



*A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Community – Excelling in a complex, interconnected, changing world*

# READY TO EXCEL

## *2024-2025 Proposed Budget*

### Alignment of Resources with Our Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan guides our work at the district, building, department and individual level. This includes the alignment of our time, resources and energy with the budget to support these priorities.

ESM’s Strategic Plan (2023-2028) emphasizes being “Future Focused and Future Ready.” The plan focuses on three priority areas:

- ◆ Student-Centered Learning
- ◆ Wellness
- ◆ Safe and Welcoming Learning Environments

The 2024-25 proposed budget aligns resources to focus on student learning from pre-k through grade 12 while supporting all curricular areas. The budget also supports the priority areas of providing safe and welcoming learning environments, as well as ongoing counseling, social emotional learning and mental health initiatives for our students. These focus areas are intrinsically tied to our vision to be “an exemplary future focused and student-centered learning community whose graduates are prepared to excel in a complex, interconnected, changing world.”

Our commitment to long-range financial planning and fiscal responsibility remains strong. Among the cost-saving measures in the budget are our energy performance contract, shared services and cooperative purchasing with BOCES, and operational efficiencies in building maintenance, information technology and transportation. Revenue-based measures include investment interest and federal revenue maximization strategies.

The final 2024-25 state budget raised state education aid over 2023-24 levels for ESM based on growing enrollment and other demographic factors. In doing so, the shift of 4.9% in the overall ESM budget reflects additional State Aid that the district will receive in 2024-25.

ESM’s \$102,375,035 proposed 2024-25 budget adopted by the Board of Education on April 15 reflects careful stewardship and investment of enhanced state resources. This includes a minor \$100,000 capital project to install new flooring in CHS classrooms and hallways.

Based on preliminary estimates of changes in assessed value, ESM school tax rates are projected to decrease slightly. On a home assessed at \$100,000, the overall tax bill decrease for 2024-25 after the Basic STAR exemption would be approximately \$34.43 annually. In general, the tax rate decrease equates to approximately \$0.51 per \$1,000 of assessed property value annually. Since 2016, ESM’s school tax rates have decreased 20.1%, reflecting increased State funding and declining reliance on local property taxes to support the educational program.

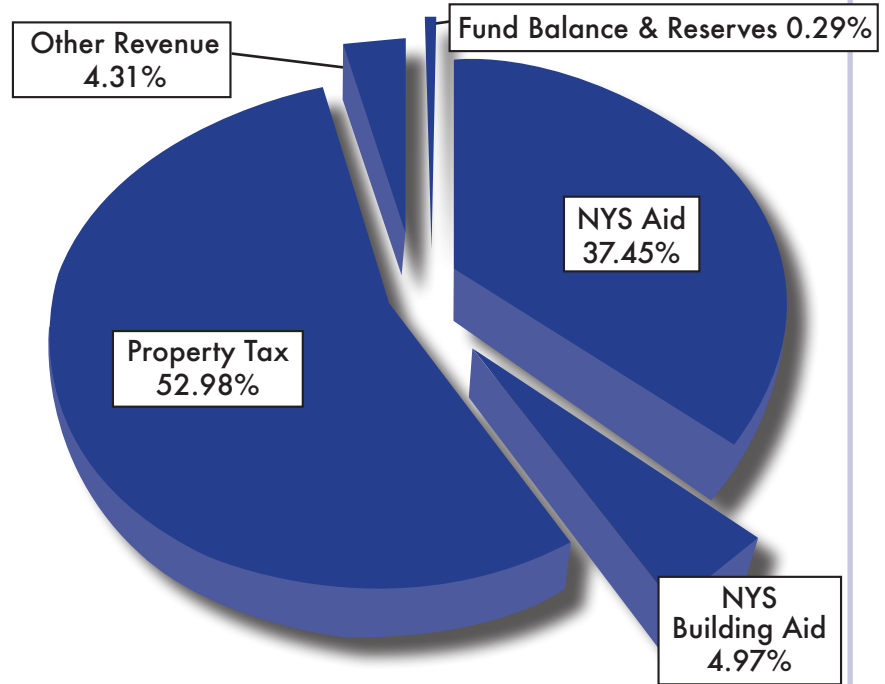
Please remember final assessments and equalization rates are not available until August at which time we will finalize the tax rate. The state calculates a property tax cap for each district. ESM is under its tax cap by \$160,000 with a tax levy increase of 2.25%.

A public hearing to learn more about the budget is May 13 at 6 p.m. in the Central High School Library. We sincerely thank our ESM community for your continued engagement and support for the education of our youth.

