



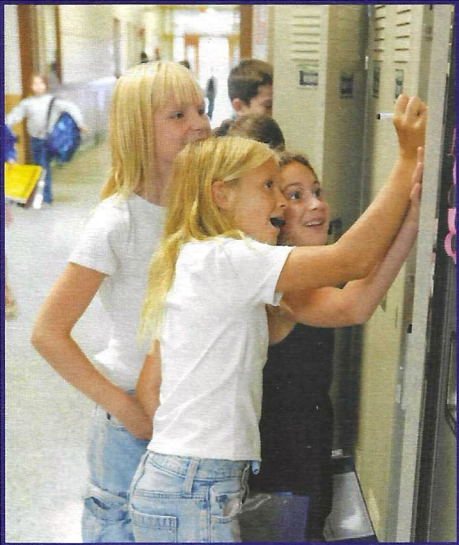
PERU CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMMUNITY REPORT

MAY 2026

PROPOSED BUDGET VOTE & BOARD ELECTION SLATED FOR MAY 19, 2026

**BUDGET VOTE &
SCHOOL BOARD
ELECTION**
Tuesday, May 19th
Peru High School
Community Room
1:00 - 8:00 p.m.



Peru Central School District's Board of Education has established a **\$56,518,175 proposed expenditure plan** for voters to consider by **voting in person, requesting an absentee ballot because of a qualifying condition, or requesting an early mail voting ballot. Absentee/early mail voting ballots must be received by the District Office no later than May 19, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.** The proposed budget calls for **an increase in overall spending of 1.55%. The tax levy is forecasted to increase 3.18%** which doesn't exceed the tax levy limit. This tax levy increase attempts to balance the costs of sustaining a school district with the inflationary pressures everyone is experiencing. Details regarding the budget proposal are featured within this Community Report.

ANNUAL BUDGET HEARING

WHEN & WHERE TO VOTE

WHAT AM I VOTING ON

**Tuesday, May 12, 2026
7:00 p.m.**
See www.perunighthawks.org for info.

**Tuesday, May 19, 2026
1:00 - 8:00 p.m.**
High School Community Room
17 School Street
Peru, NY

Budget Proposition No. 1
Bus Proposition No. 2
Board of Education Election

PROPOSED 2026-27 BUDGET SUMMARY

Peru Central School District’s proposed budget for the 2026–2027 school year reflects a “Collective Commitment” to student success. Faced with a challenging fiscal landscape and a 1% increase in State Foundation Aid (the District’s largest category of state aid), this budget prioritizes long-term stability while maintaining high-quality educational programs.

To balance the budget while addressing declining enrollment and rising costs, the District has identified several strategic enhancements and reductions.

The proposed budget includes investments in the accessibility and infrastructure of our campus to serve both students and the broader community. The enhancements are as follows:

- A Hudl subscription to provide community members with free access to live broadcasts of Peru athletic and educational events.
- Asphalt paving (sealing, lining, and striping) of campus parking lots and roadways to preserve the investments made during the 2018 capital project.
- Funding for a sustainable Buildings & Grounds vehicle replacement plan to strategically replace vehicles and equipment that are essential for maintaining campus facilities and preserving the safety of students, staff, and community members.

To address enrollment trends and financial constraints, the budget includes several staffing reductions. The District has prioritized attrition (not filling roles vacated by retirement or resignation) to minimize the impact on current staff as much as possible. The reductions are as follows:

- Reductions via Attrition: Two Elementary Teacher positions, one Social Studies Teacher position, one Business Teacher position, one Special Education Teacher position, one Teaching Assistant position, and one Clerical position.
- Position Reductions: One Assistant Superintendent position, three Teaching Assistant positions, one Music Teacher position, one Physical Education Teacher position, one Special Education Teacher position, one Social Worker position, and 0.4 of a Technology Teacher position.

Staffing reductions are never easy. The Board of Education and District Administration reached these decisions with the utmost thought and care, focusing on the evolving needs of our students. By prioritizing attrition, we have worked to minimize the impact on our current workforce and ensure our core curriculum remains intact. The District remains committed to supporting affected employees during this transition.

The proposed budget also includes a \$100,000 capital outlay project to replace the main distribution panel (MDP) in the Elementary School. The existing MDP is believed to be original to the building (approximately 70 years old) and individual components have begun to fail. Total failure of the MDP would result in power loss to a sizable portion of the Elementary School building for an extended period due to the lead time on a replacement panel. It is significantly cheaper and less disruptive to our students’ education to preventatively replace the MDP instead of waiting for it to become an emergency. With approximately 88% of the cost reimbursed by State Building Aid in the following year, this project is a cost-effective way to upgrade the school’s infrastructure. Capital outlay projects allow the district to address key facility needs while minimizing long-term financial impact.

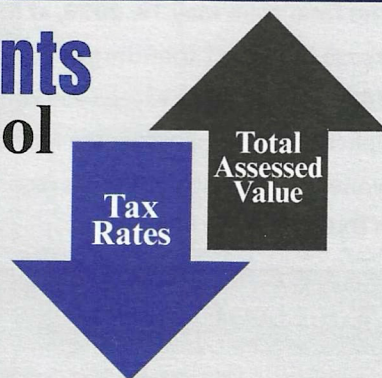
Peru Central School District’s commitment to our mission remains unwavering: to prepare our students to be fulfilled, empowered individuals and contributors to their community by providing an engaging, challenging and supportive learning environment. Our goal is to maintain the high standards of excellence that our community expects and our children deserve, while also navigating this challenging financial time.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND SCHOOL TAX RATE RELATIONSHIP

Reassessments & Your School & Taxes

As a general rule:

Typically, when a reassessment results in increased assessments due to rising property values, tax rates decrease. This is because the tax levy is now being distributed over a broader tax base. If your assessment increases, it does not necessarily mean your school taxes will increase. Your school taxes may go up, down, or stay the same depending on how your assessment changes compared to the other property in your town.



Increases in the assessed value of property will typically decrease the tax rate per thousand compared to a stagnant or decreasing property value. In a school district with increasing property values, the school tax levy amount is collected over a larger amount of property value. As a result, the tax rate per thousand typically decreases. The greater the total property tax assessment increase, the greater the tax rate decreases. The graphic seeks to illustrate this relationship between assessed value and tax rates.

A Budget Notice will be released prior to the budget vote which should reflect tax rate estimates for each town within Peru Central School District. The updated assessed values and equalization rates were not available from the Clinton County Real Property Office when this Community Report was printed.



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

From the Desk of Scott Storms

As we navigate the 2026–2027 budget season, Peru Central School District is guided by the theme of “Collective Commitment.” This theme reflects our shared responsibility to our students, even as we face a financial landscape that has grown increasingly difficult.

Last year, we managed a period of uncertainty, marked by declining enrollment and a modest 2% increase in Foundation Aid (the District’s largest category of state aid), by focusing on attrition and careful planning. However, the current fiscal year presents a more significant challenge due to a mere 1% increase in Foundation Aid. Due to this substantial lack of state aid, the budget that will be placed before the taxpayers for the 2026-27 school year is \$56,518,175, representing a 1.55% increase.

In this year’s budget, the allowable tax levy limit increase for the 2026-27 school year is 3.18%, or an additional \$655,605 from the 2025-26 school year. This year’s increase is within the allowable tax levy limit formula which was implemented in 2012. If the Board of Education had proposed exceeding this limit, a supermajority (60% or above) of favorable votes would have been required in order to approve the budget. Since the Board did not elect to go above the allowable limit, a simple majority (above 50%) is what is needed to pass the budget.

The Board of Education weighed the option of exceeding the tax levy limit to avoid staffing reductions and bolster long-term sustainability. Ultimately, the Board chose to stay within the limit, recognizing that rising costs and inflationary pressures are already placing a significant financial strain on our community members. We remain committed to balancing the needs of our schools with our responsibility to the taxpayers.

To bridge the gap left by insufficient state funding, we must utilize our fund balance to offset costs. More painfully, this

year’s reality necessitates reductions in our staffing. Staffing reductions were approached with care, focusing on attrition whenever possible, and we have worked closely and respectfully with our union partners to support those affected. I’m proud to share that, even in the face of these challenges, we have preserved our educational programs and continued to deliver the high-quality instruction that our students and families expect and deserve. These current reductions are a difficult but necessary step to ensure the district’s long-term stability.

At Peru Central School, we firmly believe that education is more than just mastering subjects; it’s about inspiring a genuine love for learning and nurturing both intellectual and personal growth. Even in this difficult fiscal climate, we remain dedicated to preparing our students to become confident, capable individuals ready to make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Our goal is to implement these cost-saving measures in a way that ensures our core curriculum and the quality of our students’ education remain unimpacted.

Beyond the classroom, we remain responsible stewards of the Peru Central School campus. We understand the importance of maintaining safe, welcoming, and efficient spaces, and we continue to invest in the long-term care of our buildings and grounds as part of our responsibility to both current and future generations.

We recognize that the success of our students is deeply tied to the strength of our community. Your continued partnership reflects the spirit of collaboration that allows us to maintain educational excellence during challenging times.



The annual budget vote will take place on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, in the High School Community Room, from 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

We thank the Peru community for their ongoing partnership and support as we make these difficult decisions to protect the heart of our vibrant learning community.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Storms". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Scott Storms, Superintendent of Schools



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