



2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR DISTRICT BUDGET PRIORITIES

School Budget Philosophy

The annual school budget is a reflection of our strategic direction, values and priorities as a school district. We strive to balance needed and desired investments in education with responsiveness to taxpayers. Our focus is on strategic planning so that school budgets provide sustainability for our students, in programs and services, and for our residents in taxes and community investment.

1. Continue a strong academic program that provides for student growth, support and exploration.

- Strengthen existing curriculum and support programs, refine academic support models (MTSS) and expand college and career pathways aligned with the Portrait of a Graduate.
- Continue to adapt special education programming based on student needs.
- Maintain strong investment in professional development and training connected to strategic priorities.
- Expand prekindergarten programming to serve more Niskayuna four-year-old learners.

2. Support the ongoing evolution of middle school learning in Niskayuna.

- Continue to plan, develop and implement program recommendations from the Middle School Redesign Team.
- Provide for staffing needs in all areas with grade 6 at VA and grades 7-8 at Iroquois.
- Assess transportation system needs for fully reconfigured middle schools (2027-28).

3. Provide robust support for student mental health and well-being, social-emotional learning and safety and security.

- Continue to provide student mental health support and relevant social-emotional learning at all grade levels.
- Maintain support for the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCIS) system.
- Sustain the District's School Resource Officer program and school-based safety and security teams to ensure consistent protocols, presence and support in all schools.

4. Pursue operational excellence as an employer of choice.

- Continue outreach across the community, region and beyond to build a diverse workforce and strategic efforts to build a high-performing, supportive workplace.
- Expand bus driver retention and recruitment efforts to improve student and family experiences.
- Support information technology and instructional technology programs that meet the needs of today's teachers, staff and students.
- Continue ongoing facilities investments and efforts to plan for the future.