

Bloomfield school budget includes pre-K program

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Bloomfield, N.Y. -

The school district's proposed \$18 million budget for next year shows an increase of \$332,375 from this year's budget of \$17,697,110.

Bloomfield will be one of several school districts in the region adding a universal pre-kindergarten program; the program will consist of two half-day sessions, five days a week, with the addition of one teacher and a teacher aide. A lottery system will be in effect to select the potential candidates, with families being notified by May 9. The program, which will be funded by a \$57,000 grant, will need an additional \$33,840 in order to have the two half-day sessions.

Transportation costs are up 12.5 percent because of rising fuel costs. Superintendent Mike Midey said that while the budget for transportation has increased noticeably, it may be underbudgeted. "We plan on \$3.75 a gallon," he said. "We will always reassess bus trips and try to consolidate them."

In the district's sports department, a modified girls volleyball team will be added, at a cost of \$3,675.

The district projects a 2.8 percent increase in state aid, and the tax levy will rise by 1.5 percent.

"I hope people will see that they are getting their money's worth. We've worked on putting the budget together to get the most out of programs," Midey said.

There is an anticipated decrease in students, from 1,087 students this year to 1,070 next September. Midey said the drop was mostly due to a small incoming kindergarten class this year. The pre-K students won't count toward the school's overall count.

A decrease in the budget was in buildings and utilities, with about an 8 percent drop, due the district paying off capital project debt from previous years.

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If you go

BLOOMFIELD — The public hearing on the Bloomfield school district's proposed 2008-09 budget is set for 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 7 in the middle school cafeteria.

A meeting for those who cannot attend the evening session will be held earlier in the day, from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m. in Room 145 in the elementary school.

Voting will be held from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 20 in the middle/high school back gallery.