

Budget Newsletter

EAST GREENBUSH CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.egcsd.org



Page 2–3: Budget Information

Page 4: 2025–26 Highlights

Page 7: BOE Candidates



School Budget Vote and Board Election Scheduled for May 19

The East Greenbush Central School District has proposed a school budget for 2026-27 totaling \$118,872,000. The budget prioritizes academic and extracurricular programs for students, achieving a balanced plan through strategic reductions in expenses, use of fund balance and reserves, and a tax levy increase of 3.33%.

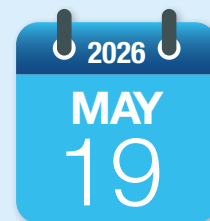
Residents will vote on the proposed school budget on Tuesday, May 19.

Despite the financial challenges affecting school districts – most notably rising health care costs – the East Greenbush CSD is able to maintain all core academic programs, including college credit courses, AP courses, career and technical education, academic intervention services, extracurricular activities, and pre-k.

District administrators have worked with the board over the last few months to evaluate the budget and reduce expenses without impacting instructional programming. By finding efficiencies and strategic reductions outside the classroom, average class sizes will remain below district guidelines at all levels.

“Highlighting and enhancing high quality educational programs were a priority throughout this budget planning process,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kurtis Kotes. “We feel confident that this budget proposal will continue to support the excellence that occurs in classrooms throughout the district.”

BUDGET VOTE & BOARD ELECTION



7 AM – 9 PM

WHAT'S ON THE BALLOT?

PROPOSITION 1: School Budget of \$118,872,000 with 3.33% Tax Levy Increase

PROPOSITION 2: Replace 6 School Buses from Bus Purchase Reserve Fund (Gas/Diesel)

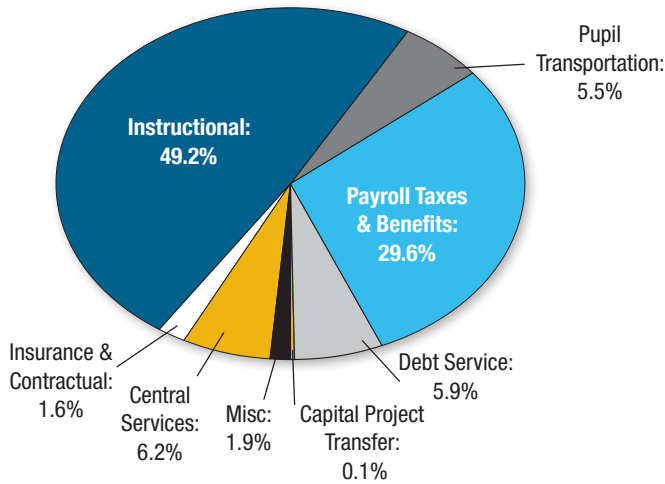
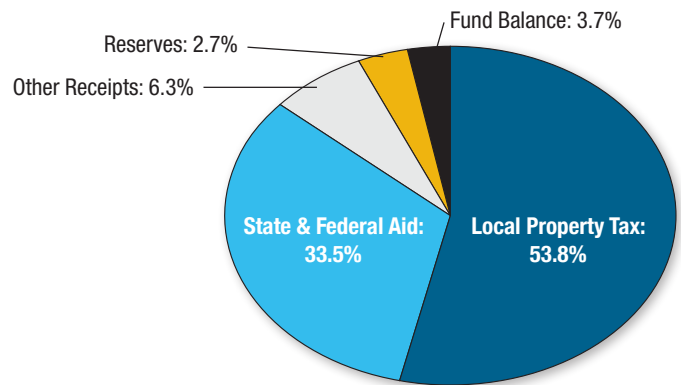
ELECTION OF THREE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS



FOR THE FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW, the East Greenbush CSD was voted Best Public School District in the Times Union Best of the Capital Region contest.