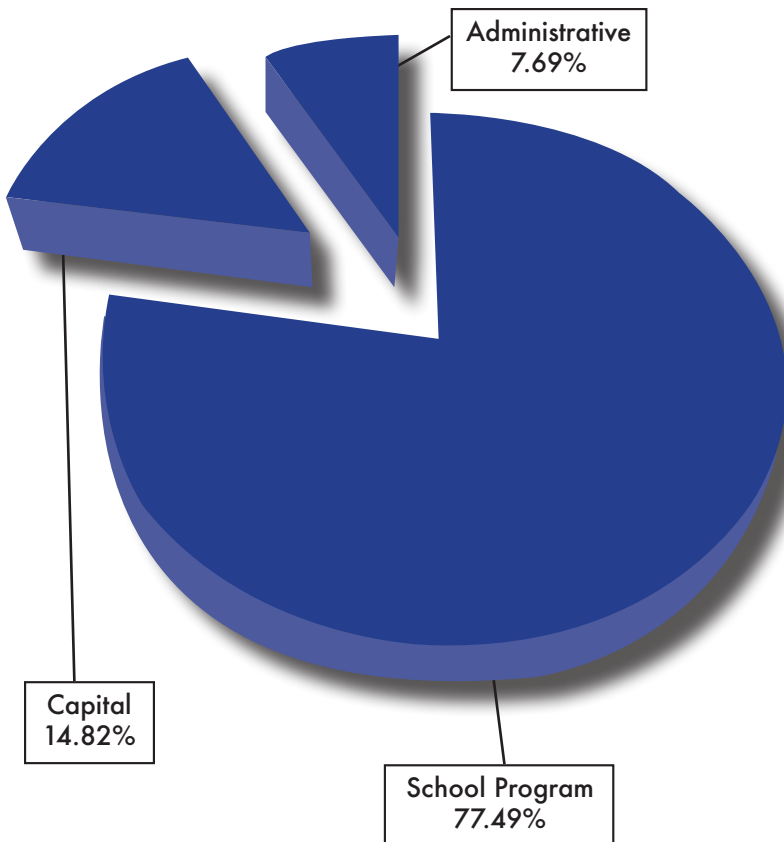
# 2024-2025 BUDGET INFORMATION

## Where does the School Budget money come from?

<u>2024-25 Revenue</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>
New York State Aid	\$38,340,628
New York State Building Aid	\$5,084,791
Property Tax	\$54,237,666
Other Revenue	\$4,411,950
Fund Balance and Reserves	\$300,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$102,375,035</b>



## Three-Part Budget Summary



**Program Component:** At 77.49% of the total budget, it includes regular instruction, special education, occupational education, curriculum and staff development and summer school as well as pupil services such as health, guidance, library, co-curricular activities, athletics and transportation.

**Capital Component:** This represents 14.82% of the total budget, including expenses for the operation and maintenance of district facilities, building renovation costs, property tax refunds and employee benefits attributable to salaries for these functions.

**Administrative Component:** This represents 7.69% of the total budget, including expenses for instructional supervision, curriculum development, the Board of Education, school information officer, central administration, director of facilities, director of transportation, legal services, central data processing, printing, mailing and employee benefits attributable to salaries for these functions.

# 2024-2025 BUDGET INFORMATION

## Propositions on the Ballot

**Proposition #1:** Proposed School Budget \$102,375,035.

**Proposition #2:** Purchase of School Buses not to exceed \$999,847.

**Proposition #3:** Increase East Syracuse Free Library levy from \$353,957 to \$361,036.

**Proposition #4:** Increase Minoa Free Library levy from \$249,900 to \$285,000.

**Proposition #5:** Create \$15,000,000 Capital Reserve Fund.

**School Board Member Seats:** Voters will choose two candidates for two open School Board seats. The two candidates with the most votes will be elected to a four-year term.

**Bus Purchase Proposition:** The district is proposing to spend \$999,847 to purchase six 65-passenger buses. The new student transportation vehicles would ensure vehicle safety and replace the oldest and most expensive vehicles to maintain/repair. The District will use \$800,000 from the 2016 Bus Purchase Reserve Fund and \$199,847 from 2024-2025 budgetary appropriations to finance the bus purchases.

**Public Library Propositions:** By law, the public libraries in East Syracuse and Minoa can request that the District conduct a budget vote and collect funds for the public libraries. Public Library budget requests are not part of ESM's school budget. This year, the Minoa Library submitted a request for a \$35,100 increase that would result in a \$285,000 annual budget. The East Syracuse Free Library submitted a request for a \$7,079 increase that would result in a \$361,036 annual budget. Questions about these propositions should be directed to public library officials.

**Capital Reserve Fund:** Also on the ballot this year is the creation of a "2024 Facilities Improvement Capital Reserve Fund" which could be funded with up to \$15 million over the next 15 years. Establishing a Capital Reserve Fund helps the District plan long-term for its facilities needs while ensuring that our students have safe and continually-updated learning spaces. The Capital Reserve Fund would provide the local share of future capital projects, and continue ESM's priority of minimizing the taxpayer impact of capital improvements. By setting aside funds over time in a Capital Reserve Fund, the District is also able to save taxpayer dollars by avoiding issuing fees and interest expenses associated with borrowing funds.

**Capital Outlay Project:** Under current law, capital outlay projects with a cost of no more than \$100,000 are eligible for Building Aid. ESM's budget proposal includes \$100,000 to complete additional flooring replacement in classrooms and hallways at the high school.

