



Budget Newsletter

2026-2027

NEWSLETTER CONTENT

1. SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE
2. DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS BEAUTY & THE BEAST
3. VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN
4. RETIREE SPOTLIGHT
6. CAPITAL OUTLAY PROJECT
7. PROPOSED BUDGET 2026-27

Budget Hearing
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
6 p.m.

Budget Vote & School Board Election

Tuesday, May 19, 2026
12 p.m. to 8 p.m.



DEAR COMMUNITY MEMBERS,

On April 14, 2026, the Willsboro Central School District Board of Education approved the proposed budget for the 2026-2027 academic year, which will be voted on by community members on May 19, 2026. This budget reflects a spending increase of 2.55% and remains within the district's state-calculated tax cap, with a tax levy increase of 2.55%.

The proposed budget reflects our ongoing commitment to the Willsboro community to make thoughtful, responsible financial decisions while maintaining our focus on student success. Despite the current financial challenges facing schools across the state, this budget maintains all existing programs and services to support the full range of our students' academic and developmental needs. In light of ongoing inflationary pressures, we were able to accomplish this with a modest spending increase, reflecting our commitment to fiscal responsibility.



Every decision made throughout our budget development process is guided by our district mission to provide a safe and supportive community that instills students with PRIDE: PREPARED for the future that they choose, RESPECTED and valued for who they are, INSPIRED to make their community and world a better place, DETERMINED to overcome challenges, and EMPOWERED to engage with a changing world.

In addition to the information provided within this newsletter, we encourage you to explore the complete budget details, which will be available to the public online and at the District Office beginning May 5, 2026. We also welcome and encourage community members to attend our public budget hearing on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 6 PM.

We are grateful for the continued support of our community, and look forward to seeing all eligible voters on Tuesday, May 19, 2026.

Together in education,

Dr. Justin Gardner
 Superintendent of Schools

Key Facts & Figures

Tax Levy Increase	2.55%
Estimated Tax Rate	\$8.27
Budget Increase	2.55%

For more information on the 2026-27 Budget



Visit our district website
<https://www.willsborocsd.org/>

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WCS SENIORS



The countdown to graduation is on for our Class of 2026! We want to congratulate our seniors and can't wait to see them finish up their high school careers this June. We know they will experience plenty of success in their futures!

DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS 'A TALE AS OLD AS TIME'

The moments and memories of a theater production always leave a lasting impact.

Willsboro CSD's production of Beauty and the Beast Jr. certainly left its mark on the entire cast who took part this year.

Following a successful showing of Disney's Frozen Jr. last year, the theater program continues to grow at WCS as more students have become involved.

"We had a lot of new kids come join us this year and be part of our production, which was great to see," Director Heather Walsh said. "We had a lot of returners as well who stepped up as leaders and made the entire experience extra enjoyable for everyone involved."

THE PERFECT EXPERIENCE

Beauty and the Beast fit exactly what WCS was looking to give to its student participants.

With the team of Walsh, Director Gigi Mason and Music Director Jennifer Moore leading the way, the trio enjoyed every moment.



MUSICAL: Continued on Page 5

VALEDICTORIAN — COLE GAY



College Plans: Physical Therapy at Clinton Community College

What is special about this senior class?

Most of us have been together since Pre-K. We have really spent the last 14 years together, so I think it's just easy to stay connected and feel comfortable with each other. We're really a family.

How has Willsboro shaped your future?

It's much more manageable to get access to what you want to do and what direction you want to head in. There are no limitations, and there are many opportunities to do what you want to do. There is a lot of support from our community, which makes things welcoming and reassuring knowing people are going to support you.

If you could give advice to younger students, what would you say?

I'd say take advantage of Mr. Ford. At a lot of bigger schools, you don't have as easy of access to the guidance counselor as you do here. I can walk right into his office at any time of the day and have a sit-down conversation and ask questions. That's really been important to me in school.

SALUTATORIAN — PEYTON LEERKES



College Plans: Occupational Therapy at Keuka College

What is special about this senior class?

We have fun together. There is a wide variety of personalities and goals. We are similar in certain ways, but we are also so different and going in different directions, which makes us unique.

How has Willsboro shaped your future?

Because we are so small, there are a lot of opportunities to do 1-on-1 activities. You really get to know your teachers and your classes and everything in the school setting on a much deeper level. This has helped me find what I am passionate about and isolate my strengths and weaknesses.

If you could give advice to younger students, what would you say?

Find every possible opportunity to set yourself up for years to come. Find shadowing opportunities and chances for career exploration. Don't be afraid to send someone an email and reach out about anything you want. If you're unsure about what you want to do, just keep trying until you find your own niche.



MRS. DROLLETTE REFLECTS ON CAREER

In Pam Drollette's heart, Willsboro CSD occupies a big spot.

Her dedication to teaching has impacted countless students for many years.

She walked into WCS as a kindergartner in 1976, and she will walk out the doors this June as a retiree.

"Willsboro has been my home. It is my heart, and it is super hard to leave," Drollette said.

After graduating in 1989, Mrs. Drollette did not venture off too far. During her college breaks and summers, she came back to sub and eventually became a teaching assistant. In 1999, she began as a full-time teacher in 6th grade. Fast forward all these years later, Mrs. Drollette teaches 1st grade and has taught all but one grade level in the elementary.

"One thing I could always rely on was the kids to get me through the day," Drollette said.

"Whether it was a hug or a note or just their smiles, that has always been the special part of the day."

Mrs. Drollette's passion to support and teach Willsboro's future stems from her family.

Her mother and father graduated from WCS in the early 1950s, and her three sisters are all WCS alumni.

"Willsboro has been the heart of my family," she said.

And at the heart of her teaching, Mrs. Drollette always wants the best for her students.

Whether it was raising butterflies, celebrating the 100th Day of School, making T-shirts, going on a trip to Jade Buffet for Chinese New Year, enjoying Grinch Day, welcoming in family on Grandparents Day, or celebrating Veterans Day, Mrs. Drollette's students always have had engaging learning opportunities.

"I have always wanted to make learning real for kids," she said.

When you think about real-life moments and memories for students, Mrs. Drollette once had her students write persuasive essays to their superintendent asking for new chairs. The essays were so convincing that they got their chairs and even got to pick out their colors.

Mrs. Drollette leaves a legacy for many to follow. She appreciates all who have supported her throughout the years, including volunteers Jane Terlouw and Valerie Jodoin as well as her family.

Now with retirement around the corner, a new chapter awaits.

"For me, my focus is going to be on my health and my faith," she said. "I just really want to bless others in this next chapter. It was a super hard decision to retire, and it still is, but I know it's the right one."

MUSICAL: Continued from Page 2

They decided on performing *Beauty and the Beast* last April and were hard at work beginning in November holding auditions.

The audition process was an educational experience for students as they attended a training workshop before auditioning.

"It's important to teach the students about the process of what to expect and how to carry themselves," Walsh said. "It's more than just showing up to the audition. We want them to embrace the process."

Forty students attended the workshop, and the cast ended up including 42 students.

Roles were handed out following Thanksgiving break, and after the winter holiday pause, the race was on.

"Most of the cast had their lines memorized when they came back from break in January," Walsh said. "We were able to hop right in on music after that, which was great."

PREPARING FOR SHOWTIME

With showtimes scheduled for March 6, 7 and 8, preparation was in full swing starting in January.

The choreography was a favorite part of the learning process for many in the cast, according to Ava Leibbeck who played LeFou.

Callie Freeman (Cogsworth) and Thea Decker (Milkmaid) both noted how close the cast was and how everyone became great friends during the process.

The cast ranged from students in 3rd through 12th grade, creating an interesting dynamic throughout the group, which was filled with support.

"It was a very fun and amazing experience," said Sandy Villamor, who played Mrs. Potts. "Everyone was very kind and helpful with the younger kids."

SUCCESSFUL SHOWS

Thanks to wonderful community support, all three showings featured great success and plenty of attendance.

"Each show was amazing in its own way, and the students really did such a good job," Walsh said. "They overcame the typical obstacles you run into during this process and put on wonderful performances for the community."

The dress rehearsals ahead of the shows went so well that the cast had a dark night before the first showing,



allowing the entire group to rest and recharge.

"We have never had that luxury before," Walsh said. "We have always been cramming right up until the last day, which spoke volumes to how prepared and ready we were."

CAST APPRECIATION

Now with the shows completed, the cast has plenty of memories to cherish.

"It was a great chance to bond with not only the elementary kids but also grow closer with the high school people that we pass every day in the hallway but don't always talk with," said Laney Nollette, who played Lumière.

"Drama Club isn't just about the actors, though. Some of my best memories are with our directors. Mrs. Walsh and Gigi have both made such a positive impact on my life, and I am most grateful for the fun memories made with them."

Walsh added that it was nice to see the students step out of their comfort zones and take a chance on themselves and each other to put on a production that many will remember in a positive way.

"It was so fun interacting with people I don't usually interact with and making new friends," said Lillian Baker, who played The Beast. "It allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and do things I would not normally do."





WILLSBORO CAPITAL OUTLAY PROJECT

The 2026-27 capital outlay project will consist of work required to make necessary improvements to the district’s IP speaker/clock, door access control, and safety/surveillance systems. As part of this project, aging and unreliable hallway clocks and door access controls will be replaced. The installation of safety strobes and new exterior PA speakers is also included.

These improvements will give the district greater control over building-wide emergency notifications and response, while also enabling upgrades to day-to-day communication throughout the building.

Through annual capital outlay projects, the state allows school districts to transfer general funds to the capital fund for building and/or reconstruction

projects, not to exceed \$100,000.

Projects funded this way receive reimbursement from the state the following budget year, unlike traditional capital projects, which are reimbursed over a longer period of time.

The state will reimburse Willsboro CSD for 52% of this project next year, resulting in a net local cost to the district of \$48,000.



PROPOSED BUDGET TAX IMPACT

Assessment	25-26 Taxes	26-27 Taxes	Tax Change
\$100,000	\$806	\$827	\$21
\$150,000	\$1,209	\$1,241	\$32
\$200,000	\$1,612	\$1,654	\$42

BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 1:
Adopt the 2026-2027 Budget \$11,458,219

Proposition 2:
Elect 2 School Board Members
Candidates:
Krissy Leerkes, Emily Phillips

Proposition 3:
Purchase and financing of one 65-passenger school bus at a cost not to exceed \$175,000



2026-2027 BUDGET COMPARISON

EXPENDITURES	2026-27 PROPOSED	2025-26 BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT			
<u>GENERAL SUPPORT</u>			
Board of Education	\$ 27,619	\$ 6,680	\$ 20,939
Central Administration	\$ 237,058	\$ 229,354	\$ 7,704
Finance	\$ 303,627	\$ 295,547	\$ 8,080
Staff	\$ 59,919	\$ 54,314	\$ 5,604
Central Services & Special Items	\$ 302,065	\$ 248,936	\$ 53,129
<u>INSTRUCTION</u>			
Administration & Improvement	\$ 84,189	\$ 81,256	\$ 2,933
<u>UNDISTRIBUTED</u>			
Employee Benefits	\$ 205,451	\$ 214,037	\$ (8,586)
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT	\$ 1,219,928	\$ 1,130,125	\$ *89,803
	<i>*Includes new payment for BOCES CTE Center</i>		
PROGRAM COMPONENT			
<u>GENERAL SUPPORT</u>			
Staff	\$ 16,667	\$ 16,667	\$ -
<u>INSTRUCTION</u>			
Instructional Improvement	\$ 24,850	\$ 26,413	\$ (1,563)
Teaching Regular School	\$ 1,960,294	\$ 1,814,380	\$ 145,914
Special Apportionment Programs	\$ 2,227,447	\$ 2,128,713	\$ 98,734
Instructional Media	\$ 222,363	\$ 293,119	\$ (70,756)
Pupil Services	\$ 501,949	\$ 443,902	\$ 58,048
<u>PUPIL TRANSPORTATION</u>			
District Transportation Services	\$ 460,958	\$ 412,381	\$ 48,577
<u>UNDISTRIBUTED</u>			
Employee Benefits	\$ 2,689,508	\$ 2,742,554	\$ (53,046)
Interfund Transfer	\$ 15,000	\$ 25,000	\$ (10,000)
TOTAL PROGRAM COMPONENT	\$ 8,119,035	\$ 7,903,127	\$ 215,908
CAPITAL COMPONENT			
<u>GENERAL SUPPORT</u>			
Central Services	\$ 559,673	\$ 543,290	\$ 16,383
<u>UNDISTRIBUTED</u>			
Employee Benefits	\$ 382,302	\$ 388,006	\$ (5,704)
Debt Service	\$ 1,077,281	\$ 1,094,801	\$ (17,520)
Interfund Transfer	\$ 100,000	\$ 114,000	\$ (14,000)
TOTAL CAPITAL COMPONENT	\$ 2,119,256	\$ 2,140,097	\$ (20,841)
TOTAL BUDGET EXPENDITURES	\$ 11,458,219	\$ 11,173,349	\$ 284,870

PLEASE NOTE: Budget documents, with detailed line-by-line deliniation, will be available May 5, 2026 in the school's main office, on our website at www.willsborocsd.org or by calling 518-963-4456, x201 to have a copy mailed to you. The budget will be reviewed at the Public Hearing on May 12, 2026.

Willsboro

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROPOSED 2026-27 BUDGET & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2026

Budget Vote & School Board Election

Tuesday, May 19, 2026
12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Budget Hearing
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
6 p.m.

REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

Community members may request an absentee ballot by contacting the District Office.

WHAT AM I VOTING ON

2026-27 Budget
2 Members of the BOE
School Bus Purchase

For more information on the 2026-27 Budget



Visit our district website
<https://www.willsborocsd.org/>



PO Box 180
29 School Lane
Willsboro, NY 12996

Ph: (518) 963-4456
Fx: (518) 963-7577

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID BY PERMIT NO.5
Willsboro Central
School
WILLSBORO, NY 12996

Board of Education

President: Heather Sheehan
Vice-President: Emily Phillips
Krissy Leerkes
Laura Bridge
Morgan Drinkwine

POSTAL CUSTOMERS LOCAL