BUDGET REVENUES

Category	Current Budget 2025-2026	Proposed Budget 2026-2027
Local Property Tax Levy	\$ 61,820,821	\$ 63,877,604
State and Federal Aid	38,055,879	39,862,629
Other Receipts	7,650,350	7,505,817
Fund Balance	4,371,422	4,371,422
Reserves	3,254,528	3,254,528
Totals:	\$ 115,153,000	\$ 118,872,000



BUDGET EXPENDITURES

Category	Current Budget 2025-2026	Proposed Budget 2026-2027
Board of Education, Central Administration Operations, Legal Services, Personnel & Public Information	\$ 2,221,031	\$ 2,304,464
Central Services	7,459,247	7,346,293
Insurance & Contractual Items	1,860,780	1,885,751
Instructional Programs	57,263,091	58,494,759
Pupil Transportation	6,344,713	6,504,975
Payroll Taxes & Benefits	33,282,083	35,128,254
Capital Project Transfer	--	175,000
Debt Service & Other Transfers	6,722,055	7,032,504
Totals:	\$ 115,153,000	\$ 118,872,000



Q: Where should I vote on May 19, 2026?

A: The school district is divided into election zones as follows:

- Bell Top – Residents of the Town of North Greenbush
- Goff – Residents of the Town of East Greenbush
- Donald P. Sutherland – Residents of the Towns of Sand Lake or Chatham or Residents with a Nassau mailing address
- Green Meadow – Residents of the Town of Schodack who do not have a Nassau mailing address



SCAN HERE FOR THE
POLLING PLACE FINDER

Budget Q&A

Q: Who creates the school budget?

A: School administrators develop a budget in coordination with the Superintendent, the Board of Education and members of the community.

Q: Is the property tax levy cap really 2 percent?

A: No. Each school district is required to calculate their unique property tax levy cap using an eight step formula provided by New York State. Some school districts will have a tax levy cap higher than two percent and others will have a tax levy cap lower than two percent dependent upon the values of all eight factors in their school calculation. The only factor in the entire calculation relating to two percent is the inflationary factor, which is the lesser of 2 percent or the Consumer Price Index.

The tax levy cap for the East Greenbush CSD in 2026-27 is 3.33%.

Q: What happens if the budget is defeated?

A: If the proposed budget is defeated on May 19, 2026, the Board of Education typically has two options:

1. Submit the same or a modified budget for a second vote on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, or
2. Immediately adopt a contingency budget.

If the residents defeat the proposed budget during the second vote, the Board must adopt a contingent budget, in accordance with State regulations.

Based on the proposed budget as of April 21, 2026, a contingent budget cannot increase the current tax levy by any amount, which would result in a reduction of at least \$2,056,783 in appropriations. These reductions could include additional cuts to teaching staff, support staff, academic programs such as pre-k, student services, equipment, contractual expenses and supplies.

Learn more about the proposed school budget by visiting www.egcsd.org/budget.

East Greenbush CSD Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal	Budget Adopted for the 2025-26 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2026-27 School Year *				
Total Budgeted Amount, Not Including Separate Propositions	\$ 115,153,000	\$ 118,872,000	\$116,815,217				
Increase/Decrease for the 2026-27 School Year		\$ 3,719,000	\$ 1,662,217				
Percentage Increase/Decrease in Proposed Budget		3.23%	1.44%				
Change in the Consumer Price Index		2.63%					
A. Proposed Levy to Support the Total Budgeted Amount	\$ 61,820,821	\$ 63,877,604					
B. Levy to Support Library Debt, if Applicable	\$ -	\$ -					
C. Levy for Non-Excludable Propositions, if Applicable **	\$ -	\$ -					
D. Total Tax Cap Reserve Amount Used to Reduce Current Year Levy	\$ -	\$ -					
E. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy (A + B + C - D)	\$ 61,820,821	\$ 63,877,604	\$ 61,820,821				
F. Total Permissible Exclusions	\$ 2,411,351	\$ 2,604,284					
G. School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$ 58,461,803	\$ 61,273,320					
H. Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, <u>Excluding</u> Levy to Support Library Debt and/or Permissible Exclusions (E – B – F + D)	\$ 59,409,470	\$ 61,273,320					
I. Difference: G – H (Negative Value Requires 60.0% Voter Approval. See Note Below Regarding Separate Propositions) **	\$ -947,667	\$ -					
Administrative Component	\$ 14,228,560	\$ 14,431,376	\$ 14,190,237				
Program Component	\$ 86,279,387	\$ 89,090,169	\$ 87,601,525				
Capital Component	\$ 14,645,052	\$ 15,350,455	\$ 15,023,455				
<p>* Provide a statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2026-27 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated pursuant to Section 2023 of the Education Law.</p> <p>Under NYS law, if the budget is defeated the Board may adopt a contingent budget or put a budget before the voters a second time. If the budget is defeated twice, the Board must adopt a contingent budget. Certain existing contingent budget requirements remain in effect that prohibit spending in specific areas including non-fee-based community use of buildings, certain salary increases and new equipment purchases. More significantly a district that adopts a contingent budget may not increase its current tax levy by any amount. This would lead to further reductions in staff, equipment, contractual expenses and supplies. A contingent budget would require \$2,056,783 in reductions, which is the increase in the tax levy.</p>							
<p>** List Separate Propositions that are not included in the Total Budgeted Amount: (Tax Levy associated with educational or transportation services propositions are not eligible for exclusion and may affect voter approval requirements)</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Description</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Bus Purchases (Gas/Diesel) – Proposition #2</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 1,100,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Description	Amount	Bus Purchases (Gas/Diesel) – Proposition #2	\$ 1,100,000
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Bus Purchases (Gas/Diesel) – Proposition #2	\$ 1,100,000						
<p>*NOTE TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUSINESS OFFICIALS: Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of this completed form to: emscmgts@nysed.gov</p>			Under the Budget Proposed for the 2026-27 School Year				
Estimated Basic STAR Exemption Savings ¹			\$ 377				

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2026-27 by the qualified voters of the East Greenbush Central School District, Rensselaer and Columbia Counties, New York, will be held at D.P. Sutherland, Green Meadow, Bell Top, and Howard L. Goff schools in said district on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 between the hours of 7:00am and 9:00pm, prevailing time in the above-mentioned schools, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

1. The basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

Proposition 2: Bus Purchase from Reserve Fund (Gas/Diesel)

Voters will decide on the replacement of six school buses, which will be fully paid for by the Bus Purchase Reserve Fund with no impact to taxpayers.

The Bus Purchase Reserve Fund acts like a savings account, allowing the district to store money for the sole purpose of purchasing buses. It also helps the district avoid the costs that come with borrowing.



Bus Type (Gas/Diesel)	Quantity	Proposition 2
53-72 Passenger	6	\$ 1,100,000

With voter approval, New York State reimburses the District for approximately 66.5% of the total bus purchase.

2025-26 Highlights

- All district schools are in “Good Standing” according to the NYS Education Department



Five schools selected to the 2026 U.S. News Best School Rankings

- Green Meadow 4th Grade Teacher Jaimee Kusche was named 2026 EGTA Teacher of the Year
- Four East Greenbush teachers - Meagan Asenbauer, Shondra Conyers, Abigail Kissane and Julie Reilly - won Broadview Educator Grants
- Genet Teachers Marie Chieco and Kelly Aldinger were named NYS Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Co-Teaching Pair of the Year
- Columbia Science Teacher Tom Ross was named a News Channel 13 Top Teacher
- Columbia won five Section 2 team championships including: Boys’ Soccer, Game Day Cheerleading, Competitive Cheer, Girls’ Volleyball, and Girls’ Indoor Track
- Columbia Baseball Coach Chris Dedrick was inducted into the NYS Baseball Hall of Fame
- Alivia Landy ’25 was named 2025 Capital District Grand Scholastic Sports Woman of the Year
- Hosted a number of community events this school year including: concerts, musicals, Veterans Day celebrations, Winterfest, Multicultural Fair, and the District-wide Art Show
- East Greenbush CSD received the School Safety Excellence Award from Utica National Insurance Group
- East Greenbush CSD was assigned two strong credit ratings by Moody’s, confirming the district’s well-managed financial position
- East Greenbush CSD received a positive fiscal stress score for 13th straight year

- Voted Public Best School District each of the last five years in the Times Union Best of the Capital Region contest
- Columbia Kicks Cancer raised a record \$239,237 for Blood Cancer United (formerly Leukemia & Lymphoma Society)
- Eight students received Spotlight on Youth Awards from the Town of East Greenbush
- Aneira Bailey ’26 won the "Taking the Pulse of the Planet Award" from NOAA at the 36th annual Regeneration Greater Capital Region Science and Engineering Fair
- Two Columbia students - Bethany Lewis ’27 and Lyla Maguffin ’27 - had artwork featured in the Art in 3 Dimensions Show
- Named one of the 2026 Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants
- Eli Merritt ’27 performed in the NYSSMA All-State Symphonic Band
- Four Bell Top students had stories published in a national writing contest through Young Writers USA



WWII and Cold War Veteran Receives High School Diploma from Columbia High School

Dominic Bersani was awarded his high school diploma in November by Columbia High School Principal Michael Harkin through New York State’s Operation Recognition program. Mr. Bersani, born in 1926, attended school in Maine but left before graduating when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Congratulations to Mr. Bersani '25!



East Greenbush CSD Named to 2026 Best Communities for Music Education

The East Greenbush Central School District has been named one of the 2026 Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants. This national award recognizes school districts that set the bar in offering students access to comprehensive music education.

Criteria for selection is based on a variety of factors such as teacher/student ratio, music education participation rates, teacher qualifications, music facilities, and budget.

BY THE NUMBERS *(as of April 7, 2026)*

- 3** Columbia students competed in the Regeneron Greater Capital Region Science and Engineering Fair
- 5** Columbia musicians selected for NYSSMA Area All-State Festival
- 6** Goff students received Physical Education Leadership Awards
- 9** Columbia students had artwork accepted to 27th Annual High School Regional Art Exhibition
- 16** Board of Education meetings hosted in person and live streamed for the public so far this year
- 24** Medals won by Columbia Science Olympiad Team at Regional Championships
- 25** Monarch butterflies raised and released by Bell Top students this past fall
- 29** Students performed at the Red Mill Talent Show
- 50** Projects presented at Green Meadow Project Showcase
- 95** Students featured in K-8 Empire State Plaza Student Art Exhibit
- 105** Goals scored by the Section 2 Champion Boys' Soccer Team this past season
- 113** Students enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs
- 225** 8th graders who attended this year's class trip to Washington, DC
- 390** News stories posted on www.egcsd.org since the first day of school
- 2,955** Canned goods donated to food pantries and the Backpack Programs by Genet families
- 3,405** Followers on Instagram (@egreenbushcsd)
- 4,311** Total number of students in the East Greenbush CSD, who we care for and teach every day!
- 112,103** Minutes read by students during the DPS Read-a-Thon
- 308,124** Free lunches served to students
- 925,991** Miles driven by East Greenbush school buses this school year



Red Mill playground will open this fall

CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE: Improvements Continue Across School District

It has been just about one year since the East Greenbush CSD began construction on its multi-year “Building a Brighter Future” Capital Project. Since that time, the district has made steady progress and begun improving school facilities.

PHASE 1A (COMPLETED IN FALL 2025)

- New roof at Columbia
- Replacement of outdoor tennis courts and basketball courts at Columbia

PHASE 1B (COMPLETED BY FALL 2026)

- New 6-Lane Track and Turf Field at Goff
- Reconstructed Grass Fields at Goff
- New Outdoor Tennis/Pickleball/Basketball Court at Goff
- New Access Road Connecting Hays Road to Goff Parking Lot

PHASE 2 (IN PROCESS)

- Renovated Goff Library (Anticipated by September 2026)
- Replacement of Red Mill Playground (Anticipated by September 2026)
- Replacement of Red Mill Sewer Line (Anticipated by September 2026)
- Renovated Red Mill Library (Construction starts December 2026)
- Install air conditioning in Red Mill (Fall 2027)

PHASES 3-6 (PLANNED FOR 2027-2029)

- Install air conditioning at Green Meadow, Bell Top, DPS and Genet
- Renovate libraries at Green Meadow, Bell Top, DPS and Genet
- Replace playgrounds at Green Meadow, Bell Top and DPS
- Reconstruct Goff main entrance
- Renovate Goff locker rooms and music rooms
- Reconstruct Columbia entrance road
- Install new lighting and sound system in Columbia auditorium
- Renovate Columbia athletic fields
- Build new classrooms
- Install new water fountains with bottle fillers
- Install new security cameras
- Repair and replace parking lots and sidewalks
- Removal of hazardous materials
- Plumbing & electrical
- Exterior doors and weather protection
- General site improvements

Columbia High School Capital Improvements

To ensure our facilities remain safe and functional, the 2026-27 general fund budget includes a \$175,000 capital project for Columbia High School. This allocation complements our ongoing “Building a Brighter Future” capital project by addressing essential infrastructure needs and routine maintenance outside the original scope. Key upgrades include replacing the IT server room’s HVAC system—safeguarding critical technology against costly outages—as well as general interior and exterior repairs. Importantly, structuring this work as a capital project makes it eligible for state building aid, providing a more cost-effective solution than using unaided maintenance funds.



East Greenbush CSD Develops New Strategic Plan

The East Greenbush CSD developed a new strategic plan last summer that will guide the district’s vision and priorities into the future. Priorities include:

The Student Experience

- Academic Excellence and Variety in Opportunities
- Mental Health and Supports for All Students
- Academic and Behavioral Accountability

The Staff Experience

- Opportunities for Collaboration
- Support for Innovation and Instructional Technology
- Appropriate Staffing Levels

Operations and Community Relations

- HVAC and Facility Upgrades
- Long-Term Sustainability
- Communication

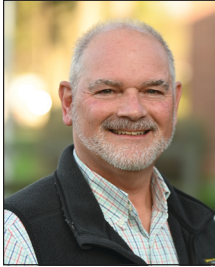
Board of Education Candidates

There are three open seats for the Board of Education. Qualified district residents may vote for up to three persons to fill these positions. The following candidates filed nominations:

Michael Buono

EDUCATION: B.A. Siena College

OCCUPATION: Retired Director of Human Resources at Questar III BOCES



It has been an honor to serve on the EGCSB Board of Education for the past 12 years, including seven years as Board President. I am seeking a fifth term because I remain deeply committed to public education and serving our community. I aim to continue supporting thoughtful, long-term planning for our district.

A lifelong resident of the area, my wife Heidi and I have lived within our district for over 35 years. We are the proud parents of three children who attended the district's schools. A Siena College graduate, I recently retired after nearly 40 years in human resources, serving both the private and public sectors.

To sustain the high-quality educational opportunities our students and families expect and deserve, we must allocate the resources entrusted to us by our community in a fiscally responsible manner. Equally important is providing our dedicated faculty and staff with the tools and support they need to succeed. I believe my board experience and professional background will enable me to continue contributing effectively as we address the challenges ahead.

Shay Harrison

EDUCATION: B.S. Rice University, PhD University of Connecticut

OCCUPATION: Chief Executive Officer at Free Form Fibers



I have resided in the district for over two decades and presently live in East Greenbush with my wife and daughter. My educational background is in materials science. I run an advanced material manufacturing company in Saratoga Springs. I graduated from Columbia High School in 1990 and previously served on the EGCSB Board of Education for 7 years. In addition, I have participated in a range of roles in the district, including as a coach for 25 years in the girls and boys basketball programs and a mentor in the Science Research program.

I am interested in re-joining the BOE as the district faces challenges over the next few years, particularly in the financial realm, but it is operating from a strong foundation of educational performance by our students and the dedication and commitment of the staff. I hope to be able to contribute to the collaborative and creative solutions that will be needed for the district to be successful.

Rob Marchiony

EDUCATION: J.D. Albany Law School; MBA Frostburg State University; B.S. SUNY Brockport

OCCUPATION: Staff Attorney, Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department



My wife Laurie (first grade teacher at Genet) and I have lived in East Greenbush for 16 years, and our three children Emma ('23), Thomas ('25) and Michael ('28) have received a great education and had many tremendous experiences in our district.

I have always been community-minded, having served on the boards of EG Softball, Little League, and Sorensco Babe Ruth, as well as being a Cub Scout leader, before being elected to the EGCSB Board last year. In my 20 years of working with the Court in various roles, I have developed a keen ability to research diverse topics and examine issues from a variety of perspectives. Prior to my legal career, I worked in higher education (and coached college baseball) and served in management roles in several nonprofit organizations.

I look forward to continuing to serve our community and use my experience and education to support the great work our teachers and administrators are doing, and to help the district navigate the major challenges ahead.

Jesse Temple

EDUCATION: B.S. SUNY Empire State College

OCCUPATION: Principal Accountant with New York State Department of Health



I am running for a second term on the Board of Education because the work is not done. As a parent of three children in the district—two at Goff and one at Genet—I am directly invested in our district's wellbeing. Our district faces a projected deficit of approximately \$2 million, with costs continuing to rise. We need experienced leadership willing to challenge the status quo to keep our district strong.

Over the past three years on the Board, including one as Board President, and through my work with the New York State School Boards Association, I have helped lead our district and others across the State.

I also bring a unique perspective. I grew up in Albany's South End, raised by public servants, attended both public and private schools, and followed a nontraditional path through education. Those experiences shape how I lead—keeping values first and people at the center of every decision. I advocate for students, staff, and administrators and will continue bringing perspective not always represented.



East Greenbush Central School District
 ADMINISTRATION CENTER
 29 Englewood Avenue
 East Greenbush, NY 12061

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2025-2026 Board of Education

- Michael Buono, *Assistant Clerk*
- Cyndi Herron
- Rob Marchiony
- Rob Panasci
- Samantha Phillips, *Deputy Treasurer*
- Robert Shane
- Jesse Temple
- Kimberly Turner, *President*
- Catherine Van Orden, *Vice President*
- Holly Thorpe '26, *Ex-Officio*
- William Bollam '27, *Ex-Officio Alternate*

DATED MATERIAL – PLEASE MAIL IMMEDIATELY

The East Greenbush Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or marital status, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by State or Federal law in any of its employment decisions; and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, and NYS Human Rights Laws.

BUDGET VOTE
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026

Voting Information

POLLING SITES

- **Bell Top Elementary School** – Residents of the Town of North Greenbush
- **Howard L. Goff Middle School** – Residents of the Town of East Greenbush
- **Donald P. Sutherland Elementary School** – Residents of the Towns of Sand Lake or Chatham, or residents with a Nassau mailing address
- **Green Meadow Elementary School** – Residents of the Town of Schodack who do not have a Nassau mailing address



Scan QR code to find
 your polling place

DATE OF THE ELECTION:

Tuesday, May 19, 2026
7 a.m. – 9. p.m.

VOTER REGISTRATION:

You are already registered to vote if you have voted in a school election within the last 4 years (or are registered with the County Board of Elections).

To register:

- Go to the Office of the District Clerk, 29 Englewood Avenue, East Greenbush, from 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on regular days of business
- Bring photo ID with a current address
- If you have moved, also bring other means of residential identification, such as a utility bill, phone bill or other official document

VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

- Age 18 or older
- U.S. Citizen
- Resident of the district for at least 30 days prior to the vote
- Registered to vote

VOTING BY ABSENTEE BALLOT

Qualified district residents who are unable to go to the polls may cast their votes by absentee ballot. An application is required first and may be obtained by calling the District Office at 518-207-2535. Applications are also available on the District’s website at www.egcsd.org. The due date for applications is Tuesday, May 12, 2026 if received by mail or Monday, May 18, 2026 if received in person at the District Office.

Once a completed application is approved, an absentee ballot is issued to the voter; it must be returned to the District Clerk’s Office by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19, 2026. Note that individuals designated as permanently disabled by the Rensselaer County Board of Elections will automatically receive an absentee ballot.

EARLY VOTING BY MAIL

Early voting by mail for school budget votes and board elections is now available to New York State residents. Registered, qualified voters of the school district may apply for an early mail ballot by requesting an application from the District Clerk.

CONNECT WITH US!    Follow the East Greenbush CSD on social media or visit our website (www.egcsd.org) for news, updates and more!