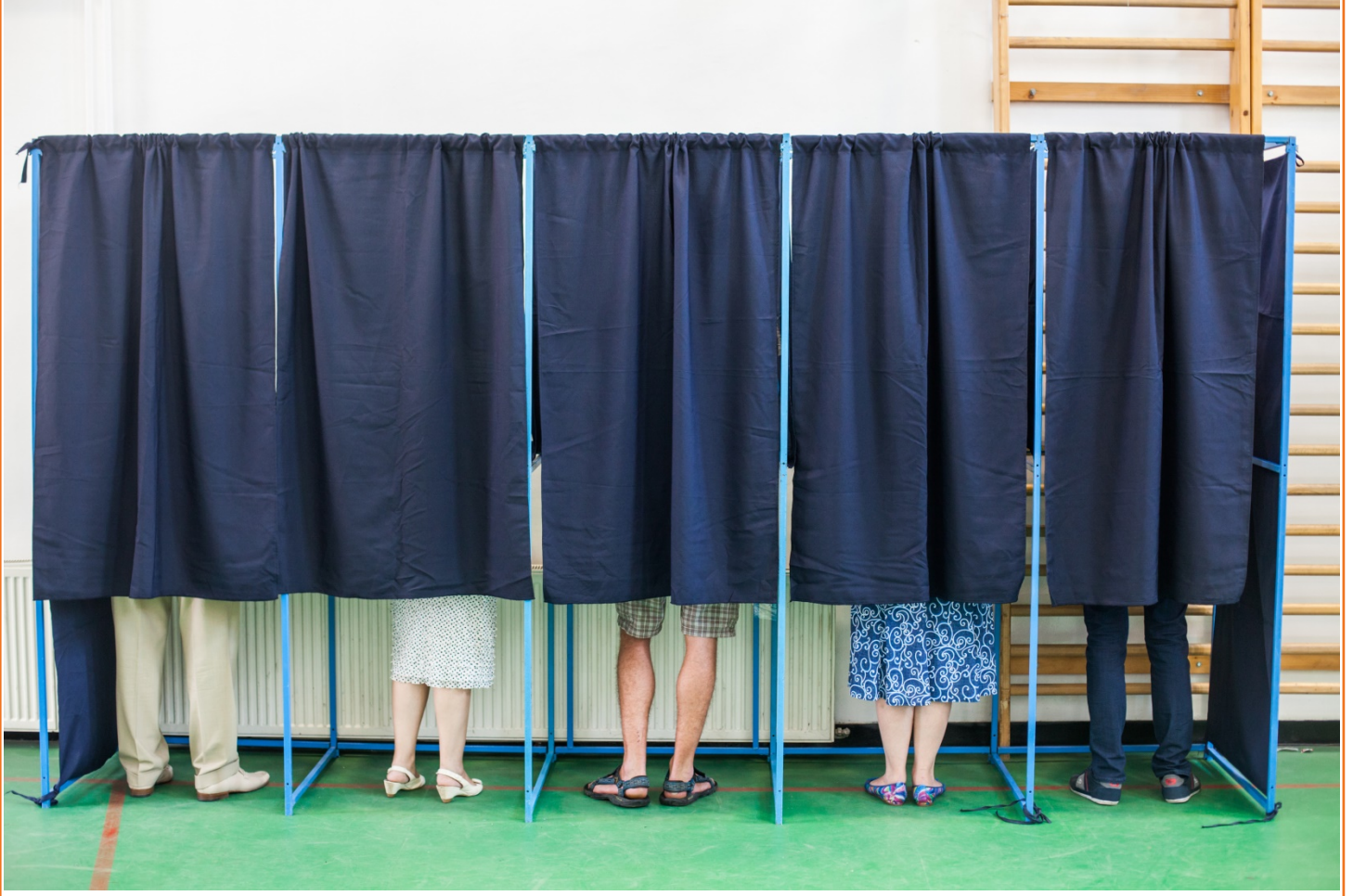


# Three Out of Four Tax Cap Overrides Succeed

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New York State  
Association of School  
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*Advancing the Business of Education*