## How Can I Learn More?

The public hearing on the budget is May 13 at 6 p.m. The hearing will be held at the Central High School Library, 6400 Fremont Road. Questions and comments may also be directed to Katherine Skahen, Executive Director of School Business Administration, by e-mailing [kskahen@esmschools.org](mailto:kskahen@esmschools.org) or calling 315-434-3004.

**When and Where is the Vote?** The ESM Board of Education will hold its budget and school board member election on May 21 from noon to 9 p.m. in the ESM Central High School small gym, 6400 Fremont Road, East Syracuse.

**Who Can Vote?** To be eligible to vote in the school election, you must be: a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older and an ESM district resident for at least 30 days. No prior registration is required.

## Can I Get an Early Voting or Absentee Ballot?

Applications for early voting or absentee ballots for qualified voters may be obtained at the office of the School District Clerk at 407 Fremont Road, East Syracuse, NY, or by contacting the District Clerk's office at 315-434-3004. Any such applications must be received by the District Clerk at least seven days before the date of the vote and election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, or the day before the vote and election if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter. Early voting or absentee ballots must be received at the District Office by 5:00 PM on May 21, 2024.

## For Additional Information:

A copy of the full budget is available at the ESM District Administrative Office, 407 Fremont Rd., East Syracuse. Visit [www.esmschools.org/budget](http://www.esmschools.org/budget) for a full budget packet.

# 2024-2025 BUDGET INFORMATION

## 2 Candidates Running for 2 Board of Education Seats

Voters will elect two candidates to the Board of Education during the upcoming vote. Each voter can choose two candidates for a four-year term. The candidates are D. Paul Waltz and Kay Gallery, who are incumbents running unopposed. Biographical information and a statement of the candidate's philosophy of education follow in the order they will appear on the ballot:

### D. Paul Waltz Jr.



D. Paul Waltz Jr. and his wife, Amy, live in Kirkville. They have resided in the district for 30 years. Their three children: Kylie, Erik and Jackie are all ESM graduates.

Mr. Waltz recently retired after 48 years in the criminal justice/law enforcement field. He has a master of arts in public administration from Syracuse University Maxwell School of

Citizenship and Public Affairs and a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from the State University of New York.

For 16 years, Mr. Waltz has served on the ESM Board of Education and he is currently Board President. He is a community member on ESM's Strategic Planning Core Committee. Mr. Waltz is a past president of the Central New York Chiefs of Police Association and past president of the SUNY Chiefs of Police Assoc. and the University Hill Public Safety Assoc. He is a current member of the NYS Chiefs of Police Assoc.

Mr. Waltz has volunteered his time with Special Olympics of Central New York, the American Cancer Society's "Real Men Wear Pink" Campaign and is a founding member of the Kindness Crusaders.

His interests are reading, American history, traveling and community activities.

#### **Philosophy of Education:**

My philosophy on education is to provide ALL students with the necessary resources, support and encouragement to succeed regardless of the path they choose after graduation.

Although many might choose college, others will choose a technical/trade school, or employment from the hands-on learning experience they acquired in our Career and Technical Education Program. We need to be there for our students and our families to offer them options, guidance and inspiration so our students will succeed and make their dreams a reality.

By forming a greater partnership between our students, parents, teachers and community we can provide a strong and stable foundation for our student's educational experience, technical curiosity, and creative arts exploration all leading to their academic excellence. A partnership that will be full of rewards and opportunities for our students as they become contributing members of society where their dreams really do become reality.

### Kay Gallery



Kay Gallery and her husband Thomas live in Kirkville. They have five children: Gordon has graduated while Thomas is a junior, Gus is a freshman and Lucy and Jude attend Pine Grove.

A resident of the district for 17 years, Mrs. Gallery is a homebound teacher for the Syracuse City School District. She has a master's degree in teaching for secondary social studies and a

bachelor's degree in psychology, both from the University of Pittsburgh.

She has served eight years on the ESM Board of Education. She is a member of the ESM Education Foundation and a former co-President of the ESE PTO.

Mrs. Gallery is an ESM districtwide volunteer for cross country, makerspace and the ESE Fun Run as well as ESM Youth Sports. She also volunteers with the Technology Assoc. of CNY (TACNY). She is a Sunday school teacher at Trinity Episcopal Church and previously served on their Stewardship Committee. In the past she volunteered as a girls assistant coach with Valley Lacrosse.

Spending time with her family is a priority and she also enjoys running, hiking, reading and attending sporting events.

#### **Philosophy of Education:**

My philosophy of education is a wholistic one; the whole child should be considered when educating. I feel passionately that the psychological, emotional, moral, developmental, and cognitive components all need to be addressed for education to be meaningful and sustaining. A wholistic educational approach helps to nurture well rounded students who ultimately become substantive and impactful members of society.

The purpose of education isn't just memorizing facts. The purpose of education is to instill a desire to learn. It's up to us as parents, educators, and community members to advocate for education so that the desire to learn is ignited. It is our responsibility to meet the diverse needs of all students. Invoking a wholistic educational approach we can help students find purpose and a pathway for success.

I have dedicated myself to serving our community, and humbly hope to continue doing so. I promise to continue to give a voice to all, stay committed to being a sound fiscal steward, and remain steadfast in asking questions on behalf of our community.