

## *97.3% of School Budgets Passed*

**O**n May 19<sup>th</sup>, voters across the state approved 657 school budgets and defeated just 18 – a record 97.3% approval rate. Despite this record approval rate many voters were faced with school budgets that contained numerous cuts to educational programs. The average increase in spending for the proposed budgets was just 2.4% and the average increase in the tax levy was just 1.9%. NYSUT had estimated that on average school budgets needed to increase spending by 4.5% and the tax levy by 7.8% in order to maintain existing programs.

Districts with a defeated budget may resubmit the same budget to the voters, resubmit a revised budget to the voters, or adopt a contingency budget. If a school district chooses to have a budget revote, it must occur on June 16<sup>th</sup> – the third Tuesday in June. If a second budget proposal is defeated, the district must adopt a contingency budget.

Spending increases under a contingency budget are capped at 4.00% over last year's level. Given that the average increase in spending in the proposed budgets was only 2.35%, it is unlikely that districts will need to make significant cuts, if any, to educational programs in order to comply with the contingency budget cap. In addition, the following expenditure increases are exemption from the cap:

- Expenditures resulting from a tax certiorari proceeding;
- Expenditures resulting from a court order or judgment against the school district;
- Capital expenditures;
- Expenditures relating to increases in total public school enrollment, including pre-k;
- Expenditures for payments to charter schools; and
- Expenditures of gifts, grants in aid or insurance proceeds

The following page provides a listing of those districts that had their budget defeated.

## 2009 Budget Defeats

*(by county)*

<p><b>BROOME</b> Whitney Point</p> <p><b>FRANKLIN</b> St Regis Falls</p> <p><b>FULTON</b> Broadalbin-Perth</p> <p><b>HERKIMER</b> Mohawk Owen D. Young</p> <p><b>MADISON</b> Madison</p> <p><b>MONTGOMERY</b> Amsterdam</p> <p><b>NASSAU</b> Hempstead</p> <p><b>ONEIDA</b> Oriskany</p>	<p><b>OTSEGO</b> Worcester</p> <p><b>PUTNAM</b> Mahopac</p> <p><b>RENSSELAER</b> Troy</p> <p><b>ROCKLAND</b> Clarkstown</p> <p><b>SARATOGA</b> Edinburg</p> <p><b>SCHENECTADY</b> Schenectady</p> <p><b>STEUBEN</b> Romulus</p> <p><b>SUFFOLK</b> Patchogue-Medford Shoreham-Wading River</p>
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The following graph provides a recent history of school budget approval rates on the initial vote.

**Percentage of School Budgets Approved on Initial Vote**

