



Lansing Central School District

School Finance Updates

MARCH 2024



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CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE

NPA

In November of 2022, the Non Pipeline Alternative Project (NPA) was approved by the voters of Lansing Central School District. This project includes upgrades to Heating Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems at the Middle School, with the goal of reducing natural gas consumption. It is being partially funding by NYSERDA. Boilers, Roof Top Units, and Unit Ventilators will all be replaced with more efficient equipment. Currently, we are waiting for the NYS Education Department to approve the design. We anticipate going out to bid soon with work to begin in late spring 2024.

BOBCAT

Voters approved the BOBCAT project in January of 2023. This project will be completed in various phases over the next few years.

Phase 1 includes HVAC controls related to the NPA project. This portion of the project will be purchased and completed via NYS Contract, eliminating the need for bidding, and ensuring we are able to complete this in conjunction with the NPA project in the spring/summer of 2024.

Phase 2 consists of the roof replacements at each school building, and the gymnasium upgrades at the Middle School and High School. We are hoping to go out to bid on this portion of the project within the next month. Both Phase 1 and 2 are currently awaiting approval by the State Education Department.

Phase 3 of the project requires the most work with regards to planning and design. It involves the full replacement of Sobus field including the track and field events, addressing the deterioration of the courtyard walls at the HS, and providing bathrooms at the Middle School Tech building that are accessible to the public after school hours. We are still in the design phase, but we are planning to submit this project within the next few weeks with bids happening in the fall. Work will start on Phase 3 in late spring of 2025.

For more information on the project click here: [Capital Project Newsletter](#)



NAVIGATING NEW YORK STATE'S ZERO EMISSION BUS MANDATE

In January of 2022, New York State issued a mandate requiring school districts to start purchasing zero emission school buses starting in 2027. Each district's fleet must be fully compliant by 2035. Currently, electric buses are the only zero emission option for schools.

Considerations:

Budget – The mandate comes with financial support and incentives from various sources aimed at easing the financial burden on school districts. Understanding these funding mechanisms will be critical in order to plan the budget effectively and make the transition without compromising other essential educational priorities.

Operational – We must assess the operational impact of introducing electric buses into the fleet. This includes charging infrastructure, maintenance costs, and training. Addressing these factors will assist with the transition and allow for minimal disruptions to daily transportation operations.

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Zero Emission Buses continued:

Long Term – The initial transition will pose financial and logistical challenges, but school districts may stand to gain long term benefits. School districts who have already started the implementation process have seen reduced operating costs and lower maintenance expenses.

Lansing CSD:

Currently, our fleet consists of 23 buses and 4 vans used to transport students. They are a combination of gas and diesel buses. We are on a ten-year replacement cycle, meaning a bus purchased today would be replaced in 2034. In order to be compliant with the current legislation, Lansing will need to start replacing its buses with zero emission vehicles by 2025 to ensure the full fleet is converted by 2035. But it's not as simple as just purchasing a different bus. As noted above, there are infrastructural changes that need to happen first.

Navigating New York State's Zero Emission School Bus Mandate requires careful planning and consideration. This is a multi-year process that we have already started. We are working with NYSEG and NYSERDA to start infrastructure and fleet assessments which will provide us with the necessary information to move forward. This will include an analysis on electric service capacity along with vehicles and chargers needed to effectively and safely transport our students. Our goal is to minimize the impact of this mandate on the local tax payer to the best extent possible, so we will be working to take advantage of the incentives that are available for each step of the conversion process.

Click on the link to hear more information on the mandate, available incentives, and Lansing's response.

[CLICK HERE](#) (Electric Bus Conversation Starts at the 58 minute 13 second mark – 58:13)



The Budget Process:

Developing a school budget is a process that starts in November of the previous school year, and is ongoing until the Board of Education approves the final budget in April to take to the voters in May.

There are various ways to create a budget. Lansing engages in what is viewed as a hybrid model. We have long-term equipment purchasing and replacement plans for transportation, facilities, technology, and athletics. Since these are more expensive items, it is beneficial to plan out when and how they will be replaced to ensure there are not years with significant increases in costs. It is a way we can maintain stability in our expense budget.

For all other expenses, we engage in zero-based budgeting. This means the remainder of the budget is built from scratch based on needs and requests. All expenses are justified annually based on student needs. We review structures and staffing to ensure it is needed, makes sense, is efficient, and, most importantly, is best for students.

Since salaries and benefits are the majority of the budget, we start there. Salaries and benefits are also dictated by negotiated contracts, so they are typically a known factor. What isn't known in the early stages is who may be retiring or leaving for other reasons or what staffing is needed to support student needs.

On the revenue side, we look at projected state aid, projected assessments and the allowable tax levy and what reserves and fund balance we have in place to help offset any increases in taxes.

Below is a general outline of the timeline for the process.

November to December: Review contractual obligations and the impact on budget

January: Faculty and staff submit requests for the following year based on their instructional or office needs. (Everything from pencils to textbooks and paperclips to filing cabinets). Building leaders review those requests and meet with their faculty and staff to discuss. The initial Governor's proposal is also released at this time. Presentations are provided to the board of education on initial numbers and projections.

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February: Each building and department budget is reviewed. We meet with each supervisor to discuss their anticipated needs and meet as a larger leadership team to look at the bigger overall picture. We review student trends (enrollments and demographics), analyze staffing ratios, and discuss anticipated staffing changes. We also start looking at the tax cap and how that will impact the revenue side of the budget. Updates are provided to the BOE on district needs, resources, and projections.

March: In March we receive estimated assessment projections from the Department of Assessment and use that information to update the tax cap and make estimates regarding the tax levy and the tax rate. Department budgets and area components are presented to the Board of Education along with recommendations. Use of appropriated fund balance and reserves is also discussed with the board at this time.

April: Final state aid projections are received from the state. We account for any changes and review the impact on the tax levy. A final budget is presented to the BOE for their approval.

May: The district engages in public hearings to discuss the budget. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent attend community meetings if invited to share information. A budget newsletter and budget notice is mailed to all residences, and detailed information is posted on our website. Finally, the vote happens on the third Tuesday in May.

July: It is not until July that we receive the final tax roll and we can calculate the final tax impact – tax rate, tax levy, payments in lieu of taxes.

Budgeting is an ongoing process. Communications with the Board of Education happen throughout the process along with updates on the current budget through the school year. These presentations are recorded and posted on Youtube for the community to watch at any time [Lansing CSD YouTube](#). In person Board of Education meetings occur the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month in the LGI (Large Group Instruction) room at the HS at 7pm.

For more information you can visit the LCSD Budget website at [Lansing CSD Budget](#) or view the NYS Education Department Budgeting Handbook at [NYSED Budgeting Handbook](#)



BUDGET NEWSLETTER WILL BE SENT OUT ON MAY 1ST, 2024

BUDGET VOTE:
Tuesday May 21st
CHANGE OF LOCATION: ES CAFETERIA
7AM TO 9PM

