent support group that helps students with an IEP, 504 or other learning difference. Every student faces challenges over the course of their education, and Trailguides connects the parents of struggling learners with useful resources, programs and other local families. No Dobbs Ferry family needs to navigate their child's challenges alone, and the purpose of Trailguides is to eliminate the isolation felt by families with a wide range of challenges and concerns.

Dobbs Ferry Families

None of the incredible things that happen at Dobbs Ferry Schools every day would be possible without supportive families volunteering their time, ferrying student-athletes to and from sporting events, filling the auditorium for performances and ensuring that every student has a safe and supportive environment at home. Thank you to our families for playing an instrumental role in the education and growth of our community's future!

**Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District
Board of Education**
505 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
boe@dfsd.org

Board of Education

Brooke Bass, President
bassb@dfsd.org | (917) 697-0126

Penny Sullivan-Nunes, Vice President
sullivanunesp@dfsd.org | (914) 646-8454

Rebecca Hershberg
hershberg@dfsd.org | (347) 782-1263

Jean Lucasey
lucaseyj@dfsd.org | (914) 831-7601

Pavithra Nagarajan
nagarajanp@dfsd.org | (630) 664-6733

Shannon Stringer
stringers@dfsd.org | (914) 478-4639

Darren Wood
woodd@dfsd.org | (917) 355-7655

Ken Slentz, Superintendent
slentzk@dfsd.org | (914) 693-1506

Dr. Meryl Rubinstein, Interim Assistant Superintendent
rubinsteinm@dfsd.org | (914) 693-1500 x3030

Resident Customer
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
ECRWSS

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 22213
White Plains, NY
10610

What's on the Ballot?

PROPOSITION 1

RESOLVED, that the sum of \$59,842,452 shall be appropriated to meet the estimated expenditures for school purposes for 2025-2026 and that a tax be levied in accordance with the law to meet the same.

BOARD MEMBERS - VOTE FOR THREE or WRITE IN

To elect three members of the Board of Education for three-year terms commencing July 1, 2025 and expiring June 30, 2028.

Disan Davis
Sudha Reddy
Darren Wood
Mindy Walker

Who Can Vote?

Applications for Absentee or Early Mail ballots may be downloaded from the District Budget section of the website or may be requested by emailing the District Clerk at districtclerk@dfsd.org or writing to District Clerk, 505 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522. Applications must be printed, signed in ink by the voter, and returned either in person or by mail to Office of the District Clerk. The Application for an Absentee or Early Mail ballot must be received by 2p.m. on May 13, 2025 if the ballot will be mailed to the voter, or by 4p.m. on May 19, 2025 if the ballot will be picked up in person by the voter or his/her designee. Completed Absentee and Early Mail ballots must be received in the District office in person or U.S. Mail no later than 5p.m. on May 20, 2025.

Voter Qualifications:

- Must be a citizen of the United States.
- Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Must have been a resident of the school district for a period of 30 days or more prior to May 20, 2025.

Voter Registration:

Monday, May 12, 2025
3:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Dobbs Ferry High School
Gymnasium Foyer
505 Broadway