

Frequently Asked Questions

The Board of Education members deliberated thoughtfully about raising the tax levy. This decision was particularly difficult as it affects all taxpayers including all board of education members. The decision was made in the best interest of Union Beach's students.

Union Beach's state aid has been cut significantly- over \$2.6 million. While the State is cutting our aid, the price of everything continues to rise (tuition, transportation, salaries, benefits, utilities, etc.).

What percentage are the taxes going up?

The school portion of the tax levy is currently \$8,622,158 and all other taxes collected are \$14,047,256.58 for a total of \$22,669,414.60.

The District plans to increase their portion of the tax levy by \$3,243,247.

3,243,247/22,669,414.60 is a 14.3% tax increase.

This \$3,243,247 includes the usual 2% increase and adjustments for enrollment/healthcare (\$608,187). This amount is the total increase for the school tax levy.

Are we below adequacy?

Yes, that is why the District is eligible for this tax levy increase. Only districts that are spending below the state-defined adequacy level and have a general fund tax levy that falls below its local fair share qualify for this program.

Are the Memorial School students the only ones being affected by the District budget?

No. The District is financially responsible for all Memorial students, Union Beach high school students, and students who are placed in out-of-district special education schools. The District must pay tuition and transportation costs for students who attend high school. Union Beach does not control this tuition and must pay the county approved amount. The District must also pay tuition and transportation costs for students who attend out-of-district special education schools. The District must also pay transportation costs for students who attend parochial schools.

Why is the 2023-24 per pupil cost the last one that was shared?

This is the most recent data the District has from the NJDOE. The cost per pupil is recalibrated after the completion of the school year.

Is the Union Beach Public School District audited?

Yes, the District is audited annually. Please see the following links:

<https://www.nj.gov/education/finance/fp/acfr/search/24/5230.pdf>

<https://www.nj.gov/education/finance/fp/acfr/search/24/amr/5230.pdf>

How was the money from last year's tax levy increase used?

The District utilized this money to pay for healthcare cost increases and to maintain the staffing and services that the District already had (transportation, out-of-district placements, and salaries).

How long will taxes go up?

This year, there will be a tax increase above the 2% cap. The amount your taxes will increase will be permanent, but it is our understanding that the 2% cap will be back in place for future years.

How much would regionalization cost?

There is no definitive answer on this. The answer depends on with whom the District consolidates. If the other District has debt and higher salaries, then taxes would be used to pay for this. If the local school is closed, then students would have to be bused to another school, and taxes would have to pay for transportation. Students would be forced to go to the high school in their new regionalized district. There would no longer be a choice for high schools. There would be some savings on redundant positions (even then, the decision about who fills the different positions would most likely be dictated by tenure law). Additionally, if Union Beach merges with a larger District, then the amount of board members on the board of education would be limited. The Board continues to have thoughtful discussions regarding this topic.

Has the District made a concerted effort to save money and look for revenue?

Yes. The District has done the following:

- *The District has cut back in many ways and worked to be more efficient. The District has reduced or fully cut positions: at least 10 teaching positions, at least 1 paraprofessional, 2 administrators, 2 secretaries, 3 educational service providers (speech therapists, social workers, LDTC, etc.).*
- *The District applied for the preschool grant as soon as the opportunity arose. The District has been receiving funding for this program which has allowed us to maintain staff for this program and allocate costs to preschool (supplies, custodians, administrative salaries).*
- *The District purchased school buses with stabilization aid from the State so bus routes could be done by district bus drivers/aides to save money. We partner with other districts such as Keyport and Hazlet to share busing costs. The District also uses MOESC which is a purchasing co-op for special education routes that cannot be done by in-district bus drivers. It can be challenging to find bus drivers; the District currently has an [open position for a full time driver.](#)*
- *The District uses shared services for the following: gasoline with the county, equipment sharing for field maintenance with the borough, cross country/field hockey programs with other school districts.*
- *The District trains its own RBTs (Registered Behavior Technicians) instead of using an agency to supply these trained paraprofessionals.*
- *The District utilized the one-time stabilization aid to purchase a multi-year package of curriculum consumables (math textbooks) because it was more cost effective.*
- *Individuals are holding multiple positions (for example, the Principal is also the Director of Special Services).*
- *The District has authorized the sale of board property to generate income.*
- *The District has its own before/aftercare program to generate income.*
- *The District investigates all claims of residency fraud to save resources on students who do not actually live here.*
- *The District has specialized classes for students with IEPs to keep those students in the district whenever possible.*
- *The District has moved from state health benefits to the SHIF to save money on healthcare coverage for District employees.*
- *The District participated in the ESIP program (Energy Savings Improvement Program) to install new HVAC equipment and lighting. The project was funded by grants, rebates, and ESSER funding.*

Do we need a Superintendent and Business Administrator?

It is required that every school district has an individual serving as Superintendent (with a School Administrator certificate). It is also required that a school district has a School Business Administrator (who holds the School Business Administrator certificate). The District had hired the Business Administrator as a part time employee in 2020 but discovered that to meet our needs, a full time BA was needed.

Why is my property reassessed annually?

Monmouth County is a part of a program where properties are reassessed every year. This has nothing to do with the Board of Education. You can find more information here:

<https://www.visitmonmouth.com/Page.aspx?Id=4246>

State aid has been consistently cut for years. The District has lost \$2.6 million from the state of New Jersey, and our students and community have suffered because of it. Who can I contact about this?

*Governor Phil Murphy
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
(609) 292-6000
<http://nj.gov/governor/contact>*

*Senator Declan J. O'Scanlon, Jr.
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*Senator Vin Gopal (Head of the Senate Education Committee)
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Assemblywoman Victoria A. Flynn
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Assemblyman Gerard Scharfenberger, Ph.D.
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The application for the senior property tax freeze can be found here:
<https://www.nj.gov/treasury/taxation/ptr/index.shtml>