**May 17, 2017**

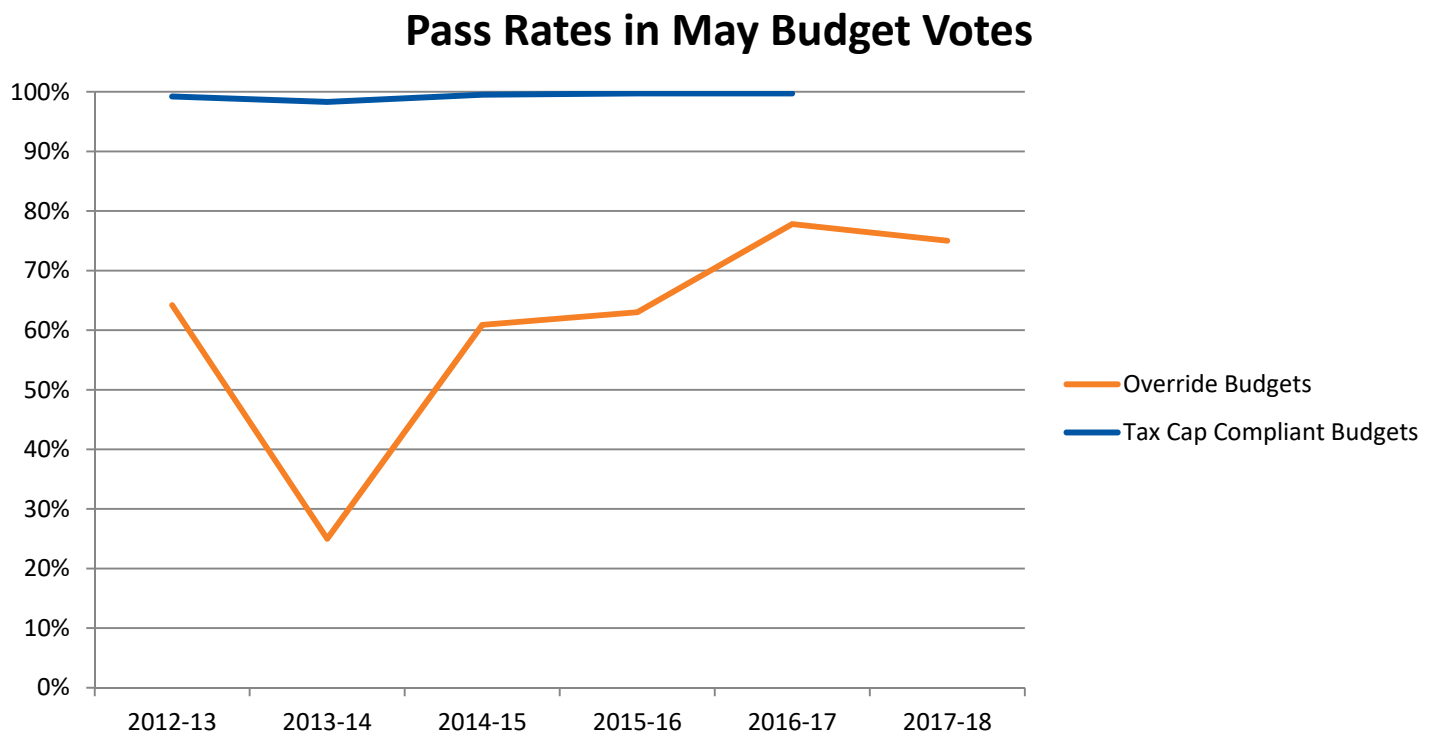
On May 16, 2017, communities voted on their school districts' proposed budgets for the 2017-18 school year. Only 12 districts put budgets forward that required the 60 percent voter approval needed to override the Tax Cap. 75 percent of the overrides were successful, a slight decline from the 77.8% of override budgets that were passed in May 2016. School districts whose budgets are defeated at the May vote have the option of going directly to a contingency budget or advancing the same or revised budget at the June budget vote to be held on June 20, 2017. If the budget is defeated a second time, the district must operate under a contingency budget. A contingency budget requires the district to operate at the same level of tax levy as the year before and does not allow the district to raise additional taxes to support permissible exclusions that are allowed if the budget were approved.

While we work on analyzing final results from the 657 districts that had not proposed an override, we want to share this brief analysis of school districts that asked their voters to override the Tax Cap.

## Overrides

The twelve districts proposing to override the Tax Cap is by far the smallest number since the creation of the Tax Cap. 75 percent of these budgets met the 60 percent threshold. Of the three failed override attempts, two school districts (DeRuyter and Pittsford) gained a majority of support, while falling short of the 60 percent supermajority. The third district, East Ramapo, wasn't close to approval with only 12.6 percent community support.

**Figure 1. Pass Rates in May Budget Votes**



**Figure 2. Supporting Data for Figure 1**

School Budget Year	Number of Districts Seeking Override	Pass Rate in May Vote	Pass Rate for Non-Override Budgets
2012-13	53	64.2%	99.2%
2013-14	28	25%	98.3%
2014-15	23	60.9%	99.5%
2015-16	19	63%	99.7%
2016-17	36	77.8%	99.7%
2017-18	12	75%	TBD

**Figure 3. Outcome for School Districts Seeking to Override the Tax Cap**

School District	State Region	Result	Percent Yes
1. Beaver River	North Country	Passed	80.1%
2. Cheektowaga-Maryvale	Western Region	Passed	79.1%
3. DeRuyter	Central Region	Failed	56.4%
4. East Aurora	Western Region	Passed	61.6%
5. East Ramapo	Hudson Valley	Failed	12.6%
6. Ellicottville	Western Region	Passed	84.4%
7. Franklin	Southern Tier	Passed	78%
8. Mamaroneck	Hudson Valley	Passed	76.9%
9. New Paltz	Hudson Valley	Passed	70.1%
10. Niagara Falls	Western Region	Passed	77.5%
11. Pittsford	Finger Lakes	Failed	53.5%
12. Rhinebeck	Hudson Valley	Passed	60.7%

## School Districts Proposing Overrides

### Beaver River – PASSED

#### Quick facts:

NRC: High-Need Rural  
Region: North Country  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: -\$583.86  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 107%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 854

#### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$16,222,319
Spending Increase	1.4%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$5,243,878
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	2%
2017-18 Tax Cap	0.42%

**Notes:** The district argued that an override budget with a modest increase this year will prevent the need for more significant overrides in the next few years. Significant cost increases include instructional salaries, which went up 2.6 percent, and BOCES general support, which went up 16.5 percent. Voters also approved a proposals for up to \$300,000 to purchase three school buses.

## Cheektowaga-Maryville – PASSED

### Quick facts:

NRC: Average-Need  
Region: Western Region  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: \$1,234  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 80%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 2,225

### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$43,165,468
Spending Increase	2.37%
<b>Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18</b>	\$20,775,361
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	1.99%
2017-18 Tax Cap	0.44%

**Notes:** Maryvale faced a particularly small tax cap of 0.44 percent. The district explained that its override budget is needed to prevent cuts to clubs and activities as well as larger class sizes.

# DeRuyter – FAILED

## Quick facts:

NRC: Rural High-Need  
Region: Central Region  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: -\$740  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 107%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 399

## *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$9,964,395
Spending Increase	1.11%
<b>Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18</b>	<b>\$3,679,402</b>
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	4.8%
2017-18 Tax Cap	2.76%

**Notes:** DeRuyter cites salary increases, a low tax cap (2.76%), limited fund balance and reserves, small property tax base, and health care costs in its decision to seek an override. Three other ballot proposals: purchasing new school buses, increased library contribution, and expanded summer recreation programs.

## East Aurora – PASSED

### Quick facts:

NRC: Low-Need  
Region: Western Region  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: \$457  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 85%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 1,816

### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$33,234,373
Spending Increase	4.93%
<b>Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18</b>	\$20,465,729
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	6.9%
2017-18 Tax Cap	2.32%

**Notes:** Budget still includes staff cuts (up to eight teachers). Cuts and override in response to cost increases for transportation and BOCES.

# East Ramapo – FAILED

## Quick facts:

NRC: Low-Need  
Region: Hudson Valley  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: \$741  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 68%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 8,794

## *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$232,598,879
Spending Increase	3.67%
<b>Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18</b>	<b>\$152,975,617</b>
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	2.49%
2017-18 Tax Cap	1.48%

**Notes:** The state required East Ramapo to revise its initial budget, because it would provide transportation to private schools on days when public schools were closed. East Ramapo has been under state oversight/monitoring since 2015.



## Ellicottville – PASSED

### Quick facts:

NRC: Average-Need  
Region: Western Region  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: -\$1,516  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 151%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 660

### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$12,319,921
Spending Increase	3.5%
<b>Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18</b>	<b>\$7,203,262</b>
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	3.2%
2017-18 Tax Cap	0.97%

**Notes:** The district cited a low tax cap limit for its decision to seek an override.

## Franklin – PASSED

### Quick facts:

NRC: Rural High-Need  
Region: Southern Tier  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: -\$1,987  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 126%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 275  
Previous Override: 2016-17 (Passed)

### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$6,967,989
Spending Increase	1.3%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$2,679,889
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	2.72%
2017-18 Tax Cap	1.72%

## Mamaroneck – PASSED

### Quick facts:

NRC: Low Need  
Region: Hudson Valley  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: -\$239  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 142%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 5,537

### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$135,103,791
Spending Increase	1.46%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$120,566,415
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	2.25%
2017-18 Tax Cap	1.04%

**Notes:** The school district explained its override by noting it drew on a significant amount of its reserves in last year's budget and that without the override, there will be significant cuts.

# New Paltz – PASSED

## Quick facts:

NRC: Average Need  
Region: Hudson Valley  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: \$877  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 82%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 2,179  
Previous Override: 2016-17 (passed)

## *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$59,000,000
Spending Increase	3.51%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$41,060,000
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	2.34%
2017-18 Tax Cap	1.20%

**Notes:** According to the district, adhering to the tax cap would require eliminating junior varsity sports and three teaching positions.

# Niagara Falls - PASSED

## Quick facts:

NRC: Urban / Suburban High-Need  
Region: Western Region  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: \$2,025  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 85%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 7,100  
Previous Override: 2015-16 (passed)

### *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$140,921,509
Spending Increase	2.82%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$25,828,989
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	0%
2017-18 Tax Cap	-1.09%

# Pittsford Central School District - FAILED

## Quick facts:

NRC: Low Need  
Region: Finger Lakes  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: \$741  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 68%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 5,780

## *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$134,229,854
Spending Increase	6.95%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$99,810,907
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	4.73%
2017-18 Tax Cap	2.72%

**Notes:** Pittsford cited moving to full-day Kindergarten as the central factor behind its decision to seek an override. Other factors mentioned include significant Foundation Aid Still Due and receiving the minimum Foundation Aid increase in the 2017-18 state budget.

# Rhinebeck – PASSED

## Quick facts:

NRC: Low Need  
Region: Hudson Valley  
Foundation Aid Still Due per Pupil: -\$95  
Percent Foundation Aid Funded: 106%  
2017-18 Enrollment: 1,013

## *Budget Summary:*

Total Proposed Spending 2017-18	\$33,121,397
Spending Increase	3.07%
Total Proposed Tax Levy 2017-18	\$27,912,045
Proposed Tax Levy Increase	3.88%
2017-18 Tax Cap	2.18%

**Notes:** The district notes that because of its low-need classification, it received a small state aid increase. Combined with dwindling reserves, this pushed the district to pursue an override.

Data Sources: March 1st Tax Cap data, Property Tax Report Card data, and NYSASBO analysis.

**Data Sources:** Office of the State Comptroller's Tax Cap data as of March 2, 2017, NYSED Property Tax Report Card data as of May 3, 2017, and NYSASBO analysis.

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SOURCE: New York State Association of School Business Officials, Albany, NY 12205, [Date of Release], [www.nysasbo.org](http://www.nysasbo.org)